



*Church & Mission in a
Multireligious Third Millennium*

Book of Abstracts

I

Chair: Thormod Engelsviken

Ecclesiology & Mission

In this section all papers examine various aspects of the relationship between church and mission. How are we to understand the mission of the church or the church of mission in the third millennium? What impact do secularization, globalization and multireligiosity have on the relationship between church and mission? Both theoretical and empirical approaches are featured.

Johannes Nissen

Church, Mission and Hospitality – Toward a New Model for mission

In recent years it has been proposed that reconciliation should be seen as a new model for mission. The present paper follows this line. At the same time it is argued that in coming years, hospitality might be the most appropriate concept. Hospitality is an important missiological and ecclesiological concept. Mission and church are related to each other in that both are characterized by two movements: invitation and outreach, welcoming and sending.

The paper has four parts. The first one argues that hospitality plays a significant role in the Bible, especially in the gospels and in the letters of Paul. The heart of Jesus's mission is his table fellowship with sinners. This fellowship is a reconfiguration of Israel's purity boundaries. Jesus celebrated the messianic banquet but with all the wrong people! The gospel is essentially "stranger-centred". An inclusive love for the "other", culturally and otherwise, is at the heart of the biblical faith. Mission is about creating a space, where we are "welcoming one another to new humanity" (cf. Rom 15:7).

The focus of the second part is on the church. Christian church can be defined as an inclusive community of hospitality. Such hospitality indicates the crossing of boundaries (ethnic, economic, political, social, gender) by being open to and welcoming the other. The missional communities of hospitality do not seek the homogeneous oneness hoped for by modernity, nor do they celebrate the fragmented diversity of the postmodernity. Instead they welcome and nurture the richness and particularity of perspectives, backgrounds, and gifts, but always with the embrace of God's reconciling unity. Hostility is converted into hospitality, strangers into friends and enemies into guests.

The third part is about hospitality in the context of interfaith relations. The religious plurality challenges us to acknowledge "others" in their difference, to welcome them, even if their "strangeness" sometimes threatens us, and to seek reconciliation even with those who have declared themselves our enemies. The starting point for Christian mission and dialogue must be a vision of mutual hospitality among people of different religious traditions. From the Christian perspective, this has much to do with our ministry of reconciliation. The concept of recognition is of crucial importance not only for an approach which aims at social acceptance but also for authentic mission.

The final part of the paper investigates the theological motivations for this approach to mission. One motivation is the triune God. Through participating in the relationship – Father and Son united in the Spirit of Love – Christians learn how to relate to others. Another motivation is rooted in Christology. It is proposed that we should create a "hospitality Christology". The grace of God manifested in Christ calls the Christians to an attitude of hospitality that is not limited to those who belong to the same group but extends to loving even the enemies. Mission when understood in the light of hospitality has no room for triumphalism; instead it must be characterized by bold humility.

jn@teo.au.dk

Todd Stockdale

Church, mission and actuality: exploring missional church through lived experience

The determined calls of ecclesiologists and missiologists for a reappraisal of ecclesiology that tempers the distinction between *church* and *mission* have at last reached the willing ears of actual Christian faith communities. These urgings for the church to conceive of itself principally as being sent by God into the world to participate in God's mission are currently being appropriated by a diverse collection of congregations and individuals – many of which loosely arrange themselves under the nomenclature 'emerging church'.

While emerging church eludes precise definition and blurs lines of demarcation, the classification is commonly being used to describe ecclesial entities that engage late modern cultures in a missional way. Thus, seeking to understand the relationship between church and mission in the third millennium requires a careful listening to the actualities and particularities of these communities as they provide a locus in which our ecclesiologies can be explored from the starting point of lived experiences. Indeed, as Nicholas Heely posits, too much of ecclesiological inquiry is essentially theoretical and remains fixated 'more upon discerning the right things to think about the church rather than orientated to the living, rather messy, confused and confusing body that the church actually is' (*Church, World and the Christian Life*, 2000).

Following Heely's suggestion, and drawing upon original ethnographic research recently conducted in two self-described emerging churches, this paper will investigate these congregations' own understanding of what it means to be missional – teasing out tensions and questions which arise from within as they endeavour towards dynamic participation in God's redemptive activity. For example, even though fascinating themes such as local interest, hospitable presence, and holistic engagement arise naturally out of the research, they must content with the participants' fears of alienation and marginalization, questions of authenticity, and instances of ambiguity in discerning the particulars of God's mission. From these complexities, I will argue for a posture of ongoing inquiry into the church's understanding of mission that remains grounded in the lived reality of ecclesial communities.

t.stockdale@sms.ed.ac.uk

Charles J. Fensham

“Emerging From the Dark Age Ahead: The Canadian Church in the Third Millennium”

The Canadian church finds itself in a situation that overlaps both with the European experience of secularization and an increased multi-religious and multi-cultural environment due to immigration, and the North American experience of vigorous Christian movements. In Canada the process of secularization has progressed further along the path of the European experience, but is also benefits from a renewal of faith through new multi-cultural immigrant participants. In addition the Canadian church faces unprecedented change under the impact of a technique and market driven culture. In contrast to the United States Canadian state policy does not propose a formal separation of church and state but this separation is a matter of regular practice. With the decline of the size and influence of Canadian Christian Churches there have been new developments in interfaith co-operation with government in the development of policies of interfaith public worship.

This paper will provide a brief descriptive sketch that situates the Canadian church culturally and sociologically in its context and will then proceed to analyse its challenges in terms of the themes of a multi-faith environment, a growing multi-cultural environment, and a culture dominated by consumerism and technology. The paper will also note major challenges *within* Canadian churches and will propose a response posed by the present context. This proposed response will build on the presenter's research project and his recent book **Emerging from the Dark Age Ahead: The Future of the North American Church** published by Ottawa: Saint Paul University Press/Novalis in 2008 as well as a new research manuscript being prepared for publication. The proposed response will employ contemporary missional ecclesiology as a basis for its argument.

Those who attend the conference will find in this presentation a picture of the present state of Christian churches in Canada and will learn about the challenges and responses that are being developed in the multi-religious and multi-cultural reality of this country and will be invited to explore theological themes in contemporary missional ecclesiology in relation to this situation.

c.fensham@utoronto.ca

Elina Hankela

The impact of a holistic inner-city mission on public and sacred space in Johannesburg, a theological analysis

Central Methodist Mission (CMM) is a big inner-city church in Johannesburg. The name of Central Methodist *Church* was changed into Central Methodist *Mission* in 1985: the focus shifted from being merely on the congregation to strongly involving the world, as the current leader Bishop Paul Verryn explains. At the present moment CMM shelters 2000-3000 homeless people in the church building. Most of these people are foreign nationals, mainly from Zimbabwe, but also some South African citizens stay in the building.

Space has become a central issue at CMM as the number of the people in the building has gradually grown. Firstly, the presence of the homeless in the inner-city influences the public space around the church. Both lawyers and business people in the area have complained about the situation, and the city of Johannesburg has promised to try to find alternative space for accommodating the people. The ministry of CMM has not only influenced the physical space around it but has also gained a remarkable space in both local and international media. Secondly, questions related to space or lack of it are a constant issue inside the building, in the private or sacred space: both the people staying in the overcrowded building and the members worshipping there are affected by the limitations of space. The nature and proper use of sacred space also raise differing opinions.

In this paper I will discuss how and on what theological and ethical premises CMM influences the public space around the church, especially through sheltering homeless people. I will complement this discussion with another form of Methodist faith in the public space, namely CMM street revivals and ways of “going out as Wesley did”. From discussing the dynamics of mission in the public space I will proceed to look at the theological (but also political) message that the different uses of the church building, the space inside, entail and how the church community understands the characteristics of sacred space.

elina.hankela@helsinki.fi

Knut Alfsvåg

Negative theology and the mission of the church

A renewal of the tradition of negative theology and its emphasis on the unknowability of God has been attempted as a possible means of reorientation in relation to the challenges of postmodernity and religious pluralism. Important examples of this reorientation are to be found among contemporary theologians both of a Roman Catholic and a Greek Orthodox persuasion, which may in itself suffice as a proof of the ecumenical potential of this renewal; there has, however, not been much discussion of the possible missiological implication of this reorientation.

Negative theology necessarily issues in a rejection of any kind of arbitrary identification of the ultimate with one's own tradition; from this point of departure, one can never conduct mission work based on an idea of epistemological superiority. Some representatives of contemporary negative theology have, however, taken exactly the opposite view, emphasizing that confessional adherence to a particular tradition in itself manifests a kind of violence against the others.

It seems, though, that the latter approach is as incompatible with negative theology as the former. If even the possibility of an identifiable manifestation of the unknown is excluded, the principle of unknowability is abandoned and the dialectics of negativity is reduced to what for practical purposes may be indistinguishable from doctrinal atheism. Approaching God as giver beyond the conceivable and expectable, one should therefore not preclude the possibility of one's own tradition manifesting exactly this possibility. Consequently, negative theology is not necessarily incompatible with an understanding of the mission of the church as proclamation of the gospel of Christ. The rejection of epistemological superiority implies, however, that one by doing so must remain aware that the identification of the divine with what is merely human must be given from beyond the humanly possible or not at all. Only by reflecting on the implication of this principle, the mission of the church can be taken seriously as a possible manifestation of the work of the unknown.

knut.alfsvaag@mhs.no

Michael Stewart Robb

“Looking Back to Go Forward”

The current context in the West has given many Christians and non-Christians a lived experience of *Heimatlosigkeit* with younger generations being particularly affected. Historically speaking, this is due in part to secularization and the advent of a variety of alternatives to Christianity. But it is also due to a historical change in the understanding of Christians of the Christian God, taking a different but similar shape among both liberals and conservatives – a change in understanding which is in part at the root of modern secularization. Specifically, Christians came to imagine that God had made (makes) the *res* of the Christian faith available *without recourse* to members of the communion of saints who preceded them. However, *Heimatlosigkeit* comes to be addressed when the West reconsiders the missional value of the communion of saints.

This theoretically-approached paper intends to address the relationship of church and mission by analyzing the (ideal) relationship between tradition and mission. The underlying assumption of this paper is that since the advent of Christ Christian mission is traditioning (*tradere*), an active handing-over to others. Consequently, Christian tradition of the recent or distant past *is* missional.

The paper will center on a reading of three more recent Christian thinkers - Friedrich Schleiermacher, Lesslie Newbigin and Yves Congar. They will help set the stage for a vision of God who uses the *whole* communion of saints to accomplish his mission. Particular attention will be paid to the role that God intends the “dead” members of the communion of saints to play for good or for worse in the formation (traditioning) of the church in mission. Thus, with an eye for the theology of mission, two “classic” missiological themes will be in turn addressed – the sending church and missionary training.

michael.s.robb@gmail.com

Jaakko Rusama

The search for a mutually acceptable understanding of mission and common witness in the Anglican-Lutheran encounters

This paper will concentrate on two topical and concrete challenges of the churches facing the mission of the churches in the third millennium.

First, I will describe and analyse the view of a common witness as expressed in five Anglican – Lutheran dialogues: in Europe the *Meissen Agreement* 1991, the *Porvoo Common Statement* (PCS) 1992 and the *Reuilly Common Statement* 1999, in the United States *Called to Common Mission* (CCM) 2000, and in Canada *Called to Full Communion* (CFC) 2000.

The view (and the wordings) of the results of these dialogues which continue in various forms is fairly similar in the PCS, CCM and in CFC. These agreements have reached an understanding of a communion relationship which includes full sacramental sharing and interchangeability of ministers. For various reasons the mutual recognition of ministers has not been reached in the Meissen Agreement and in the Reuilly Common Statement.

The main challenge is, as expressed in the Porvoo Common Statement, that the churches are committed to “share a common life in mission and service”.

