

## 2012-13 LSM Continuing Education

### Book of Faith Meets Missional Church

#### Session Titles and Themes

**Sept. 14-15** Stephen Bouman, (Executive Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission, ELCA)  
Bishop Duane Pederson and Director of Evangelical Mission, Amy Odgren  
of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

We will make the case for a more missional orientation given our context and culture, state the biblical imperative, provide some tools that folks can use with their own congregations, and provide examples as to what the missional church looks like synodically and nationally (successes/failures of those who have boldly stepped out in Christ's name to witness to and serve neighbor as disciples, as individuals living out their baptismal vocations and as the community of faith.

#### ***"The Biblical Roots and Current Reality of the ELCA as a Missional Church."***

*Friday:* Bishop Pederson – State the case and explain why the missional church is crucial for our time and culture.

Steve Bouman – Bible overview of missional imperative

*Sat.:* Amy Odgren – Mission planning tools and ways to explore mission context and do intentional strategic planning

Amy Odgren – Review what's happening on the territory of our synod; examples of how the missional church is lived out

Steve Bouman – Overall movement of the ELCA that's missional in orientation; review what's happening across the country

**Oct. 12-13** David Tiede (Past President of Luther Seminary and past Bernhard M. Christensen Professor of Religion and Vocation, Augsburg College)

#### ***Apostolic Israel: How the Communities of Jesus were Scripturally Formed to Serve God's Mission***

**Overview:** The Bible is the Church's *Book of Faith*, and every assembly of believers is a community of interpretation in its worship, witness, and action. These sessions will explore how Jesus and his communities of followers heard God's apostolic calling to them in Israel's scriptures. The Holy Spirit is at work both in what is written and how you read the scriptures.

**October 12 Session One:** ***"All the Rest is Commentary!"***

At the time of Jesus, Israel's scriptures (Torah, Prophets & Writings) were interpreted in varied communities. Their traditions embodied diverse convictions and defined their places in the world. Their hand-written scrolls were not yet our "Book of Faith," but Israel's scriptures were the common ground of the people of God and the contested ground for identifying faithfulness. Session One will introduce this variety of communities of interpretation, exploring the social and theological worlds into which Jesus came. It wasn't simple then. It isn't now.

**October 12 Session Two: "That is What I Came Out to Do!"**

Jesus is still remembered as a teacher and his followers are often called disciples or learners. Appreciating his profound interpretation/enactment of the "script" of Israel's scriptures is one of the best ways to understand why Jesus was so authoritative, and so adamantly denounced. Session Two will investigate how Jesus enacted an embodied scriptural vision of God's mission. Less original or heroic than often thought, Jesus was obedient to his role in the scriptural story.

**October 13 Session Three: "An Instrument I have Chosen!"**

Paul, "A Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee," Paul's abiding concern was Israel. In writing to churches, he opened the apostolic gates of Israel's scriptures in the light of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He is often credited (and blamed) for the ways the communities of Jesus' followers reached out to the varied peoples and nations of the Roman world. In Session Three, the Apostle Paul will teach us to read the scriptures to mobilize for mission.

**October 13 Session Four: "That My Salvation may Reach to the End of the Earth!"**

The four Gospels were probably written during the last third of the first century. The first three include many of the same stories. Selections from all four are read every week in Christian communities, then interpreted with deep deference to local pastoral and liturgical realities. Session Four will sample how varied selections (gospel *pericopes*) stir again with new power and challenge in the light of their apostolic (Spirit driven) vitality.

**Nov. 9-10 Marty Stortz (Bernhard M. Christensen Professor of Religion and Vocation, Augsburg College)**

I want to look at the Beatitudes in Matthew's gospel as a strategy for the mission church. We're called by blessing, which is itself kind of counter-cultural when you think about it. The beatitudes commission blessed disciples to be a blessing for others. Together they describe a church that is not tethered to place, but bound by practices. And the great thing about practices is that you take them with you.

