

Minutes - Latin America and the Caribbean & North America Leadership Conference

May 9 to 12, 2018 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Leadership Conference started with the opening worship by the IERP and the IELU. The preaching was based on John 15: 9-17 (see preaching in document Attachment 1). Rev. Nestor Friedrich, Vice President of LAC, welcomes Rev. Karen Castillo in her role as Pastor President of the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala (ILAG) and Bishop Ismael Laborde of the Evangelical Lutheran United Church - Lutheran Synod (IEU-SL) of Cuba both participating as guests in this activity.

Session I. Opening of the COL

The code of conduct is activated, after having been read and after inviting respect, integrity, and fair treatment, responsible management of the use of power, inclusiveness and accountability. Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez and Rev. Angela Trejo, as part of the Complaint Management Committee, will be in charge of watching over the tasks described above.

After reviewing and approving the agenda, apologies from Bishop Larry Korchendorfer of ELCIC are shared, who, due to a last-minute agenda change, was unable to participate in the COL. Also the following representatives are mentioned: Rev. Vilma Rodríguez by Bishop Medardo Gómez (ILS), Rev. Danielle Dokmann by Pastor President Marjory Slangtad (ELKS), Deacon Elaine Grannum by Pastor President Leroy Nicholson (ELCG) and Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla by Bishop Elizabeth Eaton also as Vice President of North America (ELCA). Welcome is given to Rev. Friederike Deeg, reference of Mission One World for Latin America; Rev. Jaime Dubon, Director for Latin America and the Caribbean in Global Mission of the ELCA; Rikka Leskinen, from the Evangelical Lutheran Mission of Finland (ELMF); and Marcia Palma, reference for Latin America/The Caribbean of the Association of Churches and Missions in Germany (WMW), who are attending the COL for the first time. The two advisors to the Council are also mentioned: Rev. Rocio Morales for the Committee for Theology and Public Witness and Michael Ram in the Finance Committee. Finally, after explaining the membership process to the council from the ILCO (Geraldina Alvarez), welcome is given to Rev. Ofelia Davila, who assumes the role of member of the LWF Council.

In order to reaffirm the identity and mission of the COL, we read part of the Terms of Reference: "The COL is a space where the member churches share in an intimate way their spiritual and ecclesiastic walk, recognizing the diversity of cultures, languages and social contexts. The COL is also the platform for exchange, deliberation, consultation and decisions related to the participation of the LWF member churches in the region in the mission of God. Consequently, the COL platform is a regional expression of the Lutheran churches as a space for the leadership of the LWF churches in Latin America and the Caribbean linked to the global Lutheran communion. In this COL context, a space is kept for the meeting of Bishops, Presidents or representatives, whose role is pastoral, counseling, and support. The COL expands its action through the networks established in order to follow up on specific issues."

The floor is offered to Pastor Bernardo Spretz, Vice-President of the IERP acting as President who shares the unexpected death of Pastor Carlos Duarte, thanks everyone for the solidarity and

shares the tasks that the Presidency, together with the General Secretariat, carries out until the Synod Assembly of the IERP in October 2018.

Sessions II - III. As a Report: Challenges and Alternatives of Churches in Mission

United Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELU) Several challenges but one overcomes the others, the economic one. Two elements to be considered: A) Audience: With whom does the church engage in dialogue? Who are our interlocutors (real and imaginary)? What channels and agents are needed for communication (gifts, calls, charisms)? What channels do we use and what agents do we need? B) Strategies: PEP - with five priority areas for the mission (communities, districts and synodic meeting). Those are: to be evangelized and evangelizing churches, with a committed and diaconal spirituality, with ministries according to the gifts, to improve and grow in communication and stewardship. It is hard not to dream and make this real with the annual plan. Two: Ministries: to rethink traditional ministries and the tools are REET and the IPC. Ministries are a point of entrance to think about this new way of being church. Three: sustainability with the use of new resources, administration, institutional readjustment to the new reality.

Motto of the IELU 2018:

<p>Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Unida</p> <p>Two challenges, two strategies (7 minutes)</p> <p>The Lutheran World Federation C O L 2 0 1 8</p>	<p>...How to choose (only) 2?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenges abound <p>But one of them almost takes over all others</p> 	<p>With whom we talk?</p> <p>Who are our interlocutors (Real or Imaginary)</p>
<p>What agent channels do we need?</p> <p>Gifts, the call, charisms</p> 	<p>What agent channels do we need?</p>  <p>Ministries</p>	<p>Estrategias (or something like that)</p> <p>Strategic Participatory Planning/ Annual Mission Plans. Ministries (enable/recognize new ones, rethink the traditional ones) REET / IPC</p> <p>Sustainability: develop new resources, efficient administration, institutional adaptation to the new (and hard) reality of the church, of the region and the world</p>

Nutrir y hacer lugar:
planes misionales para dar fruto

Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Unida
Asamblea Sinodal 2018



Nourishing: do not leave anybody in hunger (much less to poison).

Making room: do not occupy all the living space (nor disappear from the map)

Evangelical Church of the River Plate (IERP): How to do a lot with few resources challenging us to think further? Two challenges: A) Theological training (training of laity and ministers) - REET, 5 churches with theology and pastoral programs, semi-face-to-face and distance learning, (online) B)

Pastoral ministries related to the care of creation - Pastoral of Promotion, a Council that listens and trains in the church; meetings, workshops and materials to understand the way of working in this task. See video presentation (link)

Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELB):

Iglesia Evang. Luterana Boliviana

Challenges and Alternatives

Rev. Emilio Aslla flores

CHALLENGES 2017

1. Develop Educational Policies within the framework of the new educational law. There was an urgent need to adapt the law as a Church to community and productive education by 2018. Primary and secondary education. With mention in Music, Secretariat and English.
Alternative Education For young people and women over 18
Theological training with three dimensions:
. Pastors with a mention in Management.
. Pastors with mention in Evangelism.
. Pastors with mention in Education.

2. Adjust the Bylaws. To the frame of today's law, we have the challenge to adjust our bylaws looking to 2020.

A commission needs to be in place.

- Income and economic expenses records
- Membership registration
- Inventory including goods and equipment
- Church minutes should be digitalized

Challenges 2018

1. Implementation of the Theological and Lay Formation Training Program. With several seminars this year.

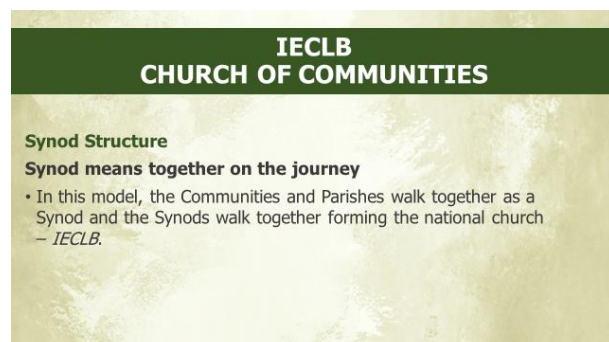
2. Organizational Management Program. Targeting a: Directors, secretaries, program coordinators and administrative personnel. This will aim at strengthening the organizational management skills; i.e. a good governance.

- Skills for Management and Direction.
- Management tools
- Human resources management
- Financial management

3. Growth and Mission Advancement. This year, we must strengthen and consolidate new mission work in:

- Santa Cruz
- Tarija
- Potosí.

Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB): The following power points are used:





CHURCH OF COMMUNITIES

The **Synod model** is a way of being church based on:

- Priesthood of all believers.
- Active participation, and in a complementary way, the *decision making level* and the *representation level* is present in each of the three levels – community, synod and national.
- Democratic administration

THEOLOGICAL GREATNESS

Articulated work through the Priesthood of all believers

CHALLENGES

Thinking about the future of the IECLB is the responsibility of each member and specially of leadership and ministers.

Our theological greatness also becomes our greatest challenge and may even become our weakness when there is no qualification and development of member and leaders.

CHALLENGES

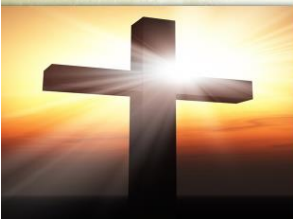
to the lutherna
faith

CHURCH OF COMMUNITIES



INDIVIDUALISTIC
SOCIETY

GOD'S GRACE
LIBERATES AND
DIGNIFIES



PEOPLE ARE WORTH
FOR THEIR CREATIVITY
AND CONSUMING

GOD EMBODIES AND
EMBRACES THE
ENTIRE CREATION



SUPERFLUOUS AND
DISPOSABLE LIVES

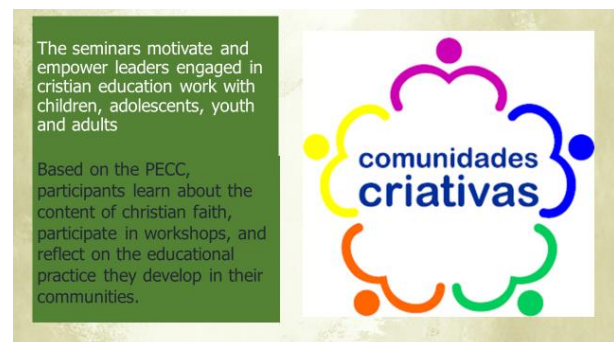
**In this scenario: the
missionary God calls us to**

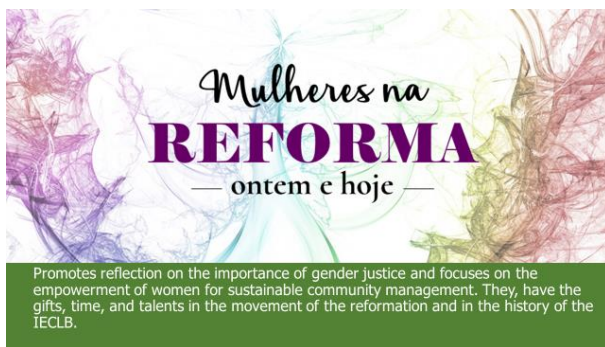
propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ,
estimulate the personal, family and community
evangelical life
promote peace, justice and love in society and
participate witnessing the Gospel in the country and
in the world

CHALLENGES for the IECLB

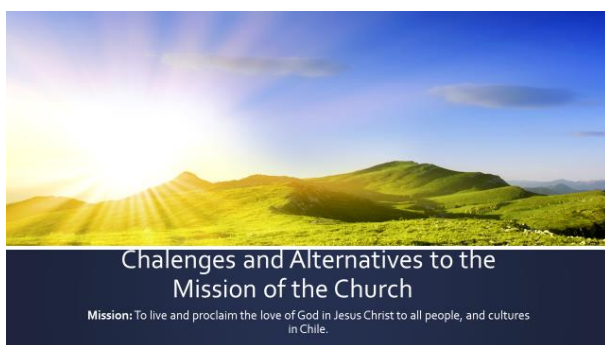
Institucional Sthrengthening

Community Sthrengthening





Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH): It is explained in the power point:



Challenges in the IELCH

- Work with children and youth.
- Link the leadership feminine/masculine in social organizations with the work of the Church
- Link the Church with its diaconal work (kindergarten – schools)

What are the objectives of these challenges?



Implemented alternatives (or to be done)

Work with children and youth.

- Develop (build together) activities in which the children participate (worship of mother's of father's day, community worship, etc.)
- Children's gathering (accompanied by their parents)
- Lutheran Youth Patrol: environmental diakonia
- Renew the Sunday school for children, seek for volunteers carrying pedagogical gifts.

Link the Church to the diaconal work (kindergartens – schools)

- External mailbox for prayers' request
- Community cleaning work
- Citizen training and environmental education
- Bible studies in homes

Link the leadership feminine/masculine in social organizations and with the work of the church

- Develop a stewardship program, motivating each member to responsibly participate in the sustainability of the community with their talents, time, and gifts
- Generate spaces for political reflection (self-education)
- Coordinate with the neighbours board to work with children.
- Conduct congregational retreats.
- Educate persons that monitor the youth work
- "Festival of God's gifts" (recognize our gifts) What gifts can be turned into service in the church?
- Create a culture of healthy volunteers.

If your Church is fighting, it is not a mystery why it is not growing.