Secondly, I will look at the process after the adoption of the agreements in the light of the recent events within the Anglican Communion and the family of the Lutheran Churches. Both church families have experienced a deep division in their understanding and interpretation of a biblically sound teaching and practice. Major obstacles are closely connected to the understanding of ministry. The Anglican Covenant (in process since 2006) is an effort to hold the common witness of the Anglican churches together. Its third draft (2009) states:

Our faith embodies a coherent testimony to what we have received from God's Word and the Church's long-standing witness. - - - The mission we pursue aims at serving the great promises of God in Christ that embrace the peoples and the world God so loves. This mission is carried out in shared responsibility and stewardship of resources, and in interdependence among ourselves and with the wider Church.

The Anglican Covenant is not only a topical issue but also a very constructive effort of the churches in their struggle to overcome modern ecclesiological challenges. Within the Lutheran World Federation decisions of some member churches have also been felt unilateral.

The credibility of the witness of the church is at stake. How can the common witness reflect the mission of the one church of Christ to the world? Are there ways to overcome denominational barriers and find new doctrinal formulations or structures for a basic ecclesial unity of the churches?

jaakko.rusama@helsinki.fi

Lap Yan Kung

Religion as Intangible (Non-Material) Cultural Heritage in China: The Church in Public

Religious policy in China has restricted religion activities to religious premises, and the registration of religious premise has to get the approval from the State Administration for Religious Affairs (Ying, 2006). It implies that the Chinese government intends to cut off religions from the public life. Since the rise of tourism and globalization (Richards, 2007), the Chinese government has realized the potential economic role of religion, for religious sites and traditions can be transformed into tourist spots. Eventually, the government has promoted the idea of non-material cultural heritage in early 2000, and religion is included. This new given public role of religion has opened the possible space for religion to participate into the public life. The purpose of this paper is not to re-frame Christianity as non-material cultural heritage, but rather to reflect what and how the Church in public is in this new social context. This paper suggests that Chinese Christianity, under the deep influence of Confucianism and Puritan tradition and the socio-political consideration, has to retrieve the liturgical tradition in order that the presence of God can be seen in public.

kungly@cuhk.edu.hk

Marina N. Behera

ECCLESIOLOGY AND MISSION: MISSION CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF INDIA, MIZORAM SYNOD

Mizoram is a state in northeast India.¹ Today the population of Mizoram is about 880,000 with the literacy rate at about 90%, the second highest in India. Having been isolated from the rest of India the Mizos have their own unique culture and society which was largely undisturbed until the advent of the British in the region in the late 1800s.

Subsequently Christianity was introduced through the Welsh Presbyterian missionaries (then known as The Calvinistic Methodist Foreign Mission), who evangelized the northern part of Mizoram with the Baptist Missionary Society evangelizing the Southern part. Within a few years the whole of Mizoram was Christianized and today all but for a few who claims to be Jews are Christians.

At the start of the new millennium the Presbyterian Church of India, Mizoram Synod, which has over the years has contributed a significant numbers of missionaries,² faces a number of unique challenges. These are largely due to the effects of the Indian economy being liberalized and the resulting impact of globalization on Mizo Society.

This paper proposes to examine the following challenges and examine how far these challenges are impacting the Church's understanding of itself, its role and its mission in the present scenario in Mizoram:

Tension between the traditional understanding of the Church and its mission and the new awareness among the laity as a result of globalization

The hierarchical structure of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram.

Incidents of local revival as against the widespread revival that had taken place from 1906 to 1935.

A general tension between the older generation and the younger generation with regard to church administration and corporate worship practices.

An emerging post colonialist critique with regard to the legacy of the white missionaries versus traditional pre-Christian beliefs and practices.

After examining these challenges the paper also proposes to come up with some suggestions as to how the Church in Mizoram could be more effective in its mission.

nmarina@rediffmail.com

¹ Mizoram has an area of 21, 087 square kilometers, roughly the size of Wales and straddles the Tropic of Cancer. The southern half of the state is wedged between Bangladesh and Myanmar and the northern half is bordered by the other northeast Indian states of Tripura, Manipur and Assam. The people of Mizoram known as the Mizos are of mongoloid origin who are thought to have migrated from China into the Chin-Myanmar region during the middle of the 16th century and then into the present state of Mizoram in the 17th century.

² The Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod constituted the Synod Mission Board (SMB) in 1961 to promote evangelistic works within and outside the territory and to renew the Church for mission and evangelism. The Presbyterian Church in Mizoram is very mission oriented and presently has more than 1449 missionaries working under the Presbyterian Synod Mission Board.

Mark Laing

“The Calling of the Church to Mission and to Unity”: Bishop Lesslie Newbigin and the Integration of the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches

The post-colonial quest to reorganise and restructure missions became focused on the question of how the International Missionary Council (IMC) should relate to the World Council of Churches (WCC), as international symbols of a recovered relationship between mission and church. The desire to rehabilitate missions led to the more fundamental questioning of how mission should be *redefined*. This historical paper would seek, through a study of Newbigin’s involvement in the integration of the IMC with the WCC, to show how, after Tambaram (1938), church-centric missiology was redefined. The paper would seek to ascertain what Newbigin contributed to integration; and secondly, how the process of integration affected Newbigin’s theological reflection on the nature of mission.

The paper would take seriously the fact that Newbigin was a task theologian, and, through the use of extensive archives, would seek to bridge the gap between Newbigin’s theological construction and the organisational embodiment of his convictions in integration. The theological foundation for integration that Newbigin provided at Rolle (1951) and Willingen (1952) would be assessed, as would Newbigin’s tenure as general secretary of the IMC.

The relationship between mission and church in Newbigin’s theologizing would be examined. The paper would seek to demonstrate the process of how Newbigin made the significant shift from addressing the *structures* of mission to exploring the *substance* of mission, constructing a trinitarian foundation. Newbigin’s emphasis, to facilitate integration between mission and church at the level of the local congregation, would be evaluated, as would his response to the challenges posed by secularization. Of ongoing relevance is the outcome of integration. This will be considered, in particular the role of mission within the WCC and the ongoing dichotomy between “ecumenicals” and “evangelicals”.

mtblaing@gmail.com

Fritz Krüger

Jesus' table fellowship as model for a missional ecclesiology in a changing world

Christian churches with a history of powerful socio-cultural presence in the past often have to adjust to a more marginalized, disempowered existence in an increasingly secular, multireligious and pluralist society. Because the new social situation is sometimes perceived as a threat to the existence of such churches, they could attempt to protect their identity through a strengthening of the boundaries between faith community and world. The holiness of the church is one of the key concepts referred to in this regard. However, the result is an insular and exclusive faith community, effectively cut off from the rest of society, and either unable or unwilling to engage with society in any missional sense¹.

In Jesus' time, when the Jewish people of the first century were ruled by the Romans, and found themselves politically oppressed, misunderstood and socially marginalized, especially the Pharisees and the Essenes tended to define and protect their own identity as God's people through emphasis on boundary strengthening, exclusivism, ritual purity and a separatist concept of holiness. For them, table fellowship was an enacted parable of the identity of the ideal Israel. However, Jesus' table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners points to a different way, namely identity formation through vulnerability and boundary removal, an inclusive seeking out of those who are marginalized in society and shaping among them a new community of the people of God.

This has profound implications for the way the Christian church thinks about itself (ecclesiology) and for the way it interacts with the world in which it finds itself (ideally: mission!) The proposed paper will investigate how Jesus' table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners points to a missional ecclesiology by investigating, among others:

- the relation between holiness and the identity of the faith community, and possible redefinition of the church's holiness (inclusive instead of exclusive holiness);
- the faith community's incarnational way of being in the world (not exclusive self-protection, but inviting vulnerability and self-sacrificing, redemptive entering into the lives of others, as Jesus did);
- the conscious social relocation of the church as faith community to the disempowered margins of society, as sacrament of God's eschatological people, indicating the kind of community Jesus continues to gather around himself;
- the implications (if any) of the above for the church as Eucharistic community.

fritzkruger@telkomsa.net

¹ Reference could be made to some traditionally white protestant churches in South Africa, which supported apartheid in the previous political dispensation, but have since had to adjust to a newly marginal and disempowered existence in a post-liberation South Africa.

David Sonju

Mission and Ecclesiology in the Eucharistic Theology of Robert W. Jenson

This paper will examine the relationship of mission and ecclesiology in the Eucharistic theology of Robert W. Jenson. My intention is to discover whether - and if so, how - Jenson's theology of the Eucharist shapes his understanding of mission and ecclesiology. It is my preliminary supposition that Jenson's theology of the Eucharist is formative to his theology of the Church's mission and that it therefore provides an essential context for understanding his thought. I will begin by explaining how the Eucharist is the source of the Church's mission in Jenson's theology. I will show that the identity, character, and destiny of both 'Church' and 'world' are sacramentally constituted in the Eucharist. From this will emerge the twin ideas that the world exists for the sake of the Church, and that the Church preserves the world in being through its audible and visible speaking of the gospel. It will be shown that for Jenson the mission of the Church is a function of the being of the Church. In the second section of the paper I will argue that along with being the source of mission, the Eucharist is also the goal of mission in Jenson's theology. The realization of this goal must be understood in terms of Jenson's theology of anticipated eschatology. In celebrating the Eucharist the Church anticipates its being as the community of redeemed creatures in communion with God. The mission of the Church is thus seen to flow out from and to serve the Eucharistic worship of the Church. The paper will conclude with some reflections on the implications of this reading of Jenson's theology of mission for the Church in the third millennium.

Secondly a thorough examination of how Hauerwas and Gräb imagine confirmation classes will be presented. The view on the relationship between Christianity and culture that hereby will become evident will then be critiqued and compared. Despite the fact that Hauerwas and Gräb are writing in cultural contexts both very different from the Danish, a consideration of which model is the most fruitful in a contemporary Danish setting, will conclude the paper.

DS454@ST-ANDREWS.AC.UK

Valentin Kozhuharov

Ecclesial Missiology: Christian Mission as Liturgical Experience. A Christian Orthodox Perspective

Christian mission has always been ecclesiastical, and its missiology as developed by researchers and done in practical terms in the last two centuries has been ecclesial missiology. The church as community of believers who put all their life in Christ's name and who yearn to be saved and to save others is a missional church. Orthodox theology maintains the truth that through our spiritual purification and salvation we purify and save others and renew the environment around us and the world as a whole; through human's salvation, we bring about the salvation of the world. The process of theosis (divinization) and salvation through our worshipping activity is most evidently perceived and felt in the liturgical life of Christians – their participation in the mysteries (the sacraments) of the Church and sharing their spiritual experience with others. The contemporary missionary movement in the Orthodoxy offers magnificent samples of true ecclesial missiology which needs to be abundantly shared with the other Christian traditions, especially having in mind the modern processes of globalization and secularization in Europe and in the world as a whole.

The study will consider the latest mission movements within the Orthodox church with special focus on the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox church and some of the other Orthodox churches and communities, especially those of Greek descent and the Orthodox church of America. It will reveal the ecclesiastical nature of the Orthodox mission as found today in many countries of the world and will show the liturgical foundation of the missional church (parish or community of Christians) which aims to salvation of both man and nature.

valentin_kozhuharov@yahoo.co.uk

Jeffrey Conklin-Miller, The Divinity School, Duke University, Durham, NC USA

“Theory In Search of a People: Contextualization and the Missional Church”

This paper builds on David Yeago’s critique of missional practices of contextualization to argue for their re-location inside a theological frame considering “Church,” “World,” and the relation between them. Outside this frame, contextualization reflects the tendency of the North American Church to establish its legitimacy in the terms of success authorized by the projects of the modern state and market. After suggesting the appearance of such tendencies in recent considerations of the relationship of contextualization and the “Missional Church,” I seek resources for resistance in a conversation between John Howard Yoder and Rowan Williams, developing an account of the “principalities and powers” of the “World” and an ecclesial identity emphasizing a non-territorial “peoplehood” dispersed in mission to practice repentance, discernment, and reconciliation. In conclusion, I suggest that as framed in theologically normative categories these central practices constitute the essential content for the practice of contextualization in missional ecclesiology.