The missional church is about the apostolate, a group of disciples that moves out in the world. It's no longer the abbey, a place where people are sequestered, nor a campus where people come to you. The missional church is discipleship - with legs.

***"Called by Blessing: The Beatitudes as Strategies for a Missional Church"***

1. Biblical blessings: What They Are -- and Do
2. "Blessed are the poor in spirit...": The practice of generosity.  
"Blessed are those who mourn...": The practice of remembering the dead.
3. "Blessed are the meek....": The practice of civility  
"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness....": The practice of feeding the hungry
4. "Blessed are the merciful....": The practice of forgiveness  
"Blessed are the pure in heart....": The practice of the Lord's Supper
5. "Blessed are the peacemakers....": The practice of baptism  
"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake....": The "corporal works of mercy"

Friday night: sessions #1 and #2

Saturday morning: sessions #3-#5

**December. 7-8          Diane Jacobson (Director of the Book of Faith Initiative)**

***Alive in Our Congregations: Living Into and Out of Our Book of Faith***

**Overview:** One of the deep challenges we face is how to help Scripture come alive in our congregations, not just for ourselves, but also for the sake of God's world. Many folks engaged in the *Book of Faith* Initiative have been meeting this challenge in creative ways that might help others do the same. In our time together we will explore both the depth of the challenge we face and some of the many opportunities for deeper and broader engagement that lie before us.

***December 7 Session One:      Formed By the Word: Challenges and Promise of Congregational Engagement with the Bible***

We will explore together some of the current challenges we face as a church committed to being deeply and continually formed by God's Word in Scripture. We will think particularly about the presuppositions and needs that everyday folk bring to Bible study and ask questions like: What would it look like in our place if Scripture really was our primary language of faith, and how might we get there? What obstacles do we face? What insights from our tradition might help guide us? Then we will consider some opportunities and promise of renewed biblical engagement. What activities might we take up, and how can we join together and learn from others?

**December 7 Session Two: *Engaging the Book of Faith and Asking Questions: A Biblical Conversation with Lydia and Paul***

How one engages Scripture is central to both deepening our own engagement and moving that engagement outside the doors of the church. In this session we will explore different sorts of questions we might ask any biblical text through delving into the richly missional text from Acts 16:13-15.

**December 8 Session Three: *Story Matters: One Proposal for Congregational Engagement***

This morning we will spend time with one newly emerging proposal for congregational engagement with the Bible, *Story Matters: Claiming our Biblical Identity for the Sake of the World*. This is a proposal from folks working with the Faith Practices Initiative, the Book of Faith Initiative, and Mission Development of the ELCA to help congregations discover and articulate, in a deep and biblically based conversation, their common identity and mission. Congregations are invited to name their story, explore their story, and live into and out of their story.

**December 8 Session Four: *Story Matters: A Hands-On Engagement: Discovering Our Own Biblical Story***

Having been introduced to *Story Matters*, in this final session we will try our hand at discovering the biblical story at the heart of our own congregations. We will explore the stories of our congregations and communities and begin the process of discernment about how discovering our defining biblical stories can help to create us as communities in mission.

**Jan. 11-12 *Gordon Straw (Program Director, Lay Missional Centers, of the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA) and (Up to 4 congregations from the Northwest Synod of WI)***

***“Place, Memory, and the Search for God.”***

- An in-depth study of St. Paul’s speech to the Athenians in Acts 17:22-28a. I contend that this gets at a very important topic in missional theology, i.e., the importance of place and context in mission and theology.
- Biblical passages and attitudes about place and memory as they relate to mission.
- An American Indian perspective on place, memory and covenant, in juxtaposition with a modern Western perspective on space, time and chosen-ness (manifest destiny).
- A brief overview of the importance of context in missional theology.
- During the group discussion times, I would posit the overarching question: “What does all this mean for your place?”