Observations for our work

- Encourage people to fall in love with our mission, not the methods.
- If the gospel is good news, then our act must be accordingly.
- Christians, it is difficult to convince the world that God's love is constant.
- Our challenge is to reduce the human barriers that keep people from Jesus, not to create new ones.
- Linking with non-Christian people
- The only way to love the community is to be in the community.

Vision always precedes resources.

Lutheran Church in Chile (ILCH): The power point is descriptive.

Challenges in mission

1.- Being open to the immediate community

Identified problems:

- A Church of migrants
- Lack of identifications with the local needs
- German language

Challenges to mission

- Social work towards the Chilean reality
- To connect with social networks
- Prejudices of society

Challenges in mission

- To observe the reality – context
- Covering points that can connect society with the Church

- Connect with music: Formation of a choir and offer open concerts
- Connect to the immediate social challenges: Help with food, clothing, etc.
- Use of social networks
- Use of local media communications

Next steps
Go
Going out
To dear
Knowing how to use
the social media



2.- A church that invite the youth

Identified problems:

- A community formed by adults
- Liturgies that does not invite the youth
- Young people leave the Church after confirmation
- Difficulty to understand the new generations

Identifying the contemporary problems:

- Millennials
- Generation Z

Activities that work:
Camps:
- Youth form 14 to 21



Leadership from 18 to 35



Campamento de niños (8 – 11)



Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO):











IELCO is in dialogue and reconfiguring its task considering peace processes so that the church reflects internal health and contributes to the country's ability to live differently.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA): Founded in 1988, largest denomination and historically linked to Scandinavia and Germany. Today churches are diverse racially and linguistically, ethnically, socio-economically, in terms of gender identities and other aspects. In this context, the challenges and alternatives are presented in the power point:

Challenges and Alternatives

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Challenges

Leadership

Congregational Vitality



Alternatives

Future Directions

1. A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening the faith of all people.
2. A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church.
3. An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings.
4. A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace, and reconciliation in communities and around the world.
5. A well-governed, connected, and sustainable church.



A thriving church
spreading the
gospel and
deepening faith
for all people.



Areas of Action

- Church identity
- Church leaders
- Renewal and formation of congregations and worshipping communities
- Ecumenical dialogues and relationships
- Renew and strengthen evangelism

A church
equipping people
for their baptismal
vocations in the
world and this
church.

Areas of Action

- Baptismal vocation
- Youth and young adults in mission
- Faith formation and practice



An inviting and
welcoming church
that reflects and
embraces the
diversity of our
communities and
the gifts and
opportunities that
diversity brings.



Areas of Action

- An outwardly focused church
- Church leadership profile
- Theological and cultural competence of leaders
- Addressing discrimination and oppression



FEDERACIÓN
LUTERANA MUNDIAL
AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE

A visible a church
deeply committed
to working
ecumenically and
with other people
of faith for justice,
peace, and
reconciliation in
communities and
around the world.



Areas of Action

- Poverty and hunger
- Response to disaster and humanitarian crisis
- Lift up the work of ELCA-related social ministries
- Advocacy and action on economic justice, racial justice, gender justice, and climate justice



A well-governed,
connected, and
sustainable
church.



Areas of Action

- Leadership in governance
- Resources for mission
- Communication
- Church structures

Current investments and commitments

- New Congregations
- Renewing Congregations
- Youth and Young Adult Ministry
- Young Adults in Global Mission
- Fund For Leaders
- ELCA World Hunger



Costa Rican Lutheran Church (ILCO)



Challenge

1. The misión of the Church among populations with a different sexuality to the heterosexual.

The Church must not, and cannot in recent times, turn a deaf ear to an ever larger population which have explicit requests for spiritual attention and above all, a request to accompany their struggles in defense of their rights. Disregarding or not wanting to attend these needs is a challenge and is like acting in dissonance with the preferential option of the minorities, as one should understand the choice of Jesus of Nazareth.

Implementation

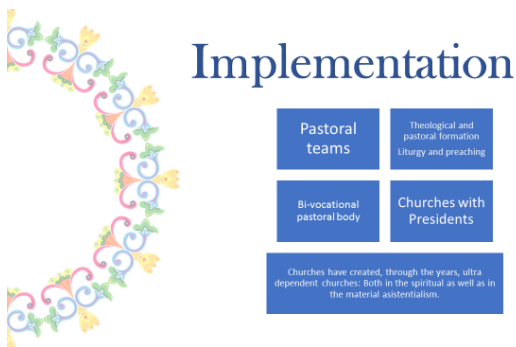


Challenge 2

2. De-cleric of the pastoral activities.

The churches, from their clerical side, are reaching their limit. Post Christianity will not support hierarchies, clericalism and structures of power and control.

We have not really realized, or do not want to see it, what a difference there is between dictatorships in Latin America and the life of episcopates, I am sorry but I can not keep these thoughts within me.



Mexican Lutheran Church (ILM)



MEXICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Challenges and alternatives in the Church in mission

COL Buenos Aires, 2018



Challenges in mission(1)

- Violence
 - Organized crime
 - Religious conflicts
 - Of gender



Challenges in the mission(2)

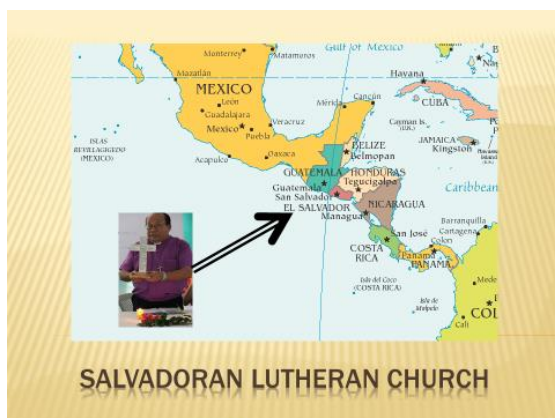
- Actual contexts
 - Models of oppression
 - Tension Grace/Works
 - Public space and private space
 - Disinterest for the gospel



Alternatives to mission

- Accompaniment
 - Hermeneutics
- New mission places
 - Homes
 - Groups

Salvadoran Lutheran Church (ILS): Composed of 57 churches and 16 missions





ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, POLITICAL CONTEXT IN EL SALVADOR

ILS aware of the difficult situation facing the country given the economic crisis, the increase in social violence that leads to migration and forced internal displacement, which mostly affects children, youth and women in poor and rural communities, to this is added environmental vulnerability. Faced with this challenging situation, the ILS must today be more than ever salt and light for the people of God.

A major challenge in the Program of Evangelism and Continuing Pastoral and Pastoral Education to pastors and lay leadership is to strengthen counselling and pastoral care to respond to the spiritual and therapeutic care needs of people affected by severe emotional crises and / or suffering post-traumatic stress, due to traumatic experiences of violence, abuse, disasters, wars, accidents, migrations and others, as well as the traumas that affect them in their spiritual life, their physical and mental health, which does not allow them to control their own lives.

STRATEGY OF SPECIALIZED FORMATION

Psychosocial attention based on community, intends a process of personal, family and community accompaniment to people in emotional crises victims of disasters, which have been affected spiritually, psychologically and socially and whose effects deteriorate the integral health and the psychosocial well-being of the victims.

Objective: reestablish the emotional integrity of victims in emergencies and disasters, as well as within their social networks.

It is used in the process the guide for facilitation and dynamize activities promoted by ACT, as well as participatory psychological techniques and dynamics applicable to group work, using the methodology of popular education for personal strengthening and rehabilitation and reconstruction of community life.

In order to follow up on the process, local community and voluntary pastoral committees of psychosocial care promoters are created with Pastors and lay and community leaders who continue to accompany the community and coordinate with other local actors.

PSYCHOSOCIAL COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS COMMITTEE



GRADUATE IN PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

Training of Psychotherapists through the Crest Therapeutic Model, to attend people living with post traumatic stress, model based on neurobiology, study of attachment and stress. The psychotherapeutic training has therapeutic and educational approaches, and is taught by the German Wing of Hope Foundation

The goal is to work on overcoming the trauma so that the person obtains a healthy memory, finds access to his own resources and can take control of his own life.

Currently 15 pastors and 2 lay leaders psychotherapists attend the post traumatic stress care demands in local parishes.

For the 30 of June 2018 the Center of Attention to the trauma in San Salvador is inaugurated, for the attention of the population, people who request the therapeutic service; as well as for the reinforcement and deepening thematic-practical Pastors and leadership trained in this specialty.

The Therapeutic Formation of trauma care has been multiplied to the Communion of Lutheran Churches of Central America (CILCA), always given by Wing of Hope in coordination with the Salvadoran Psychotherapists who carry out the workshops of strengthening and deepening thematic and practical. Graduation of CILCA therapists will be in November of 2018.

SECOND CHALLENGE: ILLEGAL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS MIGRATION, DEPORTATION AND FORCED RETURN.

The ILS was called by the Governmental Instance to jointly work on a national strategy of comprehensive care for children and adolescents returned from Mexico and the USA. About 12,000 children were returned to El Salvador in 2016 in very delicate conditions, abused their human rights during the tour of Mexico to the USA. Migration of the Salvadoran population will increase with the TPS withdrawal 200,000 Salvadorans affected, who are at risk of deportation.

STRATEGY: The Church responded to the call and through the Pastoral of Migrants, with the help of the ELCA, develops a program of care for families with returned children and cases of forced family displacement within the country.

In forced displacement in cases of danger of death, family life is prioritized and placed in safe places.

- Promotes entrepreneurship, provides seed capital for its productive and labor reinsertion in the country.
- Provide community education workshops, development of educational material and dissemination in the media to promote a culture of peace, prevention and life-threat in illegal migration and the right to migrate legally.
- Coordinates with other institutions and civil society organizations that involve displaced persons, NGOs, churches, government institutions, universities.
- Psychotherapeutic care for families displaced and returned to overcome the traumatic experience.



Dissemination in the media to inform the population about the situation in the area of migration and human rights

Prevention educational workshops that focus on the risk of illegal migration, strengthen the right to migrate legally to avoid deportation and return.



Guatemalan Lutheran Church (ILUGUA)



Challenges and Strategies

Challenge1: Strengthening the church leadership

7 congregations 1 female pastor + 2 male pastors

Indigenous Communities of the maya Chortí people that in pacific resistance defending their rights and territories

Located in the East of Guatemala in Zacapa y Chiquimula

Strategy:


- o Training to the Ministry of Diakonia, the Word, and Sacrament
- o Reading the Bible from an ecumenical perspective, focused on human rights, gender justices, masculinities, and liturgy tied to life
- o 20 persons in process of formation to respon to a more global strategy

Challenge 2:
Strengthen the exercise of the right to defend the human rights and the rights of nature

- Human rights defenders from the maya Chorti peoples
- To defend the right to food through ASSA (diversified agriculture and public advocacy)

Strategy:

Training in Human Rights y DESCAs
Capacity Building for political advocacy
Practical actions and policies for the defense of natural resources (mountains, rivers, forest, land, and territories)
Creating and enabling environment for the defense of human rights
Political advocacy



GRACIAS

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname (ELCG)

Mission: Called, empowered and sent to proclaim the ministry of Jesus Christ in the Mission of God.

Two challenges: A) Congregations do not have enough pastors, deacons, leaders, and as a result some of them lose members. There are cases in which only one pastor serves 4-5 congregations in the parish without any deacon's support. Pastors are expected to supervise neighboring parishes that have no ordained pastor or deacon. This jeopardizes the mission. The ELCG has 8 pastors and 10 deacons for 46 churches. Pastors are trained locally because of the lack of resources to send them abroad. Every Sunday there is lay leadership in charge of the church.


B) There are students who serve the congregation and are church members. Many migrate or have no interest. Membership declines among youth and it is difficult to get young women into the women's ministries body. The majority of parishes do not have groups of men and where they exist they are not enough.

Alternatives: The Lay Academy - first group of 19 deacons and 3 lay leaders; 5 deacons had a job. Lay leaders are trained locally to assist in the church work. Pay attention to young people so that the church becomes livelier by bringing drums, guitars and creativity - even changing the liturgy or the way to worship. We have to plan programs that encourage us to participate regularly.

Mission and training: Lay leadership is in charge of most of the work. The ELCG is one of the first denominations in Guyana to have trained deacons and lay leadership. The secular academy began 2015 with a 2-year program. The local pastors were teachers and the human resource for Bible studies, church history, preaching, liturgy and worship. External human resources serve as support through conferences, study groups, and ongoing training.