The paper argues that in order to resist the North American Church’s tendency to locate its legitimacy in terms of success derived from the modern state and market, accounts of the missional practice of contextualization must be re-located inside a theological frame considering “Church,” “World,” and the relation between them. This frame is developed out of a conversation between the theologians John Howard Yoder and Rowan Williams in order to shape accounts of the “principalities and powers” in the “World,” as well as of an ecclesial identity that emphasizes the Church as a non-territorial “peoplehood” dispersed in mission to practice repentance, discernment, and reconciliation. Within this frame, we can relocate contextualization as a description of the Church’s relationship with the World in mission, authorized or legitimated not by the modern state or the market, but by the Triune God.

I take my lead from Craig Van Gelder, who has recently, and rightly, argued that living in the midst of the shifts “beyond” modernity, Christendom, and Constantinianism, the North American Church needs “to engage in *the study of the church*: to explore its nature, to understand its creation and continuing formation, and to carefully examine its purpose and ministry.”¹ Thus has the conversation developed around the identity, nature, and purpose of what is now called the “Missional Church.” This paper shares such an interest, but moves beyond a concern with the nature of the church to consider as well the larger context within which the church resides, namely, that which is the “world.” Of course, ecclesiological consideration is never simply reflection on the church as church, but on the church as the church *in the world*. Thus, as the North American Church seeks new clarification of its mission and consequently reengages with the world in which it finds itself, it faces a great struggle: not only to ask what constitutes the nature, identity, and mission of the Church, but also, and always simultaneously, what should be the proper relationship between the Church and the world. jeff.cm@duke.edu

¹ Craig Van Gelder, “Introduction: Engaging the Missional Church Conversation,” *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry*. Craig Van Gelder, ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1.

II

Chair: Hans Raun Iversen

Church Renewal for the Third Millennium

In this section all papers examine various attempts to renew the church for the third millennium. How can we promote church renewal? In which ways will the church be challenged especially in a future context of secularization, globalization and multireligiosity? What lessons can be learned among the Anglo-American, the Continental and the Nordic traditions - as well as globally? Both theoretical and empirical approaches will be treated.

Hans Raun Iversen

Pro me in the Age of Authenticity. The Missiological Significance of ‘Christ in us’ and ‘We in Christ’

Living in ‘the time of authenticity’ (Charles Taylor: *A Secular Age*, 2007) we can only experience something as true when we can identify with a first person (an author). Therefore Christ is what he is to the individual! Postmodern people can not be Christians in the way of the church before they have become ‘Christians in my own way’. This calls for a reconsideration of the Lutheran concept of *pro me*. To Luther faith is the personal trust that a person has received in Christ, whom he has met and experienced as loving and trustworthy, present in His words, blood and body. What matters is how Christ matters to the individual, *pro me*. This sort of faith in Christ is a mighty thing that changes people and their criteria for acting in the world (Rom. 12:2). In his Commentary to the letter to the Galatians Luther call faith a leaven that may penetrate all of the dough – in a process that will continue throughout our lives to the resurrection: “Christ and faith must be united. We must be in heaven, and Christ must live and work in us ... closely, real and effectually” (WA 40 I:356-58). As Christians are growing in Christ – as Christ is growing in

Christian people – also the awareness of Christ as the King of the Kingdom of God and thus the universal and communal dimension of Christianity as it is shaped in congregational life may grow.

Christian faith is foremost a bodily practice – of feeling, seeing, listening, reading, praying, experiencing, singing, communicating, confessing, kneeling, walking, eating, drinking and caring for the neighbour. The body is the agent and at the same time the object being transformed as Christian faith is growing. As Christians are being transformed in Christ their bodily practices and thus their bodies are being transformed. The missional church of the future must be communities facilitating the transformation of people in the image of Christ. Christianity is not contained in the churches but in the bodies of the Christians, the living stones, who are the salt and light of Christianity in The world. We have as much Christianity as we have in our bodies.

hri@teol.ku.dk

Jenny Dagers

Pluralism and Particularity: Intercultural Theologies and the Global Christian Church

The emergence of pluralist approaches to Christian theology of religions in the latter decades of the twentieth century (Hick & Knitter) was motivated by the best of intentions – the promotion of interreligious peace and justice. The recent ‘turn to particularity’ (D’Costa and, differently, Heim) draws attention to the cost incurred in relegating the uniqueness of religious traditions to the margins in favour of meeting on some chosen common ground. The aim of this paper is to determine usable principles for renewal of the Church in the third millennium which take forward the irenic and justice-seeking commitments that inform pluralist approaches, while being committed also to bearing witness to the uniqueness of Christian particularity.

This quest for usable principles locates the long-established Western Christian tradition – whether AngloAmerican, Continental or Nordic – within global Christianity. The paper seeks to engage insights from Asian theologies, notably their emphasis on ‘being religious interreligiously’ (Phan after Knitter), with the intercultural tradition of feminist theology (Kwok). The pluralist and particularist commitments of both discussion partners are scrutinised in identifying usable principles. Recent emphasis on the origin of Trinitarian doctrine in the Eastern Church (Phan) points to the capacity of Trinitarian theology to exceed the Western tradition, as befits a renewed global ecclesiology fit for the third millennium. While a pluralist approach has been assumed as the only fitting feminist stance (Gross; Ruether), there is a feminist tradition that affirms the gender fluidity of the Trinity over against an assumed patriarchal order (Soskice, Coakley).

In sum, the paper gestures towards the emerging Church of the third millennium as a global and diverse witness to a unique Christian particularity that simultaneously furthers both irenic interreligious engagement and just relations, including gender justice.

DAGGERJ@HOPE.AC.UK

Volker Küster

Learning from “Other” Churches. Intercultural Ecclesiology

What ecclesiological innovations are implied by contextual theologies in the Third World is an open question in missiological and ecumenical research. At the same time ecclesiology is the litmus test, whether a contextual theology succeeds in bridging the gap to the local church. Taking the typology of contextual theology as a frame of reference (cf. Volker Küster, *The Many Faces of Jesus Christ*, 2001, 15-28), I will trace the transformation processes in ecclesiological thinking in the light of Latin American basic Christian communities, black churches in the US, minjung congregations in South Korea and African Instituted Churches (AIC). Occasional side glances into other contexts substantiate what is said. On these foundations I will name by way of trial four *notae novae ecclesiae*, which draw the ideal of a church, that is small-scale, contextual, prophetic and missionary.

(1) *small-scale congregations*: The group is relatively homogenous. Members know each other personally. The worship service is the center of the community and source of its renewal.

(2) *contextual congregations*: The gospel is interpreted by the community in its particular situation. Text and context are dialectically intertwined.

(3) *prophetic congregations*: The founding figures of the AIC's are prophets, who not only set themselves off against the mission churches, but also oppose the colonial system. The basic communities or the minjung congregations are initiatives of the poor and oppressed, that provide them with their own identity as a community. They publicly denounce social injustices. Their focus is on the coming of the kingdom of God in the sense of a realized eschatology.

(4) *missionary congregations*: The church is present among the people. It is the „city on the mountain“ (Mt 5).

vkuester@pthu.nl

Jakob Egeris Thorsen

Fighting Fire with Fire. Challenged by Pentecostalism and Religious Pluralism: The Spread of Charismatic Practice in the Catholic Church in Guatemala

During the last 35 years about 40% of a formerly Catholic population has converted to the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches in Guatemala. Met by that challenge and by the challenge of religious individualism, relativism and loss of tradition, Catholics and the Church hierarchy are redefining the Church as missionary towards baptized Catholics and society as a whole.

Charismatic Catholics embrace the proactive missionary attitude more than any other segment in the Church.

Charismatic practice and spirituality has spread drastically in the Guatemalan Catholic Church during the last 20 years. To some degree it pervades most lay groups in the Church today changing the face of Guatemalan Catholicism.

Although always presented as a genuine Catholic phenomenon, in many ways it resembles the practice and spirituality of the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches, among others stressing Spirit baptism, prophecy, glossolalia, healing and the 'personal encounter with Jesus'.

My empirical findings from the field show that the 'Charismatic experience' mostly leads to deepening of traditional Catholic faith and church engagement. But under circumstances it might as well lead to alienation towards the same and the creation of para-ecclesial structures.

That ambivalence is reflected in the attitude of episcopacy and priesthood towards the Charismatic movement. In spite of their often personal dislike for the movement, most acknowledge its unique ability to reengage both non-practicing alienated Catholics and potential converts to Pentecostal churches.

In the paper I present my recent fieldwork data from Guatemala and address the following questions:

1. How does the Charismatic renewal affect traditional Catholic spirituality and practice in everyday parish life in Guatemala?
2. How do Catholic bishops and priests integrate the Charismatic movement on both diocesan and parish level.
3. What are the practical theological challenges of a Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal within an 'old folk church'?

jet@teo.au.dk

Robert Calvert

The adequacy of post-colonial categories to interpret new forms of migrant church

Europe became a world power and Christianity became a world religion. As a global faith, however, the form and design of Christian faith were still dominated by Western thought. Roman Catholic missions were followed by Protestant ones that previously had little contact or interest in non-Christian peoples. European churches of Germanic origin (English, Scots, Dutch, German and Scandinavian) became established as a result of the twin processes of mission and migration. The Protestant missionary movement also contributed to the emergence of nationalism in Asia and Africa. Today non-Western initiatives and movements are reshaping Christian world order and promoting new cultural forms. They display both a diversity and divergence (especially in first and second generation migrant churches) which is contained in a common search for liberation. The first generation of leaders which developed upon the colonial memory gave rise to a new generation that would seek to shed the Western mantle. They are critical of its values in multicultural society.

Though pluralism has always somehow been characteristic of Christianity, it has become a new issue for the West. Christendom which gave rise to diverse expressions in a universal Christian world is now being replaced with a single global culture where individuals carry many identities. Migrant churches are a new feature which operate like geological plates under the earth's surface that often overlap or rub up with another. They are networks that touch one another and have 'multiple' identities. I will describe and compare them through three types of missiology: *internal*, *reverse* and *common*, and assess its adequacy for the evaluating the new phenomenon of migrant churches today. The churches that are proposed as case studies are the Danish Lutheran Seaman's Mission, an integrated Roman Catholic parish in the south of the city, and a new Portuguese-speaking church in the west of Rotterdam.

scotsintchurch@cs.com

Ole Skjerbæk Madsen

How to Become a Church in the Spirituality of Life Milieus?

From New Religious Movements to Spiritualities of Life

The new religious movements which arose in the 1960s and 1970s as more or less well defined groups, cults or religions have given way to a less well defined spirituality and spiritual life style, the spiritualities of life in milieus which celebrate life and are expressed in life enhancing practices.

Church: From Parish and Institution to Network and Right Human Relations

To meet this challenge the church has to redefine itself in terms of relations and network. Help for such a relational understanding of the Church may be found in Luther's seven marks of the Church and the reformers' understanding of the priesthood of all believers.

Syncretism and Spiritualities of Life

A major obstacle for many Christians to relate to new religions and new spiritualities is the syncretistic and eclectic character of the new spiritualities. Does the use of elements from the Christian past represent a strategy to help spiritual seekers and new adherents better to find their new identity?

The Role of Christian Symbols, Spiritual Practices and World View in a Syncretistic Setting

The only chance of retaining the true meaning of the Christian foundational metaphors in the neo-spiritual milieus is to be present and critically contextualize the gospel and inculturate the fellowship of Jesus' disciples in the milieus – knowing that syncretism is the necessary outcome wherever we are engaged in true communication. The gospel will not be understood if we are not able to manage the syncretistic process without succumbing to it.

The Shape of the Church to Come

The Church in the spiritualities of life milieu will be a network of relationships more concerned with Christ at the centre of the network than with the boundaries of the Church.

ole.skjerbæk.madsen@areopagos.org

Nigel Rooms

Imagination as a Key to the Future of the Church in the West

We do not know what the future of the church in the West will look like, particularly if its current expressions continue to decline at their present rate. Outside the church 'the world' is constantly reinventing itself and we are in a period of rapid global change. Given this background the paper will propose that the church in the West recover a *faithful imagination* for the future as it engages missiologically with the rapidly changing world it finds itself in.

