



FORUM FOCUS

FOR GLOBAL MINISTRIES
POUR LES MINISTÈRES MONDIAUX

A WINDOW ON THE GLOBAL CHURCH

Annual Issue 2012 - Number 35



FORUM LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM IN 2013!

Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry

It started with a comment on a Mission Orientation Conference participant's evaluation - "every Canadian should be required to take this course, whether they are going overseas or not." Six years later, the Forum's long focus on preparing Canadians for faithful engagement across difference in international settings now has a new expression among multicultural churches and communities in Canada.

In 2013, CCF will offer Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry (DUIM) at three different times - two, 6-day residential programs and one fall weekend series - for leaders in ministry settings who want to work more effectively with diversity. Participants will include clergy and lay leaders, foreign born clergy and seminarians, theological interns & students, global ministry placement candidates, church leaders

committed to nurturing intercultural church, diaconal ministers, chaplains and staff from agencies committed to global focus and local solidarity and shared ministry.

Canada has become increasingly diverse, and many of our faith communities either mirror this diversity or find themselves in increasingly diverse local settings. The experience of the Indian Residential Schools demonstrates the great potential for tragic damage when one culture encounters another. We also know that different cultures offer unique experiences of God and our world that enrich and sustain us. The Canadian anthropologist and ethno-botanist, Wade Davis, maintains that "...rediscovering a new appreciation for the diversity of the human spirit as expressed by culture is among the central challenges of our time."

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Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry 2013-2014 Schedule

DUIM 6-day Residential
February 10 – 16, 2013
& June 9-15, 2013
Toronto Area

DUIM Core Facilitator's Training
September 2013 TBC
6-day residential
Scarboro Missions – Toronto

DUIM – Non-residential Weekend Series
September 12-14;
October 10 - 12;
November 14 - 16, 2013;
Toronto

DUIM – 6-day Residential
February 16 – 22, 2014 TBC
Western Canada TBC

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DEVELOPING THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING FOR INTERCULTURAL MINISTRY

And who is my neighbor?¹

by Rev. Rafael Vallejo, Queen Street East Presbyterian Church, Toronto
and Guthrie Scholar, Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta Georgia, USA



“I am using a text (a trope or meme) from Luke 10: 27-37, otherwise known as the Parable of the Good Samaritan. My reason for doing this is to persuade us, me included, that one reason why we are talking about theology and culture is to learn how to approach this question in the places where God is calling and sending us.

Theological questions and answers are situated in culture. So if you were to do theology, it may be helpful to ask questions like: Where is the question

being asked? It matters if it is being asked in New York or Nairobi. Who is asking the question? Why is it being asked? Who benefits from it being discussed? Whose voices are being included and excluded? Who are not here? Who are not part of this conversation?

I suggest that this critical social practice we call “theology” begins with the question, “What is going on here?” And elsewhere I argue that when we do analysis well, we see that culture is also and always about power.

¹ This is an excerpt adapted from Rev. Vallejo’s presentation on Theology and Culture delivered during Canadian Churches’ Forum July Orientation for Global Ministry, 2012.

FORUM LAUNCHES NEW PROGRAM IN 2013! *continued*

With *DUIM*, CCF seeks such rediscovery as it draws on over 90 years of experience in ecumenical collaboration and international, intercultural ministry. Like our current programs, *DUIM* honours the richness and wisdom of participants through experiential and holistic learning. The many resource people and communities that have been part of past programs will continue to provide experience and teaching.

The program explores three dominant themes: Learning for Faithful Relationship Across Difference, Learning for Building Vibrant Church Communities Together, and Providing Pastoral Care for Ourselves and One Another. The program aims to provide an experience of faithful intercultural collaboration along with tools and resources that participants can take back to their ministry settings.

In the development of this program over the past two years, the CCF Board assessed the current context of many Canadian churches. CCF staff met with partners and potential partners to learn about those contexts and

needs, and it researched the vibrant environments of intercultural ministry Canada.