The Nicaraguan Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope

**IGLESIA
LUTERANA "FE Y
ESPERANZA" DE
NICARAGUA.**



Retos y Desafío

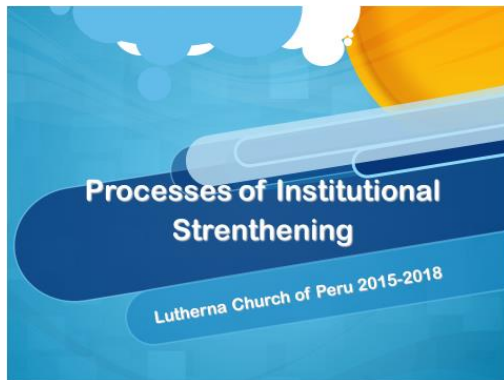
"Descubrir los signos de los tiempos"



Y por la mañana: Con este cielo rojo oscuro, hoy habrá tormenta. Ustedes, pues, conocen e interpretan los aspectos del cielo, ¿y no tienen capacidad para las señales de los tiempos? (Mt. 16,3)

Los signos de los tiempos, obedecen al contexto

Lutheran Church of Peru (IL-P)



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname (ELKS)



1 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname

Challenges and alternatives in the mission of the ELKS

2 CHALLENGE AND ALTERNATIVES IN THE CHURCH IN MISSION

What is mission?
the partnership with God, through faithful proclamation of God's Word incarnate in Christ, in order that we with the Holy Spirit, might usher in the Reign of God in Suriname.

Levels of engagement:

- Ecclesiological level
- Ecumenical and interreligious level

3 ECCLESIOLOGICAL LEVEL (INCLUSION)



Youth Participation (voice and space)

- Create opportunities for young people to live a full life and have a career while in Church
- Working towards a youth board that works with the executive council of the church on Youth empowerment

Recruitment & Lutheran Identity

- Create learning opportunities to strengthen our Lutheran identity, baptismal and confirmation vows.
- Finances & Dwelling membership

4 ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS LEVEL

Challenge	Alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engagement/ Joint social efforts with present ecumenical partners on social issues (health care, poverty & education) ■ Ecumenical dialogue between Lutherans and Pentecostals ■ Interreligious dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Indebt discourses on our common mission as churches from different denomination. ■ PANCAP Faith leaders initiative working with NGO's and Parliaments towards a Caribbean free HIV. (Regional and Local)

Session IV - Doing Mission reflecting on the mission's history traces

Mission in the Caribbean (Rev. Danielle Dokman)

Initiates singing the song Redemption Song (Bob Marley)

Old pirates, yes, they rob I;
Sold I to the merchant ships,
Minutes after they took I
From the bottomless pit.
But my hand was made strong
By the 'and of the Almighty.
We forward in this generation
Triumphantly. Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have: Redemption songs

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery;
None but ourselves can free our minds.
Have no fear for atomic energy,
'Cause none of them can stop the time.
How long shall they kill our prophets,
While we stand aside and look? Ooh!
Some say it's just a part of it:
We've got to fulfill the book.
Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?

'Cause all I ever have:
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs;
Redemption songs.

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery;
None but ourselves can free our mind.
Wo! Have no fear for atomic energy,
'Cause none of them-a can-a stop-a the time.
How long shall they kill our prophets,
While we stand aside and look?
Yes, some say it's just a part of it:
We've got to fulfill the book.

Won't you help to sing
These songs of freedom?
'Cause all I ever had:
Redemption songs
All I ever had:
Redemption songs:
These songs of freedom,
Songs of freedom.

The song revives the traces of the history of the ELKS because it is motivation for the awareness. To think about the mission through the song is to reflect on what happened in Suriname. The church, founded on November 15, 1742 (276 years ago), 121 years before the abolition of slavery, means that pastors had slaves who were allowed to participate in the church or, if they did, there were differences such as sitting apart. Only at the beginning of the 70s, they receive the first Surinamese pastor and 10 years later, the first female pastor. The ELKS has had national pastors for 50 years, despite the 276 years of existence. As a result, the state of the church has been that of colonizers.

In the past, pastors were reformed from Holland and later Lutherans of the ELCA. After slavery was abolished, ELKS continued to be an elite church. There was a long transformation before people like me could be in this church. During the last 50 years, ELKS grew through four congregations - two of which were shared with the Reformed Church. It has 4 pastors (2 women, 2 men) and 3,000 registered members though not all are seen in the church. The context of Suriname is Caribbean. A society created by colonialism for servants. It is a multi-ethnic and religious society with irreversible oppression systems and a bad inferiority complex.

As a result, the mission is a theology of the conquest that seeks to win only the spirit of the people so they can go to heaven. Many slaves were not educated to fight for their rights but in the spirituality of gaining their entrance into heaven. The theology of the imposition - in the reflection of Gustavo Gomez "to bring Jesus as if He was not present" was absent. People and their religions were demonized. These theologies and missionary views are still practiced focused on winning souls without taking into account the actual social situation. It is easy to demonize religions to minimize and impose certain points of view. A healthy model I learned at the ELCA is that the mission must focus on the accompanying theology. We have developed a Term of Reference to accompany us. I would like to suggest 3 essential elements for the mission today:

1. The element of resistance - the rejection of theological tendencies of conquest or imposition.
2. Incarnation based on the birth of Jesus - churches need to immerse themselves in the realities of the communities they serve. God did not see himself as an elite, He was incarnated in the realities of the human condition.
3. Trinitarian and communal dimension - in Suriname, there is still a culture of welfare dependency. Of course, this is important, but relationships need justice in their practice: How can it be done, not only in institutional relations, but in a more systemic way? It means promoting a more sensitive diaconal work.

The change we want is what Marley's song promotes: that we emancipate ourselves from the theological burdens of conquest; to become independent towards the incarnate theology of God with and among us.

Mission in Peru (Rev. Ofelia Davila and Rev. Pedro Bullón)

The Lutheran Church of Peru (ILP) will be celebrating 50 years of missionary work in 2019, an initiative which was promoted by the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) today ELCA. The emphasis is placed on the participation of men and women (especially women). Female

missionaries already used inclusive language in the liturgies in the 90s. The national church was started with four congregations. The second motivation was to train the national leadership.

In 1990, the Evangelical Peruvian Lutheran Church (ILEP) was formed as a national church - we are 28 years old. You know about the change of its name from ILEP to ILP due to the conflicts and internal crisis that took place from 2010 to 2015. Another feature in this context is that many people came from other denominations and we became Lutherans by choice and conviction. It is an open church and shares its space with other denominations.

In 1999, 5 pastors were ordained (3 women: Adita, Patricia, Irene and 2 men: Pedro and Benjamín. The latter is no longer in the ILP but is part of the journey). I joined the ordained ministry in 2000, Pastor Yoli Zabaleta did it in 2001, and after that Pastor Andrés Palencia joined us. Another feature of the church: the pastoral is open and inclusive. We are part of the Women's Inter-Confessional Network and we have a voice within the church and society.

As women we have been challenged by patriarchal practices - this is part of the division. We had to review the ongoing training emphasizing the education of youth and children. In 2014, communion through the LWF/regional Secretariat, supported and encouraged us to work with models of justice and the lessons learned and to rethink the ecclesial community.

Another feature is the ecumenical aspect because, since the beginning, the LCA decided to work with the Theology of Liberation. We worked with Gustavo Gutierrez and other theologians to cross the borders by participating in the summer theological workshops in the Catholic Church which promoted joint training. This challenged us to work on our identity, because the basic ecclesiastic communities, which included all people fighting for rights together with the church, asked us about our being a church.

During the last five years we have resumed our dialogue with the Catholic Church and others like the Orthodox Church, celebrating and walking in the context of the 500 years. Doors have been opened for a respectful dialogue. Many churches have felt identified and accompanied the dialogues led by the ILP. For example, the subject of *Mary in the idea of the Reformation* has challenged and helped to rethink and strengthen spirituality. The ecumenical journey allowed us to participate in the visit of Pope Francis. It is necessary to improve the liturgical practices - we had the first joint communion between Lutherans and Catholics and it was boisterous. It also opened a space for health and in memory masses as a response to the local people expectations.

Panel on convergence points (Rev. Atahualpa Hernandez)

In relation to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) the convergence with the ELKS within the South American reality is related to the songs of the Mejia Godo brothers: their theological link with the reality of slavery of Latin American people, the theology of the conquest. We are a younger church which was guided by the church missionaries. We share the elements that allowed us to acquire a local flavor: features from abroad - in the 80's with the first ordination of national pastors. The first ordination of a female pastor took place many years later, in the 90s, but it was done as a local task and with local leadership of women in the pastoral aspect.

Local leadership comes later. There was a tension between foreign and local leadership until Colombians considered their active participation possible. To share with the ELKS the transformation of the growth and change of the inferiority complex into an identity not empowered

(in the case of slaves in Suriname) but to gain souls and not contextual. Another element is the vision of identity against the other: in Colombia, autochthonous religions were also demonized during colonization. The Protestant mission in the early nineteenth century was also against the Catholic Church.

With the ILP the points of convergence are: we emerged from a mother church, the American Lutheran Church (ALC). Congregations are consolidated towards the national church. There was a Synod in Colombia, then a church that identified itself as Andean (a geographical imagery), then a national church. Another point is the training of pastors in the last years. In 1999 in Peru and also in Colombia. The IELCO is larger than the ILP but still young, which provides its identity. The first 50 years belong to a foreign leadership.

In the ecumenical field we converge in the celebration of 500 years - heal memories. The IELCO is established outside the capital city (division of territory between Presbyterians and Baptists) in opposition and clash with the Catholic Church. The commemoration in Socotá, the same place where it started, is linked to the moment the Pope co-celebrates with Lutherans in Lund. Martin Junge when visiting us in Socotá says: "the stones that were thrown in our time, are used today to build bridges". This experience of healing memories is good to re-establish relationships and share the mission in the proclamation of the Gospel in words and actions.

Dialogue and reactions in the plenary session

Adriana Gastellu: I heard the challenge of ELKS to free our minds from mental slavery. To recall the sustainability program and the participatory strategic planning (PEP) helps to recover gifts and resources, new models of being churches. The presentations make me understand that the PEP is quite incorporated. There is a desire to rethink the gifts and resources and the lay priesthood, gifts of young people and available resources appear several times. As a product presented by the three churches, a model of being a European or North American mission or migration church has been incorporated and I think we have new models. From the Swedish Church, an older person to talk to and knit is different because in LAC there are young people. LAC has the potential to change and build new models of being a church and there is a need to change the Swedish church. It summons and gets me excited not to leave what has been done for the sustainability program, in spite of the ecclesiological challenges.

Gustavo Gomez: Two words that summarize: dependence and conflict. There is a circular relationship between both and, somehow, dependency feeds the conflict and vice versa. Either both or none of them must be resolved.

Gilberto Quezada: I recall "there are still reminiscences of the bad practices that were normal at that time" (the mission). And it makes me think that we still have 2,000 years of reminiscences that hurt us (the Constantine agreement). We have to discern what no longer applies and remains hidden. We are called to change. In Sweden we were shocked as we thought of the small number of people in the temples, to find those who are defined as atheists or those seeking spirituality.

Vilma Rodríguez: I was struck by the ILP, which is present in El Salvador, because of their popular religiosity. We have people who come looking for holy water or to celebrate mass for the dead. The challenge is to explain and focus on the family and the community that needs to be strengthened.

Session V - Doing Mission Reflecting the benchmarks of the mission's history

Migration and Mission in the IECLB (Rev. Nestor Friedrich)

How to be a Brazilian church in a Brazilian context? The question about the mission is transversal to the IECLB. We are a church of communities that walk together. We account for the mission that God has entrusted us in a very challenging context. We live in an aggressive context. If we do not do mission, we will be missioned by a market that does not measure the consequences. The IECLB developed a pocketbook guide on how to create and recreate mission together: Planning is a culture change because we were trained to maintain the church and we wonder: how do we keep what we already have? How to we build a missionary profile? We are not proselytizers but we go to meet the others. How do we approach the other in an appropriate way? When we plan we ask ourselves about our strengths and our weaknesses.