I will trace the loss of confidence in human imagination in the West and particularly during the period of the Enlightenment. Nevertheless there has been a recovery of interest in employing the Christian imagination in recent decades through the work of such theologians as David Tracy, Sallie McFague, Garrett Green, Terry Veling and Sam Wells. It is claimed that imagination can bridge what were thought to be unbridgeable enlightenment dialectics such as the sacred / secular, fact / value and nature / grace. Inevitably employing the imagination raises the question of revelation and the importance of the revelatory nature of appropriate metaphor, following Paul Ricoeur. Imagination is therefore not just reproductive (Mary Warnock) but also *productive* of new meaning (Rowan Williams).

Mission is fundamentally about crossing boundaries or 'entering new worlds' and it is through utilising the imagination via the medium of metaphor that these new worlds can be engaged. How then are we to encourage Christians in the Church to develop and employ their faithful imaginations? The paper will conclude with two proposals, one pedagogical and the other presenting evidence from a church conference which aimed at physically engaging the imagination of participants through creativity.

nigel.rooms@southwell.anglican.org

Verena Grüter

Music as a missionary spirituality in postmodern times and as a form of resistance to globalization

Music as a principal form of protestant spirituality

Music is intimately connected to religion from the beginning on. Both rise from an origin of freedom of human beings and connect mankind with transcendence. Throughout the history of western religions, including the First Testament, music has been both intensively used for religious purposes and, at the same time, it has been criticized and even rejected from religious cults for its deep influence on human soul and its transcendent power. Martin Luther, on the contrary, appreciated music as a creational gift of God and made intense use of it both for pastoral care and for mission as the new chorale was the congregation's main medium to confess its faith.

Religious music in postmodernity

In postmodernity, music again is playing an important role for religious life: Beyond their critical distance towards dogmatic faith, people are searching for spirituality. Music plays a central role in this search as can especially be learnt from the "Evangelischer Kirchentag" and the strong gospel movement in Germany. These phenomena probably bear possibilities for a missionary transformation of the mainline church.

Church Music and Globalization

During the process of decolonization, some of the "young churches" in Africa, Latin America and Asia developed their own contextual music. Today a predominant anglo-saxon worship music is distributed all over the world. Contextual Church music in some places is performed as a form of resistance and a claim for an own cultural identity within the globalizing anglo-saxon culture. Recently, churches and missions celebrate ecumenical music festivals, searching for a renewal of protestant church music. How can protestant churches in Germany benefit from the new developments in ecumenical church music in order to employ new forms for missionary outreach?

vgrueter@t-online.de

Martin Friedrich

Church Renewal for the Third millennium – Can CPCE play a roll?

In the last decade, the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe more and more concentrated on fostering the “fullest possible co-operation in witness and service to the world” among its churches (cf. Leuenberg Agreement 29). Two projects have a special connection to the theme of the Aarhus Conference: “Evangelising - Protestant perspectives for the Churches in Europe” and “Ecclesia semper reformanda. Ecclesiological reflections in regard to the renewal of the Protestant churches in Europe“. The paper will present the result of the first project (completed 2006), which started from an analysis of the situation in the secular and post-modern Europe, and give a preview of the second project (to be started in October 2009). It will especially ask, whether the CPCE itself can be considered a subject of “Church renewal” and how it has to revise its structures and its objectives. This follows the impulses of the document “The Shape and Shaping of Protestant Churches in a Changing Europe” (2006), which called CPCE “to present itself ever more clearly as a shape of the church of Jesus Christ” (1.6), and to consider “consequences which arise for the future shape of the CPCE from the dynamic use of the specifically Reformation *criteria* for the shape of the church, in view of its *ecumenical tasks* and the acceptance of the *challenges* posed by the process of European integration and transformation” (4.3).

m.friedrich@leuenberg.eu

Janine Paden Morgan

Reviving Ritual

In times of greater disequilibrium and dislocation, rituals become increasingly important as a means to anchor people in important living truths. In a contemporary world in which sensory experience is privileged over cognitive knowledge and community belonging over dogmatic belief systems, mission practitioners must recover the richness of multi-sensory Christian rituals as a means of forming believers and of attesting to outsiders the central tenets of faith. Rituals serve to promote the memory of central events, binding communities together, allowing people to experience truths rather than beyond that of cognitive acknowledgement.

However, ritualistic rituals are inadequate per se; they must be revised and revitalized to enable them to serve their purpose in a meaningful manner. In a recent study on the practice of the Lord's Supper in two self-described emerging churches in the U.K., I found that the ritual was more effective at promoting spiritual depth in one community than in the other. In this paper, I will report on those findings, while exploring the factors that allow rituals in worship to effectively promote spiritual formation and enrich meaning making. Missiologically speaking, this paper on worship is relevant to the Edinburgh 2010 discussions, for worship and missions will always go hand in hand -- the fulfilment of mission culminates when all the peoples of the world worship the living God.

JPM03C@ACU.EDU

Mogens S. Mogensen

Conversion in Denmark

In an increasingly globalised world multireligiosity becomes a significant aspect of the context of the church in Denmark. Whereas in the 19th and 20th century mission among Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, traditional worshippers etc was an activity carried out in remote areas in Africa and Asia by mission societies, mission in the 21st century is the challenge of the church here in Denmark.

In this multireligious situation where Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and secularised people live together in the Danish society, religions and their adherents invariably undergo changes, one of those changes being religious conversion. No only do some convert from Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism etc to Christianity, but even more convert to these other religions.

Religious conversion was part of one of the four core areas, "Religion in Transformation" of the Research Priority Area, "Religion in the 21st Century" at the University of Copenhagen. Also the Danish Pluralism Project at the University of Aarhus with its mapping of religious and spiritual groups in Denmark touched upon the issue of conversion in a number of its books. The aim of this paper, is to bring together the main results of all the research that has been carried out primarily in the 21st century regarding conversion and religious change in Denmark. Part of this research is published in "Dansk Konversionsforskning" (Århus: Forlaget Univers 2007), which I edited together with John Damsager.

The main headings of my paper will be

- Conversions in history
- Demography of conversions in Denmark
- Globalisation and Migration
- Encounters and Interactions
- Conversion and Danish-ness
- Conversion of religions?
- Conversion of the Conversion Concept?
- Conversion as a challenge to the church

mogensen@intercultural.dk

Naveen Rao

New Wine in New Wineskins

A Theoretical and Empirical study of Ecclesiology & Mission in Multi-religious India.

Ecclesiology leads to Mission, and mission seeks to establish ecclesia, this cycle is an essential aspect to discuss and to do research upon. This paper is one humble attempt in that direction.

European and American missions in India resulted in producing a replica of the home churches. In India the churches have “inherited” a tradition of ecclesia that has come with the mission. In other words, each mission resulted in the establishment of a particular kind of ecclesial system, a whole package of a distinct name, doctrines of baptism & Eucharist, nature of priesthood and administrative structure. Even though the context changed, from Euro-American to Indian, but it was still the old wine in old wineskins. It was like transporting to India a foreign plant in a foreign pot without its roots finding a contact with the soil of India.

[] the struggle within Christendom among denominations in the 19th century Europe is a piece of our inherited baggage that had landed in our lap along with the whole package of missionary establishment of a particular European Church on the Indian soil. Any missionary enterprise was not merely aimed at establishing a “Christian” church, but it always came with a qualified form of “Christina-ness”. The Christian-mission that came to India hardly brought with them a “pure gospel”, they brought into India one or the other form of “doctrinal gospel” coloured with the denominational doctrines along with an administrative structure... For example, at present in India there are at least four brands of Methodism – Wesleyan Methodist, Free Methodist, American Methodist, and Welch Methodist¹.

So in India all most of the ecclesial groups (read denominations) have their origin in Western countries- Europe and America. Historically speaking there should be hardly any other form of ecclesia except those which were brought in by the European and American missions. But this is not the whole story.

This paper is going to present a different aspect of mission and ecclesia that has emerged in the multi-religious context of India, beyond European American denominational Christianity.

nrltcjbp@gmail.com

¹ Naveen Rao, “Response to Mission & Ecumenism: An Opportunity and a Challenge” in *MISSION AND MINISTRY III: CHALLENGES FROM THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT*, D.K.Sahu (LTC, Jabalpur/ISPCK, Delhi: 2007):35-36

Jonas Idestrom

Space, Place and Practices – Studying Local Church Identity

A trend within ecclesiology is a turn to the historical and concrete church and its manifestations. It is a challenging, difficult and important turn that forces researches within ecclesiology to innovations in both theory and methods. One important challenge is: how can the complex reality of a local church in a pluralistic context, critically and constructively, be studied from an ecclesiological perspective? Within, what Nicholas M. Healy describes as, the new ecclesiologies there is a focus on ecclesial practices when studying the church as a social body.

In my paper I will draw on Healy's critic of the way the concept of practices is defined and used. I will show how the concept can be used with Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of social space to overcome some of its limitations. When ecclesial practices are studied and analyzed within a broader and more dynamic ecclesiological model new and important aspects of the concrete identity of the local church can be studied and analyzed. From a missiological perspective this opens up for new ways to understand and critically reflect over the relationships between church and other social bodies and agents at a local level. I have developed the ecclesiological model while conducting a field study within a local church in a suburb of Stockholm. In my paper I will give concrete examples of how such a model can be used when analyzing material from a local church that is situated in a pluralistic context.

JONAS.IDESTROM@TEOL.UU.SE

Issata Amara

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AFRICAN CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Christianity was brought by missionaries from Western Europe and North America, in the 19th century. These missionaries generally tried to set up local congregations and church organizations, but by the end of the 19th century many African Christians had formed independent denominations.

The United Nations decade for women, culminating in 1985 in Nairobi, and the ecumenical decade of churches in solidarity with women, launched by the World Council of Churches in 1988 and supported by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, are two recent signs of that awareness.

There are about thirty-seven member churches in Europe, most of which ordain women. Where ordination is possible, most other roles and responsibilities are open to women as well. They may serve as church secretaries, fund raisers, church school teachers, deacons, elders, pastors, members of theological faculties, and administrative leaders.

There are about forty-three member churches in Africa. More than half do not ordain women. Most church women serve as Sunday school teachers, church secretaries, custodians, deacons, manage and provide for social functions, sing in choirs, and, perhaps most significantly, raise money. There are organized women's associations which raise money for projects concerned with women's needs, but most funds raised are turned over to the leadership of the church, which invariably means **men**. Those churches which do ordain women, such as the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Presbyterian Church of Mozambique, Cameroon, and the **Methodist Church of Sierra Leone and other Born-Again Churches**, are moving slowly towards involving women in the total life of the denomination. **Generally speaking, however, women still remain invisible.**

issata_amara@yahoo.com

III

Chair: Kajsa Ahlstrand

Church in Cyberspace

This section contains papers examining the relationship between church, mission and the new media, especially the Internet. How do the new media affect the ways in which the church operates? What impact do secularization, globalization and multireligiosity have on the church in cyberspace? Does the Internet offer new alternatives to traditional approaches to mission? Can church and congregational communities be built in cyberspace? Both theoretical and empirical approaches are applied.

Peter Fischer-Nielsen

Pastors on the Internet

In this paper I will present the main results of a survey among 1,040 pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark. For the first time this survey maps the Danish pastors' Internet use and identifies their reflections on the medium.

The paper reveals three different approaches to the Internet: First of all, most pastors subscribe to the informational dimensions of the Internet, believing that the church can use the Internet to inform the public better through one-way communication. Less widespread is a second approach that focuses on the conversational and interactional aspects of the Internet and stresses the relational presence of the church. Finally, a minority of the pastors thinks that the Internet is suitable for the more ritual and spiritual dimensions of the church such as prayer and service. For these pastors cyberspace thus becomes an extension of the ritual space of the parish church.

I argue that the informational, the conversational and the church-oriented approaches to the Internet each can be seen as different answers to the main challenges of secularisation in late modern society: The weakened power of the church, the lower popular participation in church affairs and the plurality of other religious and non-religious choices.