Following many consultations, the CCF invited the collaboration of Global Learning Partners (GLP) to help design the new program and train facilitators. In September, a team of 15 potential program designers and facilitators completed 6 days of GLP training and team building preparing them in Adult Dialogue Education™ theory and practice.

DUIM offers an opportunity for even broader collaboration among CCF and its partners, including all those who receive this newsletter, as it launches the new program in Toronto in 2013. All are invited to help by telling others about *DUIM*, identifying potential participants or interested communities, and helping to seek financial support.

Please contact Forum staff at director@ccforum.ca or 416-924-9351 if you are interested in the program or know of others who might be interested in participating.

One of the books my friends and I are reading is *Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* by Hamid Dabashi. He teaches Iranian studies and comparative literature at Columbia. In listening to what is going on, Hamid Dabashi claims that the uprisings from Morocco to Iran and from Syria to Yemen are changing our consciousness of the world we live in. Dabashi describes it as a theology playing out in the public square saying: “Hurriyah, Karamah, Adallah” (Freedom, Dignity, Justice).

[In Luke’s gospel], notice that Jesus does not answer the question: And who is my neighbor? Instead he tells a story and ends by asking the scholar a question: Who was a neighbor to this man? We can live into the question, “And who is my neighbour?” through five gates, if you will: Language, ethnicity, class, dislocation and beliefs.

By language I mean much more than spoken languages. I refer to the way we use words and actions and symbols to communicate what we experience. I am beginning to be persuaded that the “limits of my language are the limits of my world”.

By ethnicity I mean more than race. I refer to the treasure house of customs, tradition, families of origin, texts, rituals associated with a particular ethnicity.

By class I refer to the way we mark each other off; how we operate in a society that ranks people according to colour, gender, race, education and so on. I mean much more than economic class like rich or poor. Class is about unearned privilege and oppression and the ways we internalize this and act it out. It is about ways we compare ourselves with others and how we assign worth. Class is how we make choices of where to study or work, what clothes to buy or what brand of coffee to drink. It is how we decide whose words are worth listening to and who we can conveniently ignore. It is about honour and about shame.

And I want to argue that class influences the way we do theology. There is such a thing as a “theology of the over dog”. And many of us, me included, are beneficiaries of the class system.

By belief I refer to the convictions people hold about life and society, and the claims people make about the unseen

and the divine in their lives. People today are finding their identity outside of organized systems of beliefs. This opens up new areas for theology. It brings Christian theology to places it has never been before.

By dislocation I mean that people today are immigrating from all directions in a global diaspora. It is because of this that people are forecasting that one of the biggest Islamic countries in the world by 2025 will be France.

Dislocation or displacement is the experience of being uprooted from what one calls “home”, torn away from the patterns of culture that held and supported them. Forced to relocate in societies where they are unable to participate fully in the benefits of culture, unable to interpret what is going on, feeling like strangers or outsiders, sometimes made to feel that they don’t belong because they are “not from here”. Leaving behind status, language, beliefs and class to start all over again. Learning “powerlessness” because of a lack of familiarity and experience of the new culture. And left with four options: integrate, assimilate, separate or be marginalized. Many of the people in my congregation end up in the #4 spot.

My guess is that the people you will meet in the countries you are going to will most likely be different in language, ethnicity, class, beliefs and location. And, consequently, there will be some discomfort around meeting them for the first time. I suggest that that discomfort is theologically significant. Denying our differences is something we need to unlearn and repent. As co-workers with God and each other in mission, we need to meet each other on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho.

What we did today was to look at theology and culture. We talked about how theology is embedded in the social location of the interpreter. How theology begins with asking the question: “What is going on here?” How culture is related with power. And we discussed five gates we can use to enter into culture: language, ethnicity, class, beliefs and the global experience of dislocation. May our theology lead us to love of God and neighbour. If it doesn’t, then it is neither an adequate nor a faithful response to God’s call on our lives.”

“ . . . theology begins with asking the question, ‘What is going on here?’ ”

WHAT IS AN INTERCULTURAL CHURCH?

We asked participants in the DUIM Core Facilitator's Training.
Here is what they have to say.