The mission is defined according to the contexts considering the training, communication and relationships. We share the Gospel stimulating their personal family experience, promoting peace, justice and love in the Brazilian society and in the world. The IECLB needs to be appreciated as attractive, inclusive and missionary communities that act according to the gospel, serving in favor of human dignity and respect for creation. We always ask ourselves how to account for this mission of the church.

Some of the social consequences: you cannot get your citizenship, you do not want citizens, you only want privileges. We are losing financial support and the sense of value. We live in simulation; it is more important to pretend than to be who we really are. We lose the essence of being; there is a lack of reference of what is real. The value and dignity of life have become deteriorated. Our challenges: Signs of weakening of the heritage in the following aspects: confessional, normative, human resources (loss of members and leadership), gifts and talents, financial, physical-predial, cultural, social and ethical (marketing against the same institution through Facebook, etc.). Considering this, how do we take care of our theology? How to do mission? How is the merciful face manifested? Our action in the face of these challenges: Accompanying theology students and pastors, strengthening the community action, qualifying ministry, the missionary action, communication and work.

Mission from the ELCA (Rev. Rafael Malpica-Padilla)

Clues to the missionary action of the ELCA from the experience of walking together with churches throughout the world. We read in Ecclesiastes "there is nothing new under the sun". This led the ELCA to develop its mission in the 80s as it realized the great conflicts and structural adjustments that were present in society. In the 90s, churches in the region complained to the ELCA about the distance and abandonment of relationships that were important before. This led to the development of new strategies with the Churches in the region. Here the Panamanian singer Ruben Blades with his song *Searching for America* helps to open the strategy for ALC "I am looking for America"

I'm searching for you, America
and fear that I won't find you
your footprint has been lost in the dark
I'm calling for you America
but you are not answering me

you have been made to vanish by those who deny
truth

Surrounded by shadows, we deny all that's true
until there is justice, we will never have peace.
Living under dictatorships, I search for you

and I can't find you, your tortured body
is nowhere to be found.

If one's dream is everybody's dream
to break the chains and begin our journey
Let's be confident let's go ahead, my race,

You've been abducted, America
your mouth has been gagged

and today it's our turn, to bring you freedom.
I'm calling you America
our future awaits us
and before it dies on us
we will find you.

I'm searching for you America
I'm calling you America.

What Ruben describes in the 80s has not changed very much today. How do we face the loss of what is ours? The accompaniment is a theological framework of the mission. The ELCA has three axes for the mission. The missional question we ask ourselves is: how can we face and approach each other? And to answer this, we refer to the Trinitarian theology "let us make the human being in our image and likeness". God is community sustained by love. We are talking about the relational ontology according to which we were created in community and for the community (the other)

We deal with God's perspective for the world. This relationship is fractured by sin. The fragmentation of the human community that breaks with that image. God's mission is to restore community. The restoration of community with God. So we ask ourselves, how do we need to work with the marginalization and instrumentation of the other? This leads us to talk about gender praxis taking up again the love towards the other. There is a gap between the global mission praxis and local praxis. We have to fight internally against this gap.

One of the emphases is to create and live in communities of followers of Jesus. We see the centrality of the sacraments proposed by the revised Babylonian captivity, which is the liberating praxis of our sacramental practice. To seek the community of equals, that liberating praxis must lead to concrete actions that reflect the purpose of God. Repentance from the perspective of the mission, restoration (distributive justice) and recreation.

Panel on points of convergence

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH - Rev. Oscar Sanhueza)

We need to discern where God is acting and join Him. The migration of people from Haiti and Venezuela is a daily reality. Those people seek new horizons to improve their quality of life. We have points of convergence with the IECLB. We are an uprooted Church. Our church has a prophetic vocation. We are a church which is out on the streets, which marches with people for sexual diversity, which approves of decriminalization of abortion. We are a dissenter church.

We changed the pastor-centric model, we are a missionary church. Our pastors work ecumenically. And we must acknowledge that we have "highly motivated negative leaders" who confuse the value of democratic vocation. This has divided us and it calls us to reflect on how we need to continue our work. I identify myself with the definition of God's mission as the restoration of the ELC community. We tried to build a church with the ILCH but the statutes did not allow it. Close to the convection, we must respond to this fraction and seek unity

Lutheran Church in Chile (ILCH - Bishop Alexis Salgado)

The ILCH was born in a very Catholic country. It was created in a context where you could not build non-Catholic churches. A very strong internal work was done. The laws changed and there was a division between church and state.

There is a vision from the Chilean society that is hard to eradicate as it is linked with the colonization and does not allow to progress in faith and mission. In Chile, Luther is known, but Lutherans are not. In 1964 worship services began to be held in Spanish. Germans have been assisted but there is a lack of identity in the social care centers with the church.

The big problem today is the drop in members and therefore in economic resources. We need to learn how to do missionary work outward. This has led us to copy models that collide inside our church. We do not know if we are asking ourselves the right questions that will let us have an openness to the mission. And yes, we still need to affirm a theology that allows us to point towards our identity. We need to repent and move towards restoration and recreation.

United Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELU - Rev. Gustavo Gomez)

If we talk about mission, I feel identified with the fact of being in a vicious circle. I quote Nestor from the IECLB: "No community without mission and no mission without community" which identifies the IELU but actually our reality is opposite.

I compare the current mission to "someone who has two houses, one of them is on fire and the other one is still not built". In that context we want to extinguish the fire and build the house simultaneously: We must share God's community image with those who are here and there (different churches). When the church is not a healer it sickens more.

Dialogue and reactions in Plenary

Danielle Dokmann: I am not too old but in all these years I never felt that radicalism and fundamentalism were normal. Maybe it was normal before I was born. I was born in Suriname and it was not part of my reality. Somehow in the systems within my country I feel that radicalism and fundamentalism have become normal. How does our theology of mission respond to or fight against radicalism and fundamentalism so we can become healthy communities and more like God's image;

Pedro Bullon: Another participant focuses on the individual, referring to the issue of trust and belief in the individual who is part of the community. How do we discover those people who go unnoticed in our communities and are fundamental pieces in our churches? I ask the ELCA, how can you trust those individuals who are part of that communion? How do we re-enlist these individuals in our congregations? Do you consider that in our missionary work we must return to the sources of early Pietism, which suggests meetings at home? How do we deal with the individual's empowerment when he/she has a 'weapon' with social networks? What can a code of ethics do to networks like Facebook where everything is allowed? It is not simply doing something spectacular to motivate but that the essence of the mission, as such, should motivate humanity. We are part of a church of protagonist members who do not propose community strategies.

Rafael Malpica-Padilla: The Constantine curse; since then the church adjusts itself in fundamentalisms and we only understand the Gospel as a building tool but the Gospel can also deconstruct. But as a church we are not willing to assume the costs of deconstruction. The church must be a disturbing presence in the world. It is said that the Pentecostal church is known as the church of gestures, the Catholic Church as that of images and the Lutheran church as that of the word. I believe we must recover corporeality, and those rites such as the laying on of hands and the anointing with oil. We must rescue the emotionality, the pietistic spirituality.

Lutherans should know how to separate/discern as they receive all kinds of multimedia information.

Angela Trejo: I am concerned to hear about going back to pietism and other positions that make women especially visible and that are against women. Although pietism has a great wealth, we must be careful with its conservatism and its position against diversity Jesus' radicalism, which is radicalism of love, is highlighted.

Nestor Friedrich: During the last 30 years we have had many changes but my fear is that we simplify too much. We must look for deeper and wider answers. As a Lutheran church we have equality principles. There are hermeneutics that we need to rescue.

Session VI - Doing Mission Reflecting the traces of its history.

Other initiatives in mission - Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELB - Rev. Emilio Aslla)

The national and indigenous church of Bolivia, is diverse, multicultural and multilingual. It is the result of the missionary work of the World League of Prayer of the USA from 1936 to 1998 in a Catholic country, where there was not openness to other confessions; a poorer region and of slavery. Until 1956 it was administered by the missionaries. The Bolivians listened without the right to understand since everything was in English. It was alienating and discriminatory, and rejected and demonized other cultures. The ministry was only practiced by men and sinful people were separated with a proclamation of the spiritual gospel

In 1957 the national leader was included only in the presidency. Since 1971 the Bolivian church is a Bolivian national institution instead of an institution "in" Bolivia. Since then it is led and managed by national pastors. There are no missionaries, resources and infrastructure. The pastor's salary is cut and there is no administrative office. The issue was how to develop a mission without resources or support because the church was divided: the middle class members had salaries and resources, and the lower class members had nothing. This experience made us open to solidarity, equality and participation in our context.

We choose the vulnerable and impoverished regions in the country and the work is done 60% in the rural areas and 40% in the cities. Today we have a clearly defined mission: to live and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ within our Bolivian context together with those faithful communities that are opened and sustained by the grace and the unconditional love of God. Today we understand Matthew 25 which invites us to fight for the defense of human dignity, improve the quality of life, fight against violence, abortion, individualism and promote peace and respect for the native culture

Preaching the integral gospel in the context of exclusion and commitment for the dignity of the human being leads us to interact and support the community from different programs, with the

awareness of being in force in a society even as a small church. The proposal is to defend the lives of the most unprotected people.

Other initiatives in mission - Mexican Lutheran Church (ILM - Rev. Roberto Trejo)

It is created in 1859 as a mission church by the American Lutheran Church ALC so that other churches could be accepted in the country since Catholicism was the official religion. The Presbyterian is an older church.

In 1947 the first church was formed in Tapachula. Since then, many others emerged until the mid-1970s. The ALC was in charge of deciding the regulations of the mission. There was no need to talk about commitment, work and sustainability because everything was solved abroad. In the middle of the 70s the economic support is cut off and the ILM needs to wake up and think about how to evangelize. We began a deconstruction task acknowledging that not everything that had been done before was wrong. We were aware, though, that we needed a reconstruction, because the ways the mission had been done before were not over yet.

The church has been evolving according to the challenges of society. One motivation is to be salt and light, to be a pleasant smell for life and not for death. We need to know the type of members that come to church. This way we can develop our mission as each person learns differently. We are the church of the word in different ways. The new generations are more visual than listeners and this is a challenge for us. We do not need to reduce the gospel to a WhatsApp application. We need to be aware of its relevance and its meaning to know how to approach them to the Gospel.

We will not change the essence of the gospel but the forms. We need to think the gospel message in the world that causes tension between the concepts of tenderness and permissiveness. We need to speak about the work of God who embraces us. The context of terror in Mexico involves a change in society so that people feel challenged to transform their reality. We need to address many issues with those that are decision makers. The mission is performed in a context that is opposed to what God proposes. God's liberating message is given in the same way God gave it to us.

Another important aspect is to be a living church, not to survive in a survival context. We need to add the economic issue. There are human resources but we must talk about the offerings and tithes (despite the difficult economic situation). It is a matter of Christian ethics and responsibility. This is not the only issue because sustainability is a wider concept. There is a need of reflection guided by the Holy Spirit that comes from God's solidarity and the grace that does not abandon us, which is a theological framework to receive and open ourselves to needing people (migration). A feature in the work we are doing is the prison ministry and training organized by the SEMLA which began in the mid-60s and today has even opened to the region.

Other initiatives in mission - Salvadoran Lutheran Church (ILS - Rev. Vilma Rodriguez)

In 1050 the ILS was founded as a mission, led by pastor Roberto Gusic of the Missouri Synod, Pasaquina. It obtained its legal status in 1970 as Synod of the churches of Confession and Lutheran Rite. In 1972 the Lutheran Church El Redentor was founded During the civil war the church worked in favor of the war victims. The injustices were denounced, there were shelters opened, and we gave support to the victims that returned and needed rehabilitation. The ILS was

persecuted, pastors and leaders were murdered and others went into exile. The death squads captured Bishop Gomez and released him a week later.

In this context women already had important leadership position and as they were against the Missouri Synod the relationship ended because: a) they were politically active, b) they lost the Lutheran identity, and c) they ordained women. Thus the ILS became a national church accompanying people in need. To consecrations of Rev. Gomez as Bishop and of two women, shortly after, were two important landmarks. The church was invited to sign the peace agreement in 1972.