**Feb. 8-9            Rick Rouse (Director of the Grand Canyon Synod Missional Leadership Academy)**

Friday night we focus on missional leadership (with references to *A Field Guide to the Missional Congregation*) in two, one-hour sessions with conversation and on Saturday we will look at "the healing power of forgiveness" (with reference to *Fire of Grace*) in three, 45-minute sessions with conversation.

***"Healthy Leadership for God's Missional Church"***

***Friday (first presentation): "Opening the Door to God's Missional Future"***

***Friday (second presentation): "Six Marks of Missional Leadership: Managing Change and Transformation"***

***Saturday (first presentation): "Leading From a Grace-Filled Perspective"***

***Saturday (second presentation): "The Five Stages of Forgiveness"***

***Saturday (third presentation): "Four Steps Toward Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution"***

**Mar. 8-9            Craig Nesson (Academic Dean and Professor of Contextual Theology, Wartburg Seminary)**

This course focuses on key theological themes and practical directions for equipping the saints for the work of ministry, building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4 ). Worship is at the center of all congregational life. Yet many times we fail to grasp what God is seeking to make of us through the practices of worship. Jesus came to proclaim and embody the inbreaking of God's kingdom. This selfsame kingdom is what God is making of us, the church, at worship in Word and sacrament. All "inner mission" and "outer mission" of the congregation derives from what we profess and enact at worship. This includes a comprehensive understanding of stewardship, the engagement in evangelizing, and the service of shalom for the mending of the world.

***Beyond Maintenance to Mission: A Theology of the Congregation (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)***

1. God Brings the Kingdom. This session reclaims the centrality of Jesus' teaching and activity centered on God's kingdom.
2. Worship: Kingdom Arriving. This session articulates a theology of worship in accordance with the things of the kingdom.
3. Stewardship: God Owns All. This session develops stewardship as a comprehensive approach to life based on gratitude and leading to generosity.
4. Evangelizing: Speaking the Kingdom. This session defines evangelizing as "speaking the faith" and introduces concrete practices for provoking a change in congregational culture.
5. Shalom: God Mending the World. This session centers on the character of the

church in its engagement in the world as mediator of God's shalom:  
reconciliation, social justice, care for creation, and defending human dignity.

**April 12-13 Karl Jacobson, (Assistant Professor of Religion, Augsburg College) and  
Phil Quanbeck II, (Assistant Professor of Religion, Augsburg College)**

***Religion, church and the Bible in American Popular Culture***

No subject, no group of people, and no text is as widely referred to in the American popular culture (in books, music, television, film, and even comic books) as Religion and the religious. The contemporary movement known as the missional church needs to take this reality into account in a responsible and practical manner.

The church's role as God's missional agency in the world must, must engage the popular culture in which most if not all of our own people, and all of those who do not yet know the grace and love of Christ Jesus, are steeped. The perceptions, reactions, and language of the popular culture are critical parts of a biblical and missional vocabulary with which the gospel may be proclaimed to the world. We will not only explore together various representations of religion, the church, and the Bible in the popular culture, but ask how we as Christians, as church-bearers, and as Bible-readers, might faithfully engage the world in the midst of the present dominant cultural reality.

**May 10-11 Fred Nelson, Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Naomi Bruesehoff  
(former congregational president of Redeemer Lutheran Church) and  
Dick Bruesehoff (Outreach Coordinator, Portico Benefit Services)**

***From Drift to Turn-around to Multisite: Some Keys to Our Renewal and Reproduction***

***at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, IL***

The story of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, Illinois, is quite typical! Founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Redeemer was planted in a burgeoning first-ring suburb of Chicago. It experienced the glory days of the post-war years and then began a slow, steady decline until, in the late 1990s, it was facing a very uncertain future. But the story didn't end there! We'll invite you into a story of turn-around within the Park Ridge congregation and replication in the new Chicago site. But this story won't be complete until it opens the door for each of us to ask "What is God up to in *our* congregation?"