"An intercultural church exists in the Canadian Latino/a community."

- Carmen Ramirez



"An intercultural church is a place where all can share their God-given gifts and talents."

-Rev. Irene Ty



"An intercultural church is where diversity and Oneness in Christ come together in harmony."

- Girma Bekele



"An intercultural church embodies God's love for cultural diversity."

- The Reverend
Sonia Hinds



"An intercultural church is a sign of a world redeemed."

- Rev. David Warren

Recommended Resources

The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World

Wade Davis. Toronto: House of Anansi Press/HarperCollins Canada. 2009 Davis writes, "...rediscovering a new appreciation for the diversity of the human spirit as expressed by culture is among the central challenges of our time." This book is a profound celebration of diverse ways of knowing and living in the many cultures of the world. The Canadian reader can see this rich diversity shaping Canada, including our church communities.

Cracking Open White Identity Towards Transformation: Canadian Ecumenical Anti Racism Network Examines White Identity, Power and Privilege

Canadian Ecumenical Anti Racism Network. Toronto: Canadian Council of Churches. 2012. This newest CEARN resource continues the journey of racial justice and reconciliation with faith-based tools for examining, engaging, and challenging White privilege. It is designed to help people of all races identify White privilege and connect it to many other 'isms' that keep us from engaging faithfully together.

Beyond The Welcome: Churches Responding to Immigrant Realities in Canada

World Vision Canada in cooperation with dozens of research partners provide an in-depth look at Canadian churches' responses to changing cultural and ethnic demographics in Canada.

<http://www.worldvision.ca/Programs-and-Projects/Canadian-Programs/Documents/BeyondTheWelcome-2011-National.pdf>

International Review of Mission

This ecumenical missiology publication celebrated its 100th anniversary recently. Issues explore: health, faith and healing; Bible study and mission; ecclesiology and mission; Christian presence and witness in the Middle East; African Christian Diaspora in Europe; Christian witness in post-modern and secular contexts; critical reading of mission history; mission and inter-religious dialogue; mission as reconciliation and healing.

Available online at: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/unity-mission-evangelism-and-spirituality/mission-and-unity/irm.html>



Migration, Human Dislocation and the Good News Margins as the Centre in Christian Mission

AUGUST 15-20, 2012 // WYCLIFFE COLLEGE, TORONTO, CANADA

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION STUDIES HOSTED IN TORONTO

The International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) gathered in Toronto for its once quadrennial assembly. 180 academics from over 40 countries shared academic papers, discussion, worship, and study focused on the theme, "Migration, Human Dislocation, and the Good

News: Margins as the Centre in Christian Mission". The Canadian Churches Forum was part of the local host committee, provided staff and volunteers for the conference, and facilitated a day of visits to Toronto faith communities.



Delegates from more than 40 countries gathered for IAMS Conference at Wycliffe College in Toronto

2012 GLOBAL MINISTRY PERSONNEL PROGRAMS



January Orientation for Global Ministry Participants

This 12-day program held at Scarboro Mission Centre prepares individuals to live in cross-cultural settings and to participate in God's mission in a global context. In January, we welcomed 19 participants from 4 Canadian and US denominations.

Learning for International Faith Engagement (LIFE) Seminar

To capture the spirit of partnership that guides engagement with global partners, the Forum introduced *Learning for International Faith Engagement (LIFE) Seminars* (formerly Mission Trip Leaders). The first was held September 22-23 in Toronto with nine participants from the Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada attending the seminar in Toronto.

In an expanded 5-day seminar in Winnipeg October 31 – November 4, 14 participants explored food security and sovereignty while developing leadership skills for faithful engagement with ministry partners. The group included 2 global partners from the Philippines, an elder from the All Native Circle Conference, and representatives from United Church congregations in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario who explored the faith aspects of engagement and the local and global facets of food security through visits with Canadian Food Grains Bank, Winnipeg Inner City Mission, and Centre for Christian Studies.