It is God's mission and we are servants announcing the kingdom good news and denouncing injustices. It is a diaconal, prophetic, inclusive and ecumenical ministry serving the neediest. The mission is to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and diakonia. According to PEP, the church has been restructured into micro-regions with its ministry educated by catechists, deacons, and presbyters. There are lay pastors ordained due to their experience as priests. We work on advocacy, the right to water linked to the issue of incidence against mining, interreligious and intercultural dialogue. We have a holistic health program focused on AIDS (gender, rights and inclusion)

The main problem is social violence (gangs and international drug trafficking). We have had conversations through IPAZ to work on the reintegration of people into society. The return and deportation of Salvadorans (after removing the TPS) is another issue for the migrants' pastoral care - entrepreneurship for work, overcoming trauma, emergency assistance, workshops to prevent illegal migration but with the right to legal migration. We have another challenge with the pastoral salaries. There is a trust to raise money and pay the pastors' salaries, but it is important that churches can offer to the one-dollar campaign. Family Pastoral works with the culture of participation with gender and generational equality.

Panel on convergence points

The Nicaraguan Lutheran Church of Faith and Hope (ILFE - Bishop Victoria Cortez)

The exile story of Victoria Cortez in 1983 and the encounter with Salvadorans made the mission possible and connected people in exile. The church was called the Salvadoran Lutheran Church in Exile. Although the war was not over, the return was organized in 1990. Utech, Maler, and I, at the request of 20 Nicaraguan women, decide to stay. On July 24, 1990 a comprehensive missionary strategy begins, with communities with open spaces. It is God's mission and it cannot be copied but we can learn from the Pentecostal church.

Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras (ICLH - Rev. Rolando Orteiz)

I start with the quote "the oppression is the same, but the oppressor's face is different" because there were bleaching processes and implantation of churches in Europe in the south. Churches from Bolivia to Central America have another mission tone. We cannot preach the gospel and build identity from those contexts. There was a moment in history when it was necessary to decide whether to leave the oppressor and walk in our own reality.

We were born from the Missouri mission in 1951 but there was no church result. There is a new intention between 1965 and 1968 and the church in Olancho is established. From 1963 to 1974 there is no ecumenical action, no women's ordination and no messages to the government. A group of women decided to express their pastoral vocation by initiating the first battle where they had to decide a new identity and theology.

From 1990 to 1994 we broke off from the Missouri Synod. In 2007 a Honduran leader assumed the interim presidency until 2009, and after that it was occupied by ordained people. Our dilemma is how to do mission in a context of forced displacement, social violence and extreme poverty.

Lutheran Costa Rican Church (ILCO - Rev. Gilberto Quezada)

The information of the church is on the website. Like the IELB, the ILCO accompanies eight indigenous communities (with their own language) but it has made the mistake of celebrating with Western-style liturgies. Today, however, we think about encounters with indigenous communities and it has been possible to legally return them their lands. What does it mean to share the gospel in these communities? We have not past doing it literally (considering the criticisms to other mission churches). As we do, we need to change, the liturgy, songs, prayers, biblical reading are vertical, literal, sexist, and with a pyramidal structure.

Reflecting about the meaning of mission in the ILM, how much do we resist whenever a structure is new? Are we clear about what the church is, considering its structure or its communities? Is there a serious reflection on what is said (pastors) and what is heard (community)? Have we deeply thought about theism: is it theocentric, or Jesus centric? What is the difference between the Trinitarian subject that makes a difference? Is the economic sustainability for faith communities or for church structures? The effort for political advocacy should not become welfare dependency of the unprotected classes. In relation to the ILS, regarding the issue of women's leadership, what have they been ordered for? Are they in decision-making positions? And concerning the issue of churches involved in politics, is Jesus' political choice or just politicking?

Guatemalan Lutheran Church (ILUGUA - Rev. José Pilar Álvarez Cabrera)

All throughout history we can find similar experiences because we are churches that were born in the context of military dictatorships with violation of human rights. The ILUGUA was born during a dictatorship that still persists today, disguised as a civil democratic government. It is a military structure of corruption and impunity that restrains structural, political and economic changes. In addition to this structure there are multinational companies that dictate the laws.

Bishop Gerardi participated in the report that systematized human rights violations; the church recovers the historical memory. At the request of people in need, we have been part of the social movement since 1983. We were not born on mission because we saw churches that used projects and programs to drag people. We assumed the political diakonia incorporating the indigenous peasant movement, which had historical, social, economic and political claims linked to the care of nature. Leaders were criminalized. The Catholic Church had a key role in an alliance to protect the people that were threatened, arrested or who had an arrest warrant issued by multinational companies in alliance with the state, which wanted to silence people's voices.

Dialogue and in plenary

Danielle Dokman: Development linked to the mission is an implicit element. There were certain models of development that were imposed on governments and underdeveloped churches with the final goal of independence. Somehow these models have failed, creating inequities: developed and underdeveloped churches. Can one really be independent? Considering the Trinitarian model, what would be the final goal of the mission in relation to the development of churches and communities? Should they continue fighting for their independence?

Roberto Trejo: Nestor Miguez Bonino affirms: The Liberation Theology initially promoted the church in the intervention of God as in the Exodus. Many churches were discontent because the oppressive governments did not fall (as happened in the Exodus). We understand that being independent or not implies learning to get to know the context and answer in different ways. The social economic model of survival, unless there is a community generating its own resources, is dependent on the system. The task is to learn how to live beyond the system. The gospel presents a different proposal, challenging oppressive aspects.

Valerio Schaper: Sustainability and independence are based on relations of how to build and share. The mission cannot talk about anything else than this search.

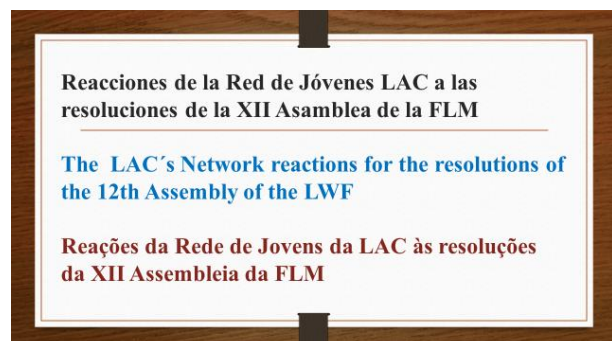
Sonia Skupch: Dependency is not an unconnected issue. As we think about what is biblical and theological, we propose the model of interdependence (more than small entities) and the relationships and links/power games closely linked to the availability of resources.

Rafael Malpica: I have been critical of the use of "sustainability" as it comes from the non-ecclesiastic world. I rather speak of spirituality of the gifts. The fact is how money and gifts are used for the mission of God and in the world of God. This provides a different perspective; as a church, we do not "invest" but we support and live the spirituality of the gifts.

Adriana Gastellu: I agree with the north-south relationships' component that implies power and financial relations.

Session IX - Networks - Analysis and alternatives for the Mission Today

Youth Network:





EDUCACION/EDUCATION/EDUCAÇÃO

- Capacitación de Líderes jóvenes a través de la información de diferentes cursos producidos por las iglesias de la región.
- Compartir el material que se ha producido en la región sobre identidad luterana y nuestras iglesias, temas de agenda pública y que son pertinentes en nuestro contexto.
- Blog mantenido en los idiomas de la Federación.

REAVIVAR IGLESIAS/REVIVAL OF CHURCHES/REAVIVAMENTO DE IGREJAS

- Retomar el día de la Oración por lo Jóvenes, debido a la buena respuesta que recibió en las dos ocasiones que se realizó. Mes de Septiembre.
- Reactivación y fortalecimiento de las Pastoral Universitaria en las iglesias.
- Trabajo de temas de agenda pública.

EQUIDAD/EQUITY/EQUIDADE

- Equidad como TEMA TRANSVERSAL que debe permanecer en nuestras discusiones y acciones.

Metodología/Metodology/Metodologia

- Estas propuestas tienen un año para ser puestas en práctica en la medida de las posibles en las iglesias de la Región.
- Se propone que en la próxima COL estas sean evaluadas para seguir nuestros próximos pasos.

Propuesta/Proposal/Proposta

- Queremos un espacio mayor para poder compartir nuestras experiencias, con el objetivo de fortalecer la Red y los liderazgos en nuestras iglesias.
- Solicitamos que la Red de Jóvenes LAC se reúna uno o dos días antes del inicio de la COL.

Women's and Gender Justice Network: Commitment to work properly and in community. Three thematic nodes: Gender's Justice Policy, Theology, and Advocacy. The following chart shows the subjects developed for each thematic node, with whom to work and what actions are to be followed:

NODES	THEMES	WOTH WHOM	ACTIONS
Gender Justice Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the GJP Corporeity Gender justice 	Youth Ordained ministries Community leaders COL Educational institutions Teachers Grupos outsiders	Coordinate with COL Having online resources Updated blog Promotion of regional seminars Motivate and promote women to access graduate studies on theology Strengthening networks Active participation with organizations working on the theme
Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious Fundamentals Masculinities Violence against women Abortions 	Reproductive and Sexual rights Violence against women Theologians Ordained ministries Seminaries and Theological centers Sustainability Institute Youth Teachers Schools	Disclosure and incentive to participate in online courses InstS Encourage exchange with Africa and Asia Positioning and Publications Identify men that address the subject masculinity Elaborate and share liturgies
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Femicide Human rights 	NGO- Civil Society Women, men Youth Lutheran Foundation of Diakonia FLD Government instances COL Ordained and lay instances	Encourage learning and exchange of experiences through the NETWORK (Exhibition Ni Tan Dulce Hogar - FLD). Pronouncements Ecumenical, interreligious, and intercultural dialogues Partnerships and strategies for working in the Network

NETWORK OF GENDER JUSTICE			
NODES	COORDINATORS	FACILITATORS	REGIONAL REFERENTS
Gender Justice Policy	Ofelia Dávila Ángela Trejo Elizabeth Arciniegas	Carmen M. Siegle	Pastoral de Mujeres
Theology		Vilma Romer	Teólogas
Advocacy		José Pilar	Pastoras Diaconas Activistas Grupos de Incidencia Juventud

Each node has coordinators, facilitators and regional reference persons:

Agenda with two tasks: 1) Continue to build liturgies: for November 25, an Advent Sunday, March 8, Family Day. 2) Pronouncement of the Network: As the Women's and Gender Justice Network being part of the Leadership Conference, we express our concern and rejection of the growing violence manifestations that are arising in our countries, violating the rights and dignity of human

beings, especially women and children. As churches committed to God's, we denounce violence as a sin and demand that public and ecclesiastical policies be created, implemented and applied, guaranteeing life, security and equity in society.

Experiences of being young in church and society

Arlene: The situation in El Salvador is one of strong violence. Being young can be a sin in this society because you cannot go into certain sectors or visit friends and families. Our task is not to get involved, making use of a community radio. About 15 young people are trained for 2 years in the area of journalism and production focused on the community. We share the information with authorities to sensitize them. The migration of young people is challenging; we have a project that intends to take action and motivate them not to migrate: We offer work initiatives and help to families. Another aspect is teaching Lutheran theology to contribute to growth.

Martina: We took the diakonia discussion to the church and the young reformers network, with the "youth and diakonia" campaign in a national meeting in 2016 with the participation of representatives of the representatives of the 18 synods that implemented the campaign locally. The first proposal was to discuss the diakonia because as there were diaconal actions that were not assumed as such and were confused with welfare dependency. We have 600 groups of young people and we managed to bring half of them through regional actions that took place during the celebration of the 500 years of the Reformation. A good action that has even gone beyond the church and has contributed in recent years to its mission.

Romario: 2016-2017 Reforming - a project to locally reaffirm and replicate the Protestant identity with themes such as: baptism and communion, justification by faith and Protestant ethics. We also reflected about the church in the public space, the role of women and the concept of our body since the Reformation and how it has evolved. More than 90 young people have also reached the bases. During 2019 and 2020 we will continue with topics related to leadership, intergenerational work and training to learn how to develop liturgical materials for youth celebrations.

Rafael VanOmeren: I will concentrate on the churches' education and revival. Regarding education: the challenge is that 15% of pastors have received Lutheran education and this implies understanding what it means to be Lutheran, mainly for youth. Future pastors will be educated more in Moravian than Lutheran in theology. It is more important that our youth learns more about leadership. We only have one young female pastor, who is great, but she is just one. We want to motivate other pastors to take this task seriously. Regarding churches' revival: it is important to learn to embrace our culture, music, and languages. The relationship with youth will change significantly if we use these elements, as an indication that we are a church with our own culture. To train youth in what it means to be Lutherans and teach adults how beautiful and good is to maintain our culture.