I will conclude the paper by pointing to the possible consequences of the different Internet approaches. The informational approach might succeed in diffusing precise knowledge but will also constantly be challenged by the interactive and antiauthoritarian logic of the Internet. The conversational approach seems more on a par with the logic of the Internet but risks on the other hand in the dialogue to lose the clearness of the message. Finally, a church-oriented approach may over time be able to catch the Internet users' attention but raises on the other hand problematic issues concerning the bodyliness of the church.

pfn@teo.au.dk

Marco Ricceri

The Catholic Church and the media world Analysis and evaluation of an evolutionary process

How the Catholic Church deals with the effects produced by the mass-media revolution? After a brief introduction, in which are mentioned the main trends of contemporary scientific thought about the media revolution ("*apocalyptic*", "*integrated*", "*committed*"), the paper presents and analyzes in critical terms the evolutionary process made the Catholic Church: by reading the first papal encyclicals (1832, 1846, 1936, 1954), to the turn of Council Vatican II (1963) and the highly innovative interventions of the last Popes. It deals with a very complex process because marked by an approach to the issue of mass-media greatly diversified over time. We can indeed clearly distinguish a series of successive steps: a first phase, decidedly negative, in which the Church mostly emphasized the dangers and risks to the believers by the new communication media; a second phase, in which the Church has appealed the liability of the media producers; then a third phase, much more positive and marked by the turn of the Council Vatican II which highlighted the media as "*Inter Mirifica*," including them among the wonderful things that God gave humanity. Finally, a last phase, with the recognition and full acceptance of the role of media, in which the President of the Pontifical Council for Communications (Cardinal Foley, 2007) openly acknowledged "*a sin of omission*" in the attitude of Catholics towards the media and the Popes urged the believers to enter boldly into the network using the new forum - Internet, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter - to spread the Gospel (John Paul II, 2002), to face the challenges of "*info-ethics*" and "*info-poverty*", with a direct appeal to the role of young people as the new "*digital generation*" (Benedict XVI, 2008, 2009). The references to the documents published on occasion of the "*World Day for Social Communications*", organized annually by the Catholic Church since 1948, allow to add more knowledge elements about this evolutionary process. Finally, the paper draws the interesting elements of coincidence that currently exist between the new position of the Catholic Church towards the media world and the strategic project launched by European Union on this issue: that of "*Media Literacy*".

eurispes.intl-dept@libero.it

Jørgen Straarup

Pinocchio goes to church: The religious life of avatars

Once hanging from Gepetto's threads, Pinocchio has freed himself from the dependency of his former master. The avatars of virtual worlds such as Second Life are far behind the wooden fellow, still dependent upon their masters' mouse clicks.

Like Pinocchio, the avatars act as social beings, interacting, socializing, flirting, and going to church. Some even build their own church. In a community without geographical borders a prayer meeting may gather participants without concern for temporal and spatial limitations.

C Helland (2005) distinguishes between religion online (RO) and online religion (OR). RO denotes the situation in which organized religions (churches, congregations etc) establish a presence on the web, whereas the term OR refers to religious practices on the web. RO is linked to the attempts of established religious organizations to serve their actual and potential flock. Through RO a church may do missionary and evangelizing work, by being present offering guidance when web users look for answers. OR, on the other hand, might be seen as a kind of bottom-up religion not necessarily controlled by organized religion.

L Woodhead & P Heelas (2000, 2005) have suggested a subjective turn of religion in the West, from "life-as" to "subjective-life" forms of the sacred, i.e. religion giving way to spirituality. However, among avatars in the kingdom of subjectivity, the virtual worlds, one may observe a significant turn towards collectivity. Avatars seem to seek out religious community and even communion, participating in prayer meetings and services, thereby showing a willingness to accept a certain, pre-defined, "life-as" form of spirituality.

I will discuss whether avatar religiosity, seen as a culmination of the subjective turn, is an avant-garde turning back to its origins, "life-as", and "religion-as". If so, it will have obvious consequences for organized religion, for church and mission.

jorgen.straarup@religion.umu.se

Christian Grund Sørensen

Aspects of ethos and credibility in Christian presence in Cyberspace

Entering an entirely different media-landscape, the “City on a Hill” is no longer primarily the physical Church or its institutions. The most noticeable lights often come from presentations in interactive hypermedia (Gibson`s “Cyberspace”) or similar presentations mediated non-orally.

At the same time, postmodern (or late modern) secularism, relativism and criticism has eroded the foundations of most institutions in society, including the Church. Accordingly, the Church is once again “in the marketplace” (George Carey) and must acquire credibility with each individual through public information, communication and presence (alongside the classic cleric virtues of ministry).

These new conditions for communication are a challenge for contemporary ecclesiastical information design. However, some of these challenges have been sought answered in secular traditions, from which the Church should acquire inspiration.

Two theories stand out: First, the classical rhetorical framework, which has sprung to new life in the “new-rhetoric” of a.o. Stephen Toulmin and in Denmark Jørgen Fafner. In classical rhetoric the importance of a personal ethos with the speaker is often stressed. But others (a.o. by Philipp Melanchthon) stressed the importance of a profound ethos also in topology and argument.

In a postmodern, post-institutional, post-authority culture, the latter aspect of rhetorical ethos seems crucial.

Second, the theories of “Captology” og “Persuasive Design” presented in recent years by a.o. B.J.Fogg of Stanford University (in “Persuasive Technology”, New York 2003). The PD-theories stress the role of credibility in the act of communicating. The aim of any communication is, according to these theories, to helping bring about change in the thoughts and actions of people. From an ecclesiastical point of view this is much in line with the traditional concept of culturally relevant mission.

The aim of this paper would be to outline inspiration from both of these theoretical frameworks to the Church, as well as applying a critical evaluation to both possible inspirations and problematic assumptions.

cgs@km.dk

Nick Pollard and Øyvind Økland

Christian organizations' positioning in the new communication landscape

The new media has opened up the communication landscape to unprecedented proportions and given new perspectives to the meaning of communication itself. Christian organizations have to some degree taken this into account. This study will discuss a model for how to describe different possible positions in this new communication landscape. The underlying problem statement will be “what does the mediatization of society mean to Christian groups' quest for reaching out to young people with their message and how can different positions be explained”?

The study will give an outline of recent developments in the postmodern communication landscape, and by a few examples, try to present a new model of how different organizations may perceive themselves within this landscape.

Stig Hjarvard's theory on the mediatization of society will function as an underlying theory, supplemented with other media theorists' emphasis on the relationship between the media, religion and culture.

The general discussion within Christianity about how to relate to the media will be dealt with, as well as discussing new possible ways of looking at the media within a communication perspective. Should the media be regarded as a threat, a possibility for evangelization, or just a way of relating and dialoguing with young people?

The study will discuss the new forms of communication, such as blogging, networking societies such as for example Facebook, video sharing sites such as YouTube, MySpace and so on. This will be related to some examples of how they are applied by Christian organizations, and how this is a part of positioning them in a landscape, based on the suggested model.

oyvind.okland@mediehogskolen.no

Jan Górski

MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN MULTIMEDIAL CONTEXT

Undertaking the topic of preaching the Gospel in the context of a complex multicultural and multireligious reality using technological developments we touch two theological disciplines: missiology and theology of mass-media. Their interrelation has been already outlined in the Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council and then deepened in John Paul II's teaching, specially in *Redemptoris mission* (1990).

My proposal of lecture contents of the following points:

1. Topicality of an evangelizing mission
2. Multidimensionality of the context.
3. Technology for evangelisation
4. Pastoral implications for mission.

jangor@katowice.opoka.org.pl

Stefan Gelfgren

Christian Entrepreneurs: Creativity in Virtual Churches

When Church moves into Cyberspace new functions and roles appear. This paper aims at exploring and analysing the role of the Christian entrepreneur in a virtual context, here more specifically in the three dimensional virtual world of Second Life.

The Internet is many times perceived as an open, non-hierarchical and democratic tool for many-to-many communication. Anyone can contribute to the content on Internet, and anyone can use his or her ability to, for example, form a Church and gather a congregation. That is the case also in our physical world, but is more noticeable in virtual worlds, where technical means and digital culture (founded on user created content, sharing and creativity) shape and re-shape religious faith and practices.

What happens when the cultures of the Internet meet and intertwine with the more traditional and hierarchical structures of the Church? The ground between traditional Churches on one hand, and digital technology and culture on the other creates a breeding ground for Christian entrepreneurship. Can the creative “Church building” entrepreneur have a special role which relates to digital technology and culture? How does this role (if so) relate to the position of the Church in the physical world? Are there special possibilities and/or restrictions related to either the digital or the “analogous” Church? Are there consequences when churches and clerical structures are challenged by individual initiatives?

There are examples where Churches and denominations in the physical world are represented in virtual worlds through a clear link. At the same time there are many different individual “Church building” initiatives – some of them related to established Churches, and some of them are purely individual projects.

This paper focuses on three different virtual Christian communities and their creators, each of them with different character, in order to explore how and why entrepreneurs create spaces for worship. One central issue is to examine how their activities relate to the three dimensional virtual world as media.

stefan.gelfgren@humlab.umu.se

Victor Counted

Managerial aspects of Cyberspace

The researcher has undertaken this study principally because of its ubiquitous abiding interest, significance, and increasing attention among Church leaders. This study is an attempt to find out the new scope of the Internet Church, by reviewing the impact and impartation of this revolution, and its move beyond the realm of fiction to reality.

Upon this background, the question this paper tries to answer is the problem of management, the managerial aspect of the Cyberspace (Internet). How does this technology-footed machine be changed from been a “war-machine” to an evangelistic occupied machine - for world change? Though trying to answer this question, the researcher looked at the Cyberspace as a medium to reach *other utmost parts of the world*, because there is a new world forming on its own – which is the *Cyberworld*.

While many books have been written on Computer Education, the 21st Century Church, Christian Education, the Virtual Church and Missions, few authors have attempted to articulate the biblical and philosophical background for Internet Evangelism (Cybermission). From these, the researcher attempts to address the *legitimacy of the Internet Church*, and highlighted why the Church must work hand in hand with *Cybermissionaries* in propagating the Kingship of God on earth through *Cybermission*.

The researcher used the secondary methods of data collection for this work, and extensively reviewed related literatures to bring out a wide range of scholarly views on the subject matter. Some Bible passages were examined, in which some important philosophical, theological, biblical and practical issues were raised as concerns doing *Cybermission*. This however, was to guide and charge Christians all over the world to do Internet Evangelism, and establishing ways we can use this revolutionary device effectively as an innovative tool to traditional approach to mission, which must be done by Christians at all level at their own spare times. Thereby emphasizing that this workforce could help accelerate the growth of God’s Kingdom here on earth, by using the Cyberspace to reach the *unreached*, and then engraft these converts to a local Church near them for further edification. This is because a local church provides that Fresh Word, right administration of Sacraments, and the exercise of Church discipline, which an Internet Church can never provide. However, the crux of it all is that the Internet does not teach values rather, we are to instill the Wisdom of God into this system because, when values are disregarded our very humanity is demeaned and man easily loses sight of his transcendent Infinite Creator.

Therefore, the training of Cybermissionaries is a necessity for the Church, so that it can curb the ill winds of Cyberspace.

In view of the foregoing, here lies a clarion call to wake up to our responsibility, and grasp this concept of *Cybermission*, which must be instilled through teaching *Cybermissiology or Cybermission Science* that investigates the mandate, message and work of a *Cybermissionary*; and training *Cybermissionaries* that will invade and penetrate the Cyberspace with the Gospel of Lord Jesus Christ. These however, must be done diligently in righteousness so that the people of God will be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. counted@graduate.org

IV

Chair: Mika Vähäkangas

The Future of Missiology

In this section all papers examine the future of the academic discipline of missiology. What is the role and place of missiology as an academic discipline within the parlance of theological studies? In what way can missiology integrate - or be integrated into - the variety of theological disciplines? When mission is transforming should missiology also be transforming?