Mission Discernment Event

In March, five participants from the United Church of Canada were part of this 3-day program held at Scarboro Mission Centre to discern their interest in and suitability for placement with global partners and for the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel.

Forum staff provided facilitation support for a second Mission Discernment Event hosted by The United Church of Canada October 23 – 25 with 9 candidates considering international placements.

2012 GLOBAL MINISTRY PERSONNEL PROGRAMS



July Orientation for Global Ministry Participants

In one of the largest orientations in many years, 38 participants from 3 Canadian and US denominations and 4 countries prepared for international ministry placements in 21 countries in the Forum's 12-day summer orientation program.

The July program featured a public panel, "Decolonize: Dismantling Myths, Taking Responsibility, Building New Relationships" with Dr. Margaret Brigham, Centennial College, Carl James, York University, and Rev. Paulette Brown, Flemingdon Gateway Mission. OGM participants were joined by CCF partners and friends for the public event at Wycliffe College on July 19.

October Re-Entry

Six participants from The United Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada joined this 4-day residential program October 18-21 in Toronto. The group included individuals returning from short-term international theological internships in the Philippines and Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel placements as well as from long-term service in Peru, Brazil, Japan and El Salvador. The re-entry program provides a critical space for returning global ministry personnel to reflect upon their experiences and contemplate how they integrate those experiences into their lives in Canada.

For more information about Forum activities and a listing of 2013 programs, please visit www.ccforum.ca

Canadian Churches' Forum

Revenue	Actual 2011	Projected 2012
Partner Churches	78,700.00	85,500.00
Donations/ Bequests	4,213.00	4,000.00
Program Fees	136,147.00	165,675.00
Mortgage	14,142.00	-
Investment	7,404.00	16,900.00
Publication Sales	5,719.00	3,000.00
Total Revenue	\$ 246,325.00	\$ 275,075.00
Expenses	2011	2012
Staff	139,616.00	134,766.00
Programs	78,725.00	119,061.00
Publications	9,308.00	4,250.00
Rent & Insurance	18,781.00	19,531.00
Administrative & Office	17,918.00	15,987.00
Total Expenses	264,348.00	293,595.00

Why Support The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries?

Our work weaves together a history of over 90 years of ecumenical intercultural ministry and global engagement.

Founded in 1921 The Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries for more than 90 years has responded to the changing context of Mission. Today's context is shaped in part by the many Canadians who encounter the world either through travel abroad or through increasingly diverse communities and congregations.

The Forum provides program and resources for intercultural ministry in Canada and is well known for its work preparing people for international mission and their return to Canada. The Forum is a strong ecumenical presence among its partner denominations and in the wider community engaged in theological reflection on global, cultural, and faith issues. It is a resource to hundreds of individuals and congregations engaged in the important task of living with and relating to God's church in the world.

In addition to maintaining our core programs, we need your help to reach out in other ways to be a resource. Please see the enclosed annual appeal letter and support our work with your contribution. A return card and envelope are provided.

Who We Are

We are a Christian agency through which Canadian churches reflect and work together on global mission and ministry and are challenged to prophetic witness through programs of education and dialogue. Our members are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, Scarboro Missions, and The United Church of Canada.

What We Do

We offer programs for people involved in intercultural mission and ministry, provide forums for dialogue, publish a number of resources, and encourage cross cultural and international dialogue:

Deepening Understanding for Intercultural Ministry

Discernment

Re-entry for Overseas Personnel

Orientation to Canada

Learning for International Faith Engagement (LIFE) Seminars

Workshop Facilitation including Inter-Cultural Development and Anti-Racism Training

Publications

Sojourning:

A Leaders Guide for Short Term Mission Travel

On Your Way:

A Guide to Your Overseas Intercultural Experience

Coming Home:

A Re-entry Workbook for Returned Missionaries and Volunteers

Here Among

Us: A Guide to Intercultural Experience for Visitors to Canada

Forum Focus Annual Newsletter



FORUM FOCUS

FOR GLOBAL MINISTRIES
POUR LES MINISTERES MONDIAUX

A WINDOW ON THE GLOBAL CHURCH

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