Martina: During this year we will go deep all the themes that were shared and worked in our churches and by 2019 we will bring them more systematized.

Dialogue in plenary

Oscar Sanhueza. Thank you for the reports received. To the youth, knowing that there is apathy towards the church but not to God, to affirm that they believe. Youth has lost spaces in society and academia, how do they resume and strengthen university spaces?

Rafael Malpica-Padilla: Rafael's point - the need to have trained leaders to meet this need.

Women and young people have shown us challenges to the praxis of congregational life. How do we train pastors for the praxis of the training life so we do not use women and young people? We need to introduce the agendas presented. The problem is that in the congregations we do not have leaders with the ability to be agents of change.

Gilberto: On the issue of revival: young drug dealers - we mean youth inside and outside the church; the "NiNi" those who neither work nor study; the atheist saints, young people who do not believe in the sitting God anymore, but love what is ecological, care for nature and are committed to life.

Luz: The University pastoral consists in creating spaces and getting involved. It is related to issues as creation's care and those actions that interest youth, not only ecclesiastic issues but also those linked to their daily activities. We also work with high school seniors. Some churches in the region used to have this ministry but the goal is to revive these spaces. When I was asked what to do, I suggested that we needed to work on it because we cannot be silent as we face the topics that have been shared. We need to take the policies and make them real. Another challenge is not to be afraid of working on biblical hermeneutics in the training centers. It is just about the decision to do it.

Continuity of reflections in plenary

Rolando Ortez: We were also young some time ago. This does not mean that youth is resistant or apathetic towards the church, but rather towards the structure. We have closed the space. I lived through something similar myself. I was told I had no experience and that I was not capable. The challenge is to open up and be an attractive church for youth.

Pedro Bullon: I want to mention a subject that for many years have been presented in the church and is related to the "dead files". I wonder how this is accompanied by the growth of churches with a Lutheran mentality and from youth and women, without the fear that growth is just a Pentecostal brand.

Adriana Gastellu: Four points of the presentation: 1) That the women's team needs to have a young person, not only as a name. The work needs not to be forgotten. The same goes for the Caribbean area, because of the language challenge, as someone who speaks another language must be connected to the churches. 2. Youth talks about liturgy with a youth focus. Women have already done that: a workshop for young women and the network to be able to work together. 3. Women choose a person in the Council and ask the youth to do the same thing to influence the federation, like Pastor Jose Pilar who is also part of this bridge to use the possibility. 4. To exhort the COL that future agendas, including not only the issues of youth and women but also topics from the perspectives of women and young people. As we read the memories of the COL, since 2011 the gender justice issue was included; in 2013 was made official; in Mexico 2014 it was assumed to work in the churches themselves as an agreement. What happens with that?

Elaine: When I was elected to come to the conference I did not know why, considering my age (72 years old). I thought that young would be the ones to come. But God has his own ways no matter what we think. Many of you do not even know where our country, is the only English speaking one. Many visit Brazil and Venezuela. The ELCG has 47 communities and only 8 pastors (4 men, 4 women). 19 deacons but disjointed. In the last Assembly, 4 deacons were commissioned. This

is the staff for the whole country. What I want to share is that the Assembly is over and we have a new president: Conrad Plummer, who is a different leader. I vow that things will change, that when pastors are ordained they will stay to work and this will be reflected in the youth, due to structural issues.

Vilma Rodriguez: It is an important fact that in the churches of Central America, 70% are young people. Our experience has shown us that youth is the key to change, growth and strengthening. We must include and listen to their proposals and new suggestions for theological education programs. Their new forms make them more dynamic and successful. We must also get them involved in the area of diakonia, for example, in holistic health programs or psychosocial training. Young people are those who carry more proposals and go faster in the dialogue between them. Get them involved in practical actions such as worship and preaching.

Session X - Important Aspects for Formation and Mission Today

Faculdades EST/InS

The EST Faculties were considered by the Ministry of Education and Culture among university centers, faculties and institutes, the fourth highest grade with a general index of courses. History is linked to the educational culture of many years.

Faculdades EST São Leopoldo - Brasil



Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Wochholz
Diretor
Prof. Dr. Valério Schaper
Coordenador InS
May 2018

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Faculdades EST: 4th best level in the General Level of Courses (IGC) Brazil



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STRATEGIC AXES

IDENTITY

- Theological / Confessional / Human:** confessional, the intellectual and artistic dimension, and the practice of care from a Lutheran, ecumenical, interreligious and contextual perspective.
- Contextual:** insertion, articulation and the joint work of the EST in company to the Latin American and global context, from an ecumenical and dialogical identity.
- Diversity:** identity of the EST affirming plurality assuming the challenges of gender, ethnic-racial, intercultural and intergenerational relationships and disabilities.
- Educational-communitarian:** community education, assuming challenges of an education that humanizes, is integral, affirms solidarity, is ethical, ecological, democratic and transformative.
- Communications:** internal communication as service to potentiate the academic, technological, artistic and cultural production of the institution.

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Identity

* The statue of Katharina von Bora with support of the institution and persons linked to it.



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STRATEGIC AXES

STRATEGIC AXES SUSTAINABILITY

- Socio-political dimension:** carried out with civil society, movements, and social organizations.
- Management dimension:** Professionalize management and ensure horizontal and vertical integration, defining competencies and tasks, and guaranteeing flows and processes with clarity and agility
- Administrativ-financial dimension:** Qualify and expand the generation, capture and management of resources to ensure the continued operation of the EST, creating impulses for modernization and innovation.
- Environmental dimension:** the campus EST with practical and sustainable accessibility.

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FACULDADES EST

Founded in 1946 for the formation of ministers of the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB), today with extended mission and training in other areas

THEOLOGY	HEALTH	ART
Bachelor	Tec. Nursing	Pedagoga Music
Specialization Courses	Tec. Care for Elderly	Tec. Composition and Music Arrangement
Professional Master		Tec. en Instrumento Musical
Academic Master		Tec. on Singing
Doctorate		
Post doctorate		

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Students 2018/1

Students	Total
Post doctorate	5
Doctorate	72
Academic Master	18
Professional Master	106
Specialization – Presential	134
Specialization – online	66
Bachelor in Theology	95
Bach. Musicoterapy	23
Pedagogy on Music	55
Others – Technical	188
TOTAL	762

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The Magazines Portal, of the Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination (Capes), is a virtual library that brings together and provides the best educational and research institutions in Brazil with education and research institutions in Brazil. It has a fund of more than 37,000 titles with full texts, 126 reference bases, 11 bases dedicated exclusively to patents, as well as books, encyclopedias and reference works, technical standards, statistics and audio-visual content.

Professors, researchers, students and officials of many Higher Education and research institutions throughout the country have immediate access to the updated world scientific production through this service offered by CAPES. The use of the Portal is free and free for users of participating institutions. The access is made from any terminal with Internet access located in the institutions.

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PUBLICATIONS FACULDADES EST



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Center of Liturgical Resources(CRL)

The Center for Liturgical Resources(CRL) of the Facultades EST initiated at the end of 1993 with the goal to contribute to the liturgical life of the Christian churches in Brazil and Latin America. Today, it is coordinated by professor Dr. Julio César Adam.

Chapel in the Facultades EST



P. Prof. Dr. Júlio Adam



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Online Courses

InS – Sustainability Institute and Religion and Gender Program:

- Women in the Reformation
- Aspects of Gender in the life of the community



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Online Courses

InS – Sustainability Institute

- Functional qualification on sustainable community leadership
- Management and leadership in sustainable churches:
- Community leadership
- How to work with migrants in the communities of faith



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Online Courses

Lato Sensu – Distance Education (Fase 1 = March/2018)

- Especialization on Bible
- Especialization on Religious Teaching
- Especialization on Teaching on Superior Education and Professional Education
- Especialization on Mobilization of Resources and Sustainability
- Especialization on Pastoral Counseling



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Online Courses

Lato Sensu – Distance Education (Fase 2 = March/2019)

- Especialization on Human Right and Religion
- Especialization on Music
- Especialization on Applied Musictherapy
- Especialization on Biblical Hebrew
- Especialization on Sequential Art and Pop Culture



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Online Courses

Lato Sensu – Distance Education (Fase 3 = March/2020)

- Especialization on biblical greek
- Especialization on clinical protocols
- Especialization on Gender: epistemology, violence and power
- Especialization on History, Culture and Afro Brazilian and Indigenous Religion



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Professional Master

Research on Theology in Latin America

This new research on Theology in Latin America within the Professional Master degree is offered to persons in the continent including pentecostal churches.



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Ecumenical Theological Education Network (REET) - Beginnings, advances and possibility



Starting – Developments – Projection

"Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions..." (Joel 2,28)

Starting



After the closure of ISEDET, the founding churches began a process of reflection and dialogue in order to evaluate the ecumenical project of theological education in the region.

Over the course of two years, a joint discernment took place regarding the various options and visions of the churches.

This resulted in five of them arriving at a consensus on the REET, reflected in the joint signing of a Declaration of Commitment, made public on October 19, 2017.

There they expressed their willingness to create the *Ecumenical Network of Theological Education*

Churches participating



General Objectives



To respond to the current needs of theological-ministerial training of the churches in the evangelical ecumenical areas in the River Plate and Latin American, both in terms of ordained ministries, and various lay ministries.

To respond to the need to have a space to study and research on theology, religion, and society which is open to the public, with quality academic and practical training developed in dialogue with sciences and other knowledge of the Spanish-speaking world.

Fundamental Principles



- To serve in God's mission in the world, building the communities of faith, and the concretion of his public testimony in our societies.

- The theological and spiritual heritage of the Evangelical Reformation is approached in an ecumenical perspective.

- The fundamental orientation to the reality and culture of our Latin American communities and peoples in the global context.

- A clear commitment in the promotion and defence of human and ecological rights.

Institutional Academic Concept



The vision that sustains the project is to create an ecumenical educational space dedicated to teach, research and dissemination using the intersection between theology, religion, and society.

REET intends to progressively develop undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate university programs, promoting the management of official recognition of the careers and degrees that it offers in the future.

Also a wide range of programs and extension courses.

Within this framework, its programmatic objective is to contribute to the creation of a true network of academic exchange and cooperation between various national and foreign educational institutions, at a regional and global levels.

Study modality



- REET will offer programs and courses in the modality of "long distance" through e-learning (on line).

- In a complementary way, it will offer intensive study instances developed in different regional "hubs", articulating a formative proposals of a "semi-face" character of education.

Developments



- In January 2018, REET started the registration to courses and subjects that make up its "Introductory Theological Diploma" (unofficial title). This program proposes to develop 2 courses and four subjects over a year.
- 26 interested parties completed the pre-registration online form, while 14 students were enrolled.
- On February 22, the activity began with the "Socialization Course", which was followed on March 8 through 2 "Introduction" courses: to "Biblical Theology" and "History of the Church". In the second semester the introductory subjects is developed to "Systematic Theology" and "Practical Theology", concluding with a "Knowledge Integration Module".

Developments



- Currently the subjects proposed for the first semester are in full development.
- The ecumenical team of teachers is working intensively on:
 - The general management and accompaniment, and the development of classes and activities;
 - Developing diverse tools and documents related to the REET: definition of an institutional – organizational chart, a study plan, etc
 - All should be brought together as soon as possible in the elaboration of a document that will formalize the Institutional Development Project (PDI) of REET – prepared in each one of the items and professional and qualified consultants.

Projection



2018

- Teaching courses and subjects of the Introductory Theological Diploma
- Design of new careers with their curricular proposal, (technical and bachelor's degrees)
- Conduct workshops and panels for the Free Training Program (Extension)
- Definition of fundamental criteria related to the management of Legal Entity
- Preparation of an Institutional Development Plan (PDI).

Projection



2019

- Launching of new careers (Technical)
- Continues with Free Training Program (Extension)
- Management and working to obtain the legal recognition (as institution of education)
- Preparation research projects
- Training of teachers in teaching using the virtual tools.

Projection



2020

- Teaching the subjects of the second year of the new career
- Continuation of the Free Training Program (Extension)
- Starting with the research projects
- Conclusion of the PDI
- Starts the administrative process to be officially recognized as an educative institution by the State.