Jonas Adelin Jørgensen

The Future of Missiology

On a global level it has become increasingly difficult to isolate our understanding of the nature and purpose of Christian missions from the reality of other religious traditions. Therefore this paper argues that the missiological study of Christian missions must include not only theological perspectives on the interaction between Christianity and other religions but also historical and social understandings of other religious traditions. The methodological intention is to open up theological reflection to the historical and cultural realities which other religions constitute in a fruitful way. The paper identifies five interrelated dimensions in the mission encounter between Christianity and other religious traditions. These five dimensions are: the apologetic, the hermeneutical, the criteriological, the dogmatic, and the practical dimension of Christian missions. Through a correlation of these dimensions the paper offers an analytical reconstruction of missiology as an academic discipline.

jaj@teol.ku.dk

Elleni Mekasha Jemaneh

The Future of Missiology. A case study on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Today only 33% of all people consider themselves Christian. In addition it is estimated that 28% of the world's population has still not heard the Gospel in a way that they can respond to it affirmatively or negatively. In other words over 1.8 billion people today have not been presented with the Gospel message. In order that the Gospel may be preached to those who have yet to here, by necessity there will need to be strategic efforts by people who will reach across these cultural and geographic boundaries.

As far as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is concerned, there are no clear information regarding missiological activities and strategies, indicating a minimality of missiological activities. For many, the fact that the Orthodox Church is or ever has been involved in missionary work is not known. In some cases it is even seen when people wonder if the Orthodox Church do missionary works. As a result, being a traditional, long aged doctrine and belief and being part of this competitive religion (Christianity) having no or minimal missiological activities is a danger in a way that questions its continuity.

As a result, through collection of data from different concerned bodies of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (and may be abroad), assessing the need of missiology and its trend along with its features so as to provide information that back up the importance of missiology to the religion would be the main objective of the study.

The study after being completed would therefore contribute much to the features of missiology in a way that the strategies and solutions to be forwarded would not only help the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's missionary strategies but also those other countries with the same problem.

ellujem@yahoo.com

Retief Muller

The God of Rain, the God of English, and the Future of Missiology

If missiology's past is intertwined with the colonial missionary movement, it only makes sense that its future be married to the post-colonial context of global Christianity. Just as missiology was the discipline that studied and theologically reflected upon the missionary contexts of yesteryear, so the contemporary context of global Christianity needs a critically reflective missiology to accompany it. This is particularly necessary in the light of the increasingly heterogeneous nature of Christianity as a world religion.

I will make the point that in this process there remains a place for cross-cultural engagement, indeed that cross-cultural engagement is one of the best ways of getting a picture of this heterogeneous context. Contrary to the lopsided cross-cultural encounters of old, the approach that I favor is primarily characterized by learning, and only secondary by teaching.

This paper will present two examples from personal cross-cultural experience: 1) some Southern African Christians continue to see close connections between God and rain, both as a symbol and a life-giving resource. 2) In some Korean churches there is a tendency to synthesize Christian worship and English study. This is perhaps a natural synthesis in that both Christianity and English might be conceived of as world opening resources at the very basic level.

Yet what are the connections, if any, between praying for rain in Africa, and praying for English in Korea? Given that both occur in the context of contemporary global Christianity this is one of the questions that could impact the future of missiology. In reference to these two examples I will make some suggestions for how missiology could continue to be of service to theological studies in general. Indeed, missiology could once again be at the cutting edge of theological research.

retief.muller@ptsem.edu

Peter Geel

Religious Pluralism and Christian Missions After the End of Religions: Breaking Free from European Universalism, Secularized Religion, and Enforced Homogeneity

Beginning with the Protestant Reformation the western world has witnessed an unfolding historical process by which our modern, western conceptions of religion and religions developed. Whereas religious diversity was formerly measured along patristic heresiological lines, it is now conceptualized by the concretization of self-contained, approximately equivalent units called “religions”. The process by which this shift occurred was intertwined with secularism's rise and the West's emerging sense of trans-historical self-perception. The conceptual shifts that these changes have entailed have had a profound effect on the Church, largely in the direction of undercutting the theoretical grounds for missions and evangelism.

In this paper, I trace the historical development of the western sense of para-religious understanding of religions and the domestication of religions by way of their secularization. I then consider the regime of enforced homogeneity which has been built around these conceptual arrangements and has become the standard for our emerging global, multi-religious denominationalism. From there, I move on to look at how the theoretical understandings occasioned by these conceptual arrangements have been appropriated by Christian theologians, especially those who focus on the question of religious pluralism. I argue that to the degree that these categories which structure contemporary perceptions are accepted, the foundations for Christian missions erode. I will conclude with a theological consideration of how the Church might move away from the secular-normative understanding of religion and religions and into the constellation of genuinely biblical categories. Thus a more comprehensive Christian worldview might be established and the future of missions might be set on more secure theological and theoretical footing.

pjgeel@gmail.com / pjg39@georgetown.edu

Ursula Glienecke

Hallowed be Thy Name Images of God and the Future of Missiology

The way we understand mission and its tasks is closely related to our images of God. The time-honoured approach to mission and the exclusivist understanding of evangelism implies highly problematic images of God. The most destructive among them portray God as a merciless judge condemning the majority of humankind to eternal torture or annihilation.

Negative, destructive and "demonic" images, as Karl Frielingsdorf calls them, not only cause psychological suffering, they frequently alienate people from God and religion altogether these images have driven humanity into the deepest abyss of our existence, namely the assumption that violence and war are God's will.¹ It can be hoped that embracing less aggressive images of God could not only improve our relationship to non-Christian religions, it could have a positive impact on the way we treat each other in general.

As evangelical and charismatic groups continue their missionary activities based on an exclusivist understanding of salvation and the problematic image of God that goes with it, the state of the world makes it more and more pressing to find alternative, healing, freeing and truly empowering images of God.

The paper reflects on destructive images of God, including their development, background and biblical reference, and then goes on to explore the positive images that could transform our lives and our missionary activities.

ursula@glienecke.de

¹ Hanna Wolff, *Neuer Wein- Alte Schläuche. Das Identitätsproblem Des Christentums Im Lichte Der Tiefenpsychologie.* Stuttgart: Radius- Verlag GmbH, 1981, p. 176-177.

Thor Strandenæs

**“Reclaiming God’s Presence in the Secular City:
How may the Church offer Festivals, Rituals, and Worship
Opportunities which relevantly and adequately correspond with
the Lives and Needs of Citizens in Urban Societies?”**

The traditional agrarian calendar, represented in Norway by the so-called “Primstav”, listed the times/dates for important agricultural events as well as those relating to the church year. Thus a calendar of secular and religious events and festivals was established. Since the life cycle rites (baptismal, confirmation, matrimony and funeral) were of a more individual nature they were of supplementary nature to the Primstav. Thus the traditional, agriculturally based society lived in a rhythm where the seasons in nature were interfaced with events in the church. Secular and religious life was coordinated. When society became more industrialized, less oriented toward the rhythm of the farmers, and more attuned to the life and situation of more or less secular city dwellers, what happened then to the role of the religious calendar and how were the inhabitants of the cities influenced by its events? Although many of the agrarian festivals lost their significance for those whose life was based in the city they were nonetheless influenced by the turn of the seasons and the life cycle. Thus, whereas ‘the death of God’ (Friedrich Nietzsche) led to secularization and should, as a result, logically be followed by *The Secular City* (Harvey Cox, 1965),¹ the development in recent decades has shown that, far from disappearing, religion has been transformed and found new ways of existing in the secular city – as also attested by Harvey Cox (*Fire from Heaven*, 1994).² This also includes Christian festivals and rituals relating to seasons and the life cycle.

This paper addresses the question, of how the church in its mission can reclaim the presence of God in a society, where the role of public religion is diminishing, by offering such festivals, rituals and opportunities for worship to citizens in urban societies which relevantly and adequately correspond with their lives and needs. Following a presentation of historical and cultural context the paper proceeds by analyzing the lives and needs of the citizens and by proposing relevant and adequate festivals, rituals and worship opportunities.

thor.strandenaes@mhs.no

¹ Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective*, New York: Mac-Millan, 1965.

² Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven : the Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, Reading, Mass. : Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1994.

Pa Hrang Hmung

Chins Diaspora mission

Introduction

The people of the Chin tribe is a territory surrounded by Myanmar. Manipur on the south, Mizoram in the west and the Bangladesh in the northwest.

A brief Note on the Background of Missionary works

The Chin people had been scattered and domiciled in various states and divisions of Myanmar and at the present some place of the world. Some of them are government servants and others are business people and as such, they got dispersed and resided at various places.

Having had difficulties in understanding local language, or in some cases, having met some difficulties as regards local customs and cultures, and also confronted with various modes of faith and order, some of the Chins kept aloof by themselves from any church. Besides, some of them had been inticed by other denominations to join them and eventually they had to withdraw, from their original church membership and joined the nearest church from their original church membership and joined the nearest church of any other denomination. Those who does joined other denominations this wise, were not few by any means.

In order to regard these Chin Christians brethren and with the objectives to make them I to hardcore members in evangelizing the people of Myanmar, the Chin Diaspora Mission had been born.

The Great plan

Objective: To engender the becoming of all dispersed Chins in Myanmar and some place of the world as symbols of God's evangel (Good News).

Aims: All dispersed Chins throughout the length and breadth of Myanmar and other places be unified and that they have fellowship with one another in Christ. To let the scattered Chins who are actually lost souls won over the enjoy the Grace of true salvation. In order that the Chin people as diasporas may grow spiritually in to maturity, eventually capable of leading local churches. So that the Chin Diasporas, whatever they reside, may carry on the missionary torch and relay them to their posterity.

Name: Chins Diaspora mission

Theme: You are My witness

Methodology: Missionaries are to be sent out to preach the good news with effective nurturing and spiritually strengthening those who had been converted the Disapora Chin Converts are to be encouraged to form up local churches. To urges them to become regional Association. The churches thus formed should be relied upon bases for further missionary work.

phhmung@gmail.com

Berge Traboulsi

The Decline of Christian Presence in a Multiconfessional Lebanon: Missions vs. Visions

This paper is primarily concerned with the decline of Christian presence and influence in Lebanon –the only country in the Middle East where Christians and Muslims co-retain political power based on the principle of political and confessional parity, granted by the constitution. The endorsement of the National Reconciliation Accord (known as the *Taif* Agreement) in 1989 has terminated a long period of Christian Maronite pre-eminence which they had since Lebanon's independence in 1943, by transferring some of the power from the Maronite President to the Sunni Prime Minister, and militarily by disbanding their paramilitary militias. This radical change has left not only the Maronites, but also the Christians, in general, in a state of disillusionment and has turned them into a large minority with various economic and social problems, pushing many to choose emigration as a solution to their problems. The Maronites have often mixed between politics and religion; their existence as a socio-religious community depends on their political roles. Unlike the Maronites, the other Christian communities, mainly the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholics, were not officially involved in Lebanon's political quarrels; the religious leaders had to show flexibility in dealing with the various political positions with whom their people affiliate. The Armenians and the Protestants have always taken a political neutrality stand. On the socio-religious level, critical questions are asked about the missions and visions of those churches and leaders who do not practice evangelism; their private universities, schools and hospitals are being for-profit businesses rather than being missionary institutions. This paper will discuss why the Lebanese Christian communities are losing ground, focusing on some problematic political, social, and religious factors.

berge.traboulsi@haigazian.edu.lb

Jean-Paul A. Heldt

Six years of teaching ESL/TESOL in China as an effective and promising form of missionary engagement in an age of secularization and globalization: Missiological opportunities, socio-cultural constraints, and future prospects for para-church tentmakers in CAA (Creative Access Areas).

With the spread of Communism and the resurgence of Muslim fundamentalism, the role of missionary schools has seen a steady decline as the 20th century progressed. With the advent of secularization and globalization, however, and the emergence of English as the dominant world language, there has been an increasing demand for native-speaking English teachers from countries in Europe (UK, Ireland), North America (USA, Canada), and Oceania (New Zealand, Australia). What is the role, if any, of Christian language teachers in the fulfillment of the Great Commission in "*Creative Access Areas*" (China, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, etc.), where many denominational schools have been either closed, or taken over by their respective governments?

This paper argues for a continued, even expanding, role in such creative access areas for foreign Christian teachers as just another form and strategy for missionary engagement in a context of globalization and predominantly secular environment. The author analyzes current opportunities, describes existing constraints, and explores future prospects for this unexpected, yet exciting, avenue for sharing the good news alongside teaching ESL (and, of course, other subject matters) in so-called "closed" countries where traditional missionaries and evangelistic activities are typically banned (ABWE 2007; Armstrong 2008; Culbertson 2002; OC International 2008).

jpheldt123@yahoo.com.

Dagfinn Solheim

The Future of Missiology and Models of Evangelical Theological Education

(Religion - mission – church)

Some historical lessons:

Weaknesses inherent in theological education – from the colonial period:

From ethnocentricity to “in and for the context”. A paradigm shift in theological education: toward an incarnational theology, African Christian Theology – contextual theology.

From academical toward contextual, practical and relational theology.

Analysis of Ecumenical Theological Education

A paradigm shift in theological education in Asia and Africa. From Eurocentric theology to relevant African theology: incarnational, contextual. Also addressing the issues like poverty, ethnicity, HIV/AIDS etc.

A critique of existing models (from Asia): the university model, the banking model, the residential model. From these models there is an ecumenical move towards “Theological Education together with People”.

Evangelical Voices and Institutions - New evangelical models?

From Eurocentric to contextual and holistic mission - Gospel and society, evangelism and social work – where is our emphasis and how do they relate. Focus on church and society (culture, religion, poverty...).

Academic and relational. Three main emphases in evangelical theological education: Academic, practical (skills), and spiritual.

Institutional or extension...

The Curriculum:

- Biblical studies (missional hermeneutics, systematics, historical, practical)
- Missiology (God’s mission), cultural studies (cultural, local and relational), multi-faith society
- What about: HIV/AIDS, poverty, discrimination, Liberation theology, the environment. Towards a theology of development (Amanze)? Ethnicity, peace and reconciliation, conflict resolution, politics (Kairos document).
- Relevance to ministerial formation and training of the laity

Common Concerns and Differences between ecumenical and evangelical?

1. Contextual – plurality not relativism,
2. Relationship between the Kingdom of God and the Church. (Matt 28 and Luk 4). Conversion and transformation.
3. Method: proclamation, dialogue and social work (politics?). Is there a primary task? Healing or salvation. Commitment or “interested theology” – “speak on behalf of “
4. What is the goal: the Body of Christ (Church) or a new society (role of God’s people – role of humanity? Salvation or ethics – how do they relate? The People of God – for the sake of the nations. Eschatology – and the Kingdom of God at hand (Jes 65) – a paradox and challenge.

What is God’s “telos” for the world? And what is the purpose of theology

dsolheim@nlm.no

Posters

This section contains papers that will be presented as posters.

Joop Vernooij

ECCLESIOGENESIS AND MIGRATION

The case of the Netherlands

The number of migrants in the Netherlands is 1.5 million, 6 % of the population. In the luggage and baggage of migrants are their religions, languages, and cultures. This is changing the religious landscape in Holland. Half of the migrants is Christian, another half is Muslim, Hindu and others. That is challenging for the Christian churches. Our point of view is that the migrants and their religions can help the Christian churches to grow in depth, predominantly qualitatively. We are concentrating on the Christian churches, especially the Roman-Catholic and the PKN (the Protestantse Kerk in Nederland, a structural combination of reformed, Lutheran and Calvinists in the Netherlands).

2. First of all we have to present the actual situation of migration, the religious affiliation and the public domain. We have to explain the situation of the Islam in the Netherlands and the political implications (for example the political party: Partij for Freedom and Fitna). We can explain the assessing religious situation.

3. Further we have to sketch the Church's trials till now on this field of migration, like the development of Cura Migratorum (R.C.), the SKIN (Together Churches in the Netherlands), statements and booklets on this subject from R.C. side as well of the Protestant side.

4. We can give an insight in the problematic situation in the society: the churches concerning secularisation, rationalism, individualism, and the churches as reflections of the society. We have to underline the positive elements of this new lifestyle, and the way the society is travelling by multi-cultural and interreligious issues.

5. That needs an appropriate and new concept on the church as a theological issue, and as a socio-cultural complex, for example: the Bible (texts of Exodus 23,9, Matt. 25.35, Ps. 17, 2-3); Good News of Jesus, the option for the poor and liberation in a globalising context; the theology of migration or migrants theology; the church and her political responsibility and spirituality; a church fighting inequality, marginalisation and discrimination; a church of martyrs; Missio Dei in a church, a stranger and more and more unfamiliar in the society.

6. We can give a sketch of the priorities in this process, the resistance and the handicaps, inside and outside the churches. But also the possibilities of a process of change, in the fields of kerugma, ethics, pastoral, liturgy, catechesis, diaconia and, koinonia, in short the mission of migration..

7. We give attention to distribute these new ideas within the churches and outside. How we can clarify for the society the new possibilities and the necessary implications for pastoral approaches. The churches can help the society to reformulate multi-culturality and inter-religiosity.

J.VERNOOIJ@VODAFONEVAST.NL

Ursula Glienecke

Developing a Dialogical Understanding of Mission in the WCC

It was Wilfred Cantwell Smith who described the growing necessity to cope with a religiously plural world as a current that is about to become a flood.¹ This is because social, political, economic and cultural changes have turned our planet into a 'global village'.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has been aware of the challenges posed by religious plurality for a long period of time. Among the issues that were being raised no one has been of greater significance than the bitter controversy over the understanding of mission and evangelism.² The ongoing debate about this particular point gave rise to consent and substantial disagreement alike, both from outside and from within the WCC itself.³ To this day, many Christians are of the opinion that the new understanding of mission in terms of inter-religious dialogue and collaboration in areas of peace and justice amounts to nothing less than a betrayal of Christ.

The paper shows the development of the new dialogical approach to mission within the WCC by using the main conferences and their findings to this topic as milestones.

ursula@glienecke.de

¹ Smith, William C., *The Christian in a Religiously Plural World*, in Hick, John and Hebblethwaite, eds. *Christianity and other Religions*, Collins, Glasgow, 1980, p. 87 quoted in Ariarajah, Wesley, *Hindus and Christians. A Century of Protestant Ecumenical thought, Currents of Encounter Vol. 5*, Editions Rodopi, Amsterdam, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1991, p. 3.

² Ariarajah, Wesley, *Hindus and Christians. A Century of Protestant Ecumenical thought, Currents of Encounter Vol. 5*, Editions Rodopi, Amsterdam, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1991, p. 6.

³ Van Lin, Jan, *Shaking the fundamentals. Religious Plurality and Ecumenical Movement*, Rodopi B.V., Amsterdam, New York, 2002, p. 9.

Ursula Glienecke

Three Views on Religious Pluralism

In order to appreciate diverging concepts of Christian mission we are required to take a closer look at the underlying idea about religious pluralism. Three basic positions are possible:

- **Exclusivism** takes as a matter of fact that "there is only one true religion."¹ Christian exclusivists regard the central tenets of the Christian faith as exclusively true and repudiate conflicting views held by other religions as per se false and misleading.² They also consider Jesus Christ to be the only incarnation of God and the only Saviour and Lord. Salvation is not to be found in other religions. This position is most characteristic among evangelicals.
- **Inclusivism** holds that God has revealed himself most fully in Jesus Christ and that Christ is central to the salvation of humankind, but it also concedes "that God's salvation is available through non-Christian religions."³
This is the position most closely associated with the Second Vatican Council and especially Karl Rahner's thinking (later modified by H.R. Schlette, R. Panikkar, A. Camps and others).
- **Pluralism** (or relativism, also called the mutuality model or the acceptance model⁴) could be defined as: "there are several true religions without one being superior to all others."⁵ It can also be described as soteriocentric⁶ or *theocentric*.⁷ The most reputable proponents of the pluralistic position are John Hick, Paul Knitter and Dan-Cohn Sherbock (from a Jewish point of view).⁸

The paper surveys the historical development that shaped each position, discusses their theological foundations by introducing the most prominent theological proponents and examines the current state of the discussion as well as its impact on the understanding of mission.

ursula@glienecke.de

¹ Christian Danz, Einführung in die Theologie der Religionen, Lehr- und Studienbücher zur Theologie, Vol 1, LIT Verlag, Wien, 2005, p. 53.

² "where the claims of Christianity conflict with those of other religions the latter are to be rejected as false." (Netland, dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth (Leicester 1991) p. 9f) in Dr Daniel Strange, Christian uniqueness, the challenge of pluralism and the 'theology of religions', <http://www.uccf.org.uk/yourcourse/rtsf/docs/christianuniqueness.pdf> 29.05.2006.

³ Netland, dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth (Leicester 1991) p. 9f) in Dr Daniel Strange, Christian uniqueness, the challenge of pluralism and the 'theology of religions', <http://www.uccf.org.uk/yourcourse/rtsf/docs/christianuniqueness.pdf> 29.05.2006.

⁴ S.B. Bevans and R.P. Schroeder, constants in Context, p. 380.

⁵ M. Hüttenhoff, Der religiöse Pluralismus als Orientierungsproblem, s. 29f quoted in Danz, Einführung in die Theologie der Religionen, p. 53.

⁶ S.B. Bevans and R.P. Schroeder, constants in Context, p. 380.

⁷ Mäkelä p. 170.

⁸ Dr Daniel Strange, Christian uniqueness, the challenge of pluralism and the 'theology of religions', <http://www.uccf.org.uk/yourcourse/rtsf/docs/christianuniqueness.pdf> 29.05.2006; Millard J. Erickson, How Shall They Be Saved? The Destiny of Those Who do not Hear of Jesus, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1996, p. 85.

Prof. Federico D'Agostino, Ph.D. Prof. of Sociology. Univ. Rome III

Thinking about natural law and universal ethics through the prism of cultures in the age of religious pluralism

The focus of the paper is about a hermeneutics of natural law and universal ethics in the light of scientific progress in the area of biology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and ethics and through the spectrum of cultural and religious pluralism.

The concept of natural law has medieval connotation especially on the grounds of sacralisation of nature being the depository of revelation and divine law. The enlightenment has brought to a process of secularization of nature and to a splitting between natural and spiritual sciences and to the separation of the body from the cosmos and the disenchantment of the sacred space,time.

There is a new reflection today on the base of the human rights declaration and of the bioethics in order to develop a universal ethics elaborated through a common ground and space found among the religions and cultures; also a new hermeneutics of the human nature could lead us to discovery a common ethical script for new international relations. The role played by the monotheistic religions and the contributions of Hinduism, African religions, Confucianism, Buddhism and different forms of popular religions can open new horizons of peace in the world.

f.dagostino@uniroma3.it

Helen Keevers

Survivors of child sexual abuse by clergy – Part of the problem or part of the solution?

This presentation explores a collaborative approach to working with victims of child sexual abuse by church personnel. The approach draws on the wisdom of those directly affected in designing healing programs.

In all likelihood, all churches face the possibility that within their institution there exist cases of historical child sexual abuse by church personnel. For some churches this has been a more public issue than for others. However, reaction to survivors who come forward by church officials of any faith is often remarkably similar. No matter what environment we create to receive them, survivors are retraumatized by the experience of disclosure. When their experience is one of being disbelieved and demonized by church officials and faith communities this retraumatization is exponentially compounded. We also risk their wellbeing when we take over their healing process, when we assume we know best for them and prescribe finite, time limited solutions. The approach outlined in this presentation is based on the knowledge that the effects of child sexual abuse are lifelong and there is no “one size fits all” solution for addressing the damage caused. It explores the need to engage with both the presenting adult and the damaged child within. When approached with respect and openness, survivors are able to articulate their own needs for recovery and can provide wisdom and direction for programs seeking to address the effects of this trauma.

helen-keevers@netspace.net.au

Marianne Søndergaard

Christianity in the Third Millennium

The era of Christianity is approaching its end. Traditional Christianity has problems everywhere in attracting new believers. The world is more and more on a post-Christian, secular heading.

Dogmatic Christianity is out of pace with the evolution of human consciousness and simply no longer fits the postmodern world view. Traditional Christianity belongs to a level of consciousness, that was relevant in the past.