Projection



On these bases, the ecumenical team will:

- Develop the Academic Program in force (DTI)
- Design courses for the undergraduate degree (Tecnatura) and Bachelor and Professional degrees as Extension Program (free courses) with the aim of offering them from 2019
- Design and progressive execute the PDI including management of legal recognition and actively explore possibilities of academic-institutional cooperation with other houses of study.

"Those who sow in tears, singing will harvest."
(Cancionero Abierto)

Augsburg Lutheran Seminary (SEMLA) of the ILM

It was created in 1964 by the Lutheran Church of Missouri and the ALC. It was thought as a regional seminar in Colombia but ended being in Mexico City. It has a structure for teachers, students, and classes. It had students from several places of Central America, Colombia and Ecuador. As it embraced the Theology of Liberation, in the 70s, it was difficult for the Mexican church to understand this position taken by professors from the USA. It was closed in 1981, keeping the professors from the Theological Community.

It was expected to reopen in 1997 and in 1998, led by David Brondos who prepares leadership, it gives rise to generations of national leadership. This second stage begins with the arrival of women who were ordained in 1999. After observing the lack of students another step was taken in 2011: the creation of online resources: Introduction to the Bible; Martin Luther and the Reformation. Two students graduated and the work had a great impact on Latin America and other churches (Chile, Argentina with more students).

SEMLA participates in the COL in 2015 by listening to the needs of the churches. In March 2016 in Lima, in dialogue with Pastor Emilio, Pastor Rolando and Bishop Victoria (dialogue facilitated by Patricia), the churches requested specific courses and it was responded to. It was agreed that it

was cheaper to move one or two persons to a local church and that this church would be responsible for bringing students (training plan).

Since 2017, two courses were given at the IELB: "Introduction to the Lutheran Identity", and "Introduction to the Reformation History". In the ILFE the course "Old Testament" was given in two rural Lutheran communities. We could listen and know how they live in a context of struggle, poverty, etc. In the ICLH "Introduction to the Bible" and "Biblical Hermeneutics with an emphasis on Gender". In the ILUGUA with Maya Chorti communities that fight for the defense of land and water against the Canadian mining company. They work on issues of "Bible with Lutheran identity", "Diakonia (which they already practice) with Lutheran identity". "The Mayan position and Spirituality". These experiences have marked and broadened the horizons helping us to take a turn and break with the scheme in which seminars go on the one hand and churches on the other, as well as placing themselves in contexts with a return dynamic.

The need for courses with a year or two program focused on the Lutheran identity has arisen. The ILM and the Seminar move to offer proper spaces for possible training processes. The SEMLA team has been able to sit down and listen to meet the needs that the churches have placed in this task.

IPC Pastoral Institute of the IELU

It was created and approved by the Board of Directors of IELU at the end of 2015 for the formation of lay people. It does not replace the ISEDET nor does it prepare but it rather deals with the strengthening of lay people in the congregations. When ISEDET decided to close, the IELU included the training of pastors together with REET.

The IELU has reviewed pastoral training because of the social and financial challenges to strengthen lay people who carry on the ministry. Alan Eldrid, Iván Vivas and Mercedes García-Bachmann are the part-time staff. IPC works in a contextual way, not from the office but in contact with the communities. One of the components of the IPC's participation is REET, and Alan and Mercedes are preparing subjects.

IELU with its Local Participatory Strategic Planning process has seen the needs, and the courses try to respond to them. At the same time, it proposes topics that are important, even if they have not emerged from the PEP. The course "Facilitators" provides tools to work systematically with mediation and analysis. In 2018 it will be offered for the first time in the IELB. The course is well prepared, it trains people who serve as leaders in congregations and can also be used in the workplace.

The mission of the IPC is not only inward but also to other spaces. There is "Introduction to Biblical thought and Bible and Gender" for Catechists. A basic course "Everything you do is mission" with a general introduction of what is mission and nine specific modules linked to mission issues (diakonia, management, etc.). This course will be given for the first time to the ICLH in 2018.

The Bible theme (online) has a monthly on site class (optional). Finally, the mentoring course, as we realized that in general we have not studied online because we all study face-to-face theology. We want to accompany students to study online as it requires a mindset change. The new pastoral model requires that pastors give place to people; this way we really tutor under the new

mission model. This helps those of us who want to be mentors, to see the challenges, difficulties, advantages and points to be considered to make a critical evaluation of the ministries themselves.

Session XII - Round Table for financing of the Ministerial Training

Rev. Katia Cortez shares the information about the Round table:



Round Table Financing Ministerial Formation

LWF
September 25-26, 2017



Objectives:

- Gather Information on the models, levels and styles of training
- Sharing experiences of financing the ministerial formation
- Identify strategies for future scholarships
- Identify existing different challenges and opportunities in the different regions
- Identify possible lines of work for the LWF on this theme

THEMES WORKED

► Types and levels of existing trainings:

Theological Education and Ministerial Formation

Traditional types of formation:

- Bachelor, masters
- Experimental
- Normative
- Emerging

THEMES WORKED

► Training institutions

Training centers that consider:

- Working regionally
- Denominations (ecumenical)
- accreditation
- Residence models.

THEMES WORKED

► Alternative models of training

From creativity, new approaches to mission have involved the concept of "Diversified Ministries" bringing concrete and practical elements for ministries. It considers abilities of the people and includes aspects related to leadership, management, planning that are ecclesiological and theologically grounded. Theological education by extension, is given in all regions of communion. Short courses of 9 to 12 weeks on specific topics, Contextual Pastoral Institute, Diaconate Lay Academy.

THEMES WORKED

► Scholarships

"Training of Trainers"

- 2015 evaluation

Finances used from 2007 to 2010: 500,000.00 Euros

THEMES WORKED

► Alternative models for financing

Financial dependency in the global south:

- External financing
- Government support
- Local churches' support

Some challenging factors: drop of students, reduction of government support or partner agencies, or lack of management or financial plans.

Resultados

Networks:

- Recognize the new network model between churches in Latin America and the Caribbean, the theological training seminars, and the Theological Mission Forum that supports formation in different churches in Asia.
- Proposal of a mapping of network initiatives in the regions
- Promotion of Exchange of teachers for learning through the regions
- The offices of the communion will facilitate the establishment of networks for theological formation

Resultados

Model to support programs

- Identify other forms of support, apart from scholarships, for payment of personnel who teach in theological institutes
- Theological training institutions are more proactive in the search for funds
- Promote support and accompaniment south-south

Resultados

Estrategies for institutions in vulnerable situation

- Develop ongoing evaluations to ensure finances and seek solutions
- The LWF must develop a policy to assist "vulnerable" institutions
- The LWF offers support to networks

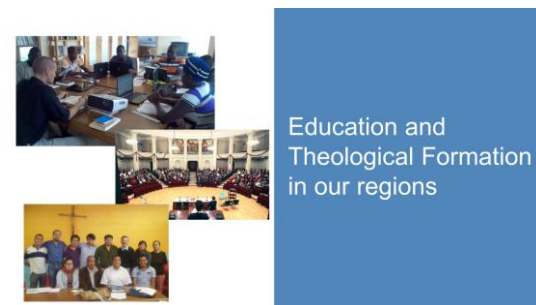
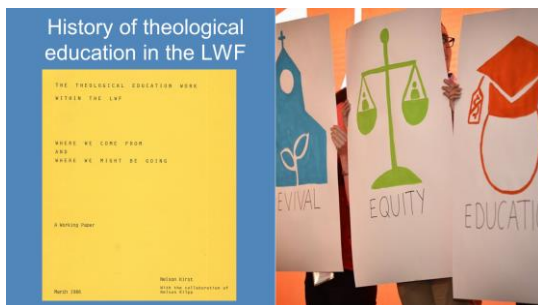
Other considerations

- Diversity of languages, bilingual experiences
- Need for coordination between the cooperation
- Finalize processes of accreditation
- Considering limiting frames (aspects) for online courses
- Greater and constant information about the scholarship processes
- Strengthen / create platforms for development of contextual content to different realities
- Follow up on these agreements between DMD and DTPW

Network Work Agreement Rev. Dr. Chad Rimmer

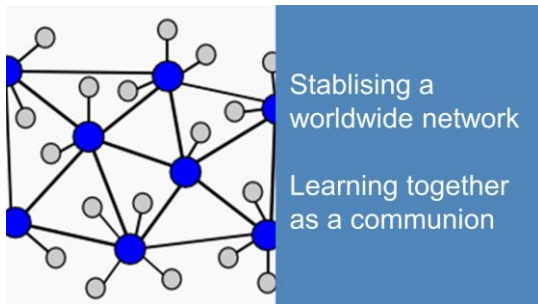


I was a missionary and professor in Senegal and South Africa. In Senegal, people eat around the plate. The older generation together with the younger generation, does it for training. The word *Nit ku Jamm* means to educate and the goal of the intergenerational moment is to be trained to live in peace. This is the purpose of intergenerational and inter-ethnic communion.



The key to theological education is transformation: Luther spoke of the transformation in the church, in society and in the homes when referring to the children's education. The document *Where do we come from and where could we go* (1986) states it. We are a diverse fellowship in

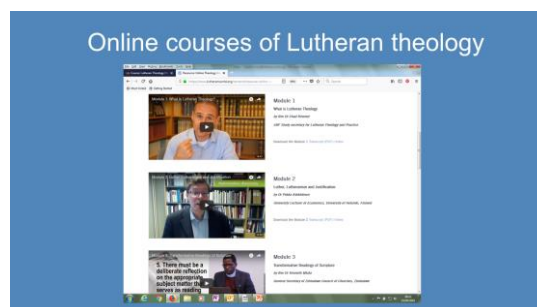
terms of theological education and we have one goal: to help churches and people called to the ministry to access theological and Lutheran education. In Senegal, it is not sustainable to send students abroad or to access good Lutheran theological education. The trilateral action between Senegal, ELCA and MELF made it possible. Another training model is that of the State University of Helsinki with classical and high level theology. As a public entity it does not teach the confessional doctrine. Finally, the SEMLA is a model of contextual education.



The approved resolution on theological education calls to be contextual with a network strategy for 2020. A strategic working group will be designing the network in two years in order to increase the access to theological education worldwide. The working group is formed by the member churches, study houses and theology students.



A participatory network (member churches and training centers). Churches with experience and different relationships need a platform to share resources. The structure of the network will be developed together with the contents.



The Department of Theology and Public Witness identified through consultation the meaning of transformative theology: contextual, critical, creative, concrete. The 2017 Assembly has identified several nodes that will be considered. Finally, the aspect of the network and communication platform. Yesterday we heard fantastic and innovative theological training presentations at LAC. In the communion offices, a pilot video project was developed with eight modules on different topics:

Luther and Lutheranism, justification, theory of the two kingdoms, biblical hermeneutics and feminist hermeneutics, ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, diakonia. There were students and teachers from each region. Each module has a video, questions and answers with a weekly meeting between students and teachers (live). It is a study experience with different communities. What can be done is to support contextual theological education in the regions. The added value is that it can transform different people in the world, motivate them to live the transformation through the access to Lutheran identity in the regions. What I see in LAC is a model for other realities.

Questions in plenary

Guillermo Hansen: This worked well considering that English is not the language. The translated courses are available, in addition to which the translation considers the contextual.

Chad Rimmer: The strategic group is not the network but the member churches and education institutions. Language is a critical aspect for the platforms of theological education; the teacher's exchange. The example is a pilot course. It can be a way of working. In order to expand globally we will need to work on the language with models such as SEMLA or IPC.

One task is for theological education and jointly articulating the Lutheran identity. We are finishing a conceptual note for a consultation on spirituality in the church, how we live and how we can talk about our experiences as Lutherans. We want to design a participatory process. Each region will send representatives in order to develop a framework of understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, then they will return to the regions and put it in a final document.

Session XIII - Theological Training in the Network. The Theological Training for the Mission - Working Network Agreement

Nestor Friedrich indicates that the shared document is an intention to face the challenges of training and theological education and how to work on those challenges. The COL theme is the mission and how to train for the ministry. The ministerial and theological training in the network is part of it, because its intention is to contribute to God's mission.