It is important to acknowledge, that Christianity is basically a process. It began with a turn-over of ancient Israel's understanding of God (which was in itself a monotheistic turn-over of even older polytheistic belief-systems). If we want Christianity to be a part of our future, we must accept this process and keep it alive - even when it means letting go of old beliefs and interpretations.

This paper focuses on some of the most important areas of change.

* Christianity must acknowledge and develop the spirituality of the present time which concerns itself with a commitment for social justice, protection of the environment, and a global ecumenism.

* After many years of focusing on the supernatural, the church needs to help people find God in the phenomenal, natural world.

* Christianity should not focus so much on *what* we are (i.e. fallen sinners) - but on *what we might become* - our divine potential.

* It needs to transcend the magical / mythical level of consciousness, that is totally outdated in our day and age. We need a theology, that can speak to the whole universe, not only the personal ego.

* Christianity must address the issues that arise between faith and science.

Christianity has a potential for development, that you cannot find in any other religion. It is a profoundly deep and dynamical religion, but it can only reveal its deep truths to people of sufficient spiritual maturity and a level of consciousness, that transcends the former magical / mythical levels. The church will only survive, if it meets these challenges.

info.booking@mail.dk

Massoud Fouroozandeh

Church of Love - mission to new Danes

"Love is the only power that can change an enemy into a friend."

Martin Luther King

"As the flame exists by burning, so does the Church exist by mission."

Emil Brunner

The demography of Europe has changed, and therefore our evangelical strategy must also change to keep pace with time. There are approximately 25 million Muslims in Europe today and about 4.5 % of the Danish population is new Danes with a Muslim background.

Right now we have a historical opportunity to bring the message of love out to our new friends in a country, where the law doesn't punish us for doing it. Our understanding of dialogue is not necessarily a religious compromise. Therefore Church of Love works out of love in a directed effort to bring the gospel out - primarily to the new Danes, but as time goes by, more and more "old Danes" are joining us, too.

Church of Love has become an ecumenical, multicultural church with a special focus on mission. A mission, that touches people socially, culturally and spiritually.

massoud@mohabat.net

Sharon K. Hermanson

Mission, Church and an Aging Population in the Third Millennium: Opportunities and Challenges

The world is aging. Globally, the number of persons aged 60 or over is expected to almost triple, increasing from 739 million in 2009 to 2 billion by 2050. In addition, two-thirds (65%) of the world's older persons live in the less developed regions -- by 2050, 79 per cent will do so.¹ In regions with high longevity rates, the number of older persons surpassed the number of children dropped over a decade ago.²

These statistics raise questions and reflect existing dilemmas for the Church and her *missio Dei*. Two of the primary opportunities include to: engage older persons and their wisdom, talents, and gifts, and; seek out persons, well into later life, who have not been involved in Christian life of koinonia. Yet, the challenges for the Church in its approach are many. How does the Church achieve relevancy in its mission, while staying true to the Word, to a cohort who does not have the same perspective as their parents regarding the Church – to a cohort that is more diverse, more multireligious, more skeptical of religion than their parents ever were. In cultures in which the vitality of youth overshadows the experience of age, many congregations have placed themselves in a perilous position of focusing on mission to attracting the younger generation, at the expense of their older members. Lastly, what are the Church's missional diakonia responsibilities as it experiences increasing numbers of person who are home-bound, frail, immobile?

This paper identifies and examines both the missional opportunities and challenges for the Church, through the commission of *missio Dei* and its three elements³ – diakonia, koinonia, and kerygma -- as it responds to the changing demographics of its congregations in the third millennium.

sharon.hermanson@schweiz.org

¹ United Nations Report

² 1998, according to http://www.tiresias.org/accessible_ict/ageing_population/statistics.htm

³ As Bosch (2006) documents, at the 1947 Whitby meeting of the International Missionary Council (IMC) (1947) the terms *kerygma* (proclamation) and *koinonia* (fellowship) were used to summarize the church's mission, and soon, thereafter, *diakonia* (service) was added. The author acknowledges that two additional elements are sometimes included: *martyria* (witness) and *leitourgia* (liturgy). The three-fold approach is used for this thesis, as it is both most familiar to lay audiences as well and offers a concise and adequate framework for this study.

Tim Hutchings

Contemporary Religious Community and the Online Church

“Online churches” are Internet-based Christian communities, seeking to pursue worship, discussion, friendship, support, proselytisation and other key religious goals and practices through computer-mediated communication. My Masters and doctoral research has followed some of the best-known online churches over the last four years, including forum, blog, chatroom, Second Life and “online campus” formats, interviewing over 100 members and leaders, participating in online and offline events and analysing archives of online material. This paper introduces some of the findings of my work.

Online churches attract considerable religious and secular media attention as apparent examples of unusual, innovative and controversial Christian behaviour. My research suggests that members of these online churches predominantly use the Internet as an additional resource to broaden and fulfil religious lives based firmly in offline local church communities, and that these online churches make very few attempts to create new and innovative styles of worship or theology. Online ritual can adopt the latest and most powerful new media but continues to follow established patterns, just as researchers have reported since the mid-1990s. What is significant about these churches is more subtle: the creation of new, loosely networked, worldwide communities for the exchange of ideas, prayer and conversation, supported through new media and maintained alongside existing local church contexts. This paper will reflect on some of the forms these parallel communities can take, the significance and appeal of this online involvement for churchgoers, and the implications of online churchgoing for the experience of religious community life.

t.r.b.hutchings@dur.ac.uk

A. Solomon Rajan Babu

“Church and Mission in a Multi religious three Millennium-India”

Religions in India :- India known as the land of Spirituality and philosophy, was the birthplace of some religions, which even exist today in the world.

The most dominant religion in India today is Hinduism. About 80% of Indians are Hindus. Hinduism is one of the ancient religions in the world. Around 500 BC two other religions developed in India, namely, Buddhism and Jainism. Today about 0.5% of Indians is Janis and about 0.7% is Buddhist. These three ancient religions, Hinduism, Buddhist and Jainism, are seen as the molders of the Indian philosophy. In modern period new religions were also established in India. The next largest non-Indian religion is Islam. They are about 12% India's population. Christians are more than 2.5% of Indian population.

Church and Mission:- The work of the Church is Mission. Mission is the work of the Church. The work of mission is the Church.

a) The work of the Church is Mission :- The first proposition that I would have your consider is that the work of the Church is Missions. That is the work of the Church is not primarily self-preservation, the perfection of organization and equipment, the improvement of the membership, or several other firsts that people might propose.

What has been called “The Great Commission” the task of evangelizing the world, was given to the Church and thus become its great work. When the risen Lord, having been given all authority in heaven and on earth, spoke the words of Matthew 28 :18-20 to the eleven disciples, he did not address them as some separate little group, but as a part of the church he was establishing. And therefore the work given to them is a work committed to the whole Christian Church, considered both as a unit and as the individual members which compose it.

The vision of the church as “the herald and servant of the Kingdom of God” would be a much more appealing model, since it contains a two-fold relativisation of church, one in the suffering servant relation to the world and the other in its relation to the Kingdom to come. The sign character and servant role of the church demand that in the face of the oppressive situation of the people, the church must “organize itself into peoples’ movement for liberation” cutting across the boundaries of religion, caste and culture; and here transparency of the church requires that we have to conceive of an open church with flexible structures, boundaries, rules and rituals making Christian identity vulnerable.

revsrbabu@gmail.com

Christian Grund Sørensen

Media literacy of the Church – a challenge from new media

A specific reading of Church history seems to underline the relevance of media literacy in spreading the gospel. This may be observed in the use of extensive writing in the Paulinian letters, which also through their use of koine-greek introduces a diglossi-tradition. Thus transforming the gospel from an orally mediated message in fixed geographical context to writing, is delicate a process which obviously required media literacy in this crucial transformation.

Another example is the revolution of Guthenbergs printing machine, allowing a one-to-many literal approach, instead of the one-to-few approach of antiquity and the middle ages. Not only did this alter the possibilities for people like Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon to spread the messages of reformation, it also gave possibilities for a more diverse communication to legio recipients, offering the challenge of recipients from entirely different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, too.

Another transformation came in early modernity with the possibility of simultaneous few-to-many communication through broadcast. This obviously also called for new design of communication, as the design of a.o. the church service did not fit the pace and speed of electronic broadcast.

This leads us to the present era, offering a wide variety of communicative possibilities through much more tailored media. Broadcast is supplemented by narrowcast, and the emerging interactive hypermedia offering not only one or few-to many communication, but also one-to-few/many, few-to-few/many and most interesting many-to-many communication. This last development we see in social media and user-generated contents (web 2.0), which has a huge cultural impact and offers great opportunity for emotional as well as religious “immersion” (in a general meaning, not primarily Virtual Reality).

These challenges require a new media literacy of the Church, and the aim of this paper would be to identify some of the aspects separation new media (interactive hypermedia) from the older media types, as well as identifying characteristics of the Gospel as well as previous Church communication practices, that may be used helpfully in this context.

cgs@km.dk

Other papers

This section contains papers that will be presented Wednesday evening.

Kenneth R. Ross

Mapping Church and Mission in the 21st Century: the *Atlas of Global Christianity*

A key feature of the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference was the *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions* edited by James Dennis. The centenary is marked by the publication of the *Atlas of Global Christianity*, edited by Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross and published by Edinburgh University Press in November 2009. This is the first scholarly atlas to depict shift of Christianity to the Global South and to do so on a fully ecumenical basis. The paper will offer an analysis of the Atlas and assess the implications of its findings for ecclesiology and mission in the 21st century. Themes under consideration will include:

- The worldwide profile of Christianity in relation to other religions, including analysis at the provincial level.
- Assessment of religious freedom and religious diversity on a worldwide basis.
- Trends of decline and growth within world Christianity and their implications for the future.
- Consideration of the degree of homogeneity and the degree of diversity prevailing within World Christianity (or World Christianities).
- Analysis of key issues in regard to Christian mission, including urbanization and ethnolinguistic diversity.
- Acknowledgement of the limitations of the statistical approach represented by the Atlas, complemented by recognition of its achievement.

The presentation will be made using the interactive electronic product on CD which is provided with the Atlas.

Note on author: Kenneth R. Ross, formerly Professor of Theology at the University of Malawi where he taught from 1988 to 1998, in Council Secretary of the Church of Scotland World Mission Council. Since 2001 he has chaired the Scottish Towards 2010 Council which acted as a catalyst for the international movement finding expression in Edinburgh 2010. He is the author of *Edinburgh 2010: Springboard for Mission* (Pasadena: William Carey International University Press, 2009).

Note on *Atlas of Global Christianity*: through negotiation with Edinburgh University Press it is possible to make copies of the Atlas available at a special conference price of £60 (= 60% discount on the normal price of £150).

kenneth.ross@blueyonder.co.uk

Jacques Matthey

“Missional” spirituality as key feature of church and mission in NT and contemporary world

The trends towards marginalization of mainline churches in the North and the growth of charismatic forms of faith in the South highlight the increasing role of local ecclesial communities as key bearers of the gospel. These developments require a new prioritization among NT texts, by and for contemporary missiology. The paper will start from the observation that the evangelism and mission terminology used in the “great commission” texts or in the description of Jesus’ ministry rarely features in the exhortations to the early churches. The same can be affirmed for the technical preaching and healing vocabulary describing the mission of the first apostles including Paul and his companions. It only exceptionally appears in passages describing the witness of the new churches. There the emphasis lies on love, sharing, mutual respect, personal and family ethics, peace inside and outside the community. The difference in language may indicate a shift in priority, from “world evangelization” (to use modern terminology) to the radiating witness of local churches, based on a “missional spirituality” and a respectful attitude to neighbours of different religions.

The observation is not new, but needs to be highlighted as the guiding principle for interpreting mission strategies and priorities in first century developments. Communities living a “missional spirituality” appear then as the basis for a theology and witness respectful of the Christian origins and relevant in contemporary post-Christendom contexts, with humility and openness to the Spirit as key characteristics.

Some implications on mission and power and the (related) attitude to people of other religions will be drawn. The paper will also show that specialised mission ministries are justified insofar as they contribute to the witness of the local churches or enable inter-church communication and solidarity.

jacques.matthey@wcc-coe.org