Baumann's sentence in his work *The Liquid Modernity - Babel*, between uncertainty and hope - allows us to think about the world we are facing and the work that requires time and effort. Among the ways and tools we need, the dialogue with a favorable and cooperative disposition seeks mutual understanding and reciprocal benefit that deserves more confidence. If we are not accomplices and we have confidence, the document can be filed. Dialogue is not an easy or fun task. It requires resolute and continuous determination, and to be immune to what may happen. It is important not to give up but to continue, despite the negative results. The document has a strong sense of purpose and intentionality. We have to admit our mistakes and make up for them, but most of all, have serenity, balance and patience.

If we read Acts of the Apostles, we see how Jesus' movement becomes a church because they were one heart and one spirit. Each one of them was committed to God's mission in the midst of a hostile context and they knew they would only survive if they stayed together. We have a beautiful task ahead of us if we see the context, the religious market, the challenge of being a Lutheran church swimming against the flow and not trying to shape society. That will make a difference and it is based on our unity. This document is a beautiful intention. It will be significant if we embrace it

and transform it in a good attitude. At the IECLB we have to learn, exchange experiences, contribute and talk together.

Gustavo Gomez: We have to remember that the document calls us to be together in a long walk (since 2012) and that it has questions that were considered long ago in this common space. It brings aspects to look forward and proposes a thick line from where to walk together. There is a great systematic effort and we are very grateful that we have put in a panoramic view various things from the wealth and looking for the common points: But it is a thick road that indicates that we are going somewhere. That is the idea, then we will have to determine the means of transportation the date, who prepares the sandwiches, etc. The document is shared with this spirit and the proposal is to look widely the extensive task of the training spaces.

Roberto Trejo presents the power point prepared by EST/InS, SEMLA, IPC and the Area Secretariat.

MEMORY – BUILDING THEOLOGICAL
TRAINING FROM PRACTICE



FEDERACIÓN
LUTERANA MUNDIAL
AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE

Memory developed for the 2018 COL
Buenos Aires, 08 - 12 May

2012 – FLORIANÓPOLIS, BRAZIL

- Request of the LWF churches for training on contextual ministries that include management and leadership aspects
- The churches proposed to develop training plans linked to the strategic / mission plans
- **Proposal of the churches:** to approach the centers of theological formation making possible mutual support for mission

2013 – MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

- Emphasis of training on critical thinking
- Churches promote deeper participation of women and youth in ministries and training
- **Agreement:** considering the sustainability processes in the churches, develop a space that could contribute to training using acquired experiences in the program
- **Result:** in dialogue with the IECLB and Faculties EST, the Sustainability Institute (InS) was inaugurated in October 2013 for the churches in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2014 – MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

- COL focused on theological formation
- Agreement to support research in the academy regarding the theological production made by women, it will include their stories
- Theology must affirm vocation and services, and reconceptualize them theologically offering these results to the churches
- Use of participatory methodology including bi-vocational promotion for the ordained ministry
- Greater knowledge of training made by SEMLA
- **Agreement:** to respond to the need related formation in the churches in the region – to be executed by the area secretary
- EST/InS accompanies PEP processes in the ILS



2015 – WEAVING LINKS

- Development and approval of the EST / InS founding document
- Curricula and online courses developed in the EST / InS
- At request by the IELB, the EST/InS carries out the course "Good Living, Lutheran Identity and Sustainability" (September/2015)
- Dialogue with SEMLA to get the seminary involved in the processes of ministerial formation



"Good Living, Lutheran Identity and Sustainability" September/2015
By the EST/InS in the IELB

2016 – LIMA, PERU

- Meeting on human and institutional capacity development, dialogue between the IELB, ILFE, ICLH, and SEMLA looking for alternatives that can respond to the churches' challenges for ministerial formation
- **Agreement:** walk towards the churches to meet their theological training needs
- The area secretary was in charge of weaving connections and making it possible in relationship to trainings needed



Agreement between IELB and SEMLA



Agreement between ILFE, ICLH and SEMLA

2017

- 500 years into a new reformation process – SEMLA with a new way of working on theological formation
- May: "Introduction to the Old Testament" in ILFE (by SEMLA)
- June: "Church in misión and ecclesial management on perspective of sustentability in the IELB" (by EST/InS)
- September: "Introduction to the Lutheran Identity" and "Introduction to the History of the Reformation" in the IELB (by SEMLA)
- November: "Introduction to Bible" in the ICLH (by SEMLA)
- December: "Diakonia and Lutheran Identity" in ILUGUA (by SEMLA)



"Introduction to the Old Testament" in May/2017 by SEMLA in the ILFE



"Church in misión and ecclesial management on perspective of sustentability in June 2017 in the IELB" (by EST/InS)



"History of the Reformation" and "Luthran Identity", September/2017 by SEMLA in the IELB

2018

- IPC is integrated into the network for ministerial formation
- "Introduction to the Bible: History and formation" in ILUGUA (by SEMLA)
- "Introduction to the Bible II" in ICLH (by SEMLA)
- "Hermeneutics and Homiletics" in ICLH (by SEMLA)



"Introduction to the Bible", February/2018 by SEMLA in the ILUGUA



"Introduction to the Bible II". April 2018 by SEMLA in the ICLH

Dates	Courses/Workshop	Church	Responsible
February	Introduction to the Bible: history and formation	ILUGUA	SEMLA
April	Introduction to the Bible II	ICLH	SEMLA
April	Hermeneutics and homiletics	ICLH	SEMLA
May	Liturgy	ICLH	EST/nS
May	Sacraments: Holy Communion and Baptism	IELB	EST/nS
May	The two Catechisms and doctrinal aspects of the Lutheran identity	ICLH	EST/nS
July	Biblical hermeneutics (emphasis on the popular Reading of the Bible)	ILUGUA	EST/nS
July	Introduction to the Old Testament	ILFE	SEMLA
August	Church History	IELB	SEMLA
August	Liturgy and Homiletics	ILUGUA	SEMLA
August	Lutheran identity	ILCH y IELCH	SEMLA
October	Worship and Liturgy	IELB	EST/nS
October	All that you do is mission	ICLH	IPC
October	Seminary for Facilitators	IELB	IPC
November	Church history and Lutheran identity	ILUGUA	EST/nS

TRANSVERSAL AXES

- Faith and resistance
- Justice and gender equity
- Masculinities
- Theology of the cross
- Agriculture and creation
- Youth

Dialogue in plenary

Riikka Leskinen: My reflection was precisely on the transversal axes. I see sensitivity in the use regional wisdom and resources. Climate change and the environment are issues that mark MELF.

Oscar Sanhueza: Yesterday I spoke about the need within the IELCH, and, above all, about conflict management. I appreciate the possibility of having a seminar and a course.

Atahualpa Hernandez: We are not beginning. We have to remember the efforts made and recognize what has already been done. This is a recurring issue that has been specified together with the possibility of developing subjects from the churches through a two-ways dialogue (the church has to offer it). It not only requires the exchange but also the development on the part of the churches - not just the educational centers. A two-way dialogue.

Oscar Sanhueza: since 1978 at the IELCH, lay people have participated in several training courses, to the point of being overwhelmed. I am afraid that we are going the same road. We need to know how we will apply what motivates people. I am moved by everything that has to do with praxis.

Ofelia Davila: Classes from a contextual need, with a trained leadership to support the ministerial work. Webinars are important with the concern that in the group there are older adults and young people who have a career. We want them to be trained in ITEL so that they can contribute to the pastoral work. But many of them will want to study.

Patricia Cuyatti: certainly with the participation of the School of Theology, the IPC, etc., we are offering what the churches are producing. There will be more intentionality in this. Regarding Pastor Sanhueza's thoughts, it is true that there will be some leaders who will be tired of trainings. However, it is up to each church to develop a training program with ministerial objectives for lay

people. This process of network education responds to each church's programs and its objectives for ministerial tasks.

Angela Tejo: SEMLA has been participating for a year in this initiative and we understand that, while some people show no interest in an official certification, others do. You can choose either way. At SEMLA we have two cases of Latin ELCA communities who are finishing the certification program and requesting the diploma. The ELCA recognized them as pastors in their communities. This involves a dialogue. Another example, in Chile's church a signed document was sent to be vicar. Each church defines what certification is needed. Our institutions are flexible to understand the needs of each church through dialogue.

Alexis Salgado: I do not know if from the global network, we can see a little "clutter" because there is no clarity about what kind of certification is needed. Maybe if we think globally, people who take the course can receive a certification or a simple recognition.

Angela Trejo: Many churches make their courses open to the congregation where some people with high school diploma or bachelor's degree and the way of working is different. This was done in Bolivia, negotiating with the church, laying the groundwork for the course process and even working together to teach the course.

José Pilar Alvarez: Since 2017 we feel the need for theological training and in conversation with the secretariat we included SEMLA and EST/InS from a list of topics we need. We have developed the first two courses and there are three on the way. Indigenous leaders and peasants participate in the courses and bring to the class many experiences of resistance. An interreligious dialogue: Lutheran with Mayan spirituality. Both religious expressions strengthen each other and enrich each other. After two and a half or three years we will have ordained ministers for the Word and the Sacrament. There is a high spirit and those who participate already have faith communities assigned. From the church, the ordained pastors accompany them in the ecumenical emphasis with an awareness of doing mission considering the important traditional elements. They are communities in peaceful resistance. That is why they focus on human rights and justice approaches.

Rolando Orteiz: The ICLH already has its Training Plan since this year. This has been a dream since 2011 and it defines the objectives and needs of the ongoing theological education to train the ordained pastors. Nobody is a prophet in his own land, but there is more reception and openness, there are people that feel weak and fear to speak in public. Theology courses have helped them to express themselves in public. These courses gave strength to a shy woman with whom we also work to develop the contents. We can motivate them to work participating with their knowledge and not directly with the academic workload. The new ways of reading the Bible, in a Catholic or neo-Pentecostal context, affirm these processes. It would be a good idea to include Professor Martin Hoffman of Mission One World in these processes.

There were questions about relationships, finances and the issue of human sexuality in the strategic axes:

Patricia Cuyatti: In 2018 we are trying to involve financial partners who are also interested in these axes and the ministerial and theological education in the churches with a greater commitment to local programs (organized and coordinated). This will not only strengthen relationships, but will allow strengthening relationships in action. Human sexuality as a transversal axis: we must realize

that there is no regional hermeneutics or practice/dialogues that can indicate a form or way. Churches in the region have different approaches in hermeneutics and practice.

Gustavo Gomez: Following the last point and considering the different processes also depends on the societies. In the River Plate area has been a healing process that further enabled the churches, but we have to understand that despite these advances, the church is still behind society.

Ofelia Davila: The ILP has its own Lutheran Theological Institute (ITEL) with a year and a half of Bible, Liturgy, and History of the Church activities. They request that their participation in the network be considered.

Atahualpa Hernandez: The Lutheran School of Theology (ELT) works online since 2013 and its program of Strengthening Leadership Capabilities (Profile) is being considered to be shared on the Web.

Session XIV. Message COL - Moderation - Date and Venue COL 2019

Katia Cortez and Romario Dohmann read the message of the Leadership Conference, and it is approved. It will be distributed to the churches by email and it will be on the regional webpage.

Moderation

Moderator 2019 - 2021 Rev. Roberto Trejo - ILM

Co-moderator - Rev. Gilberto Quesada - ILCO

Venue and date for the 2019 COL

Lima, Peru from 2 to 5 April, 2019.

Back up venue - Costa Rica

Attachment 1

Acts 10: 44-48

Psalms 98

1 John 5: 1-6

John 15: 9-17

His love does not mean people

We resume the Gospel where we left last Sunday. Jesus as the true vine. We had seen in that image that the vinedresser cut the branches (that is, the Christians ... that is, us) that did not bear fruit. We also saw that the vinedresser pruned the branches that bore fruit.

The image of fruit makes us think about a topic that concerns us: the growth of the church. Why are we so few? What should we do to be more? Should we copy the methods of some sister churches? Would we have to be on TV, hand out brochures, give away stuff, etc.?

The motto of our conference is somehow linked to these questions: ("Come on! Lutheran churches moved by the mission of God")

And for more uncertainty Jesus tells us in the Gospel "Remain in my love."

Then what do we do? Do we move for the mission, or do we remain in his love?

Reading the book of Acts gives us the opportunity to deepen our reflection. In this story, something incredible happens for Christians of Jewish origin who are witnessing Peter's discourse: (v.45: - "... they were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles"). This occurs in the context of Peter's preaching in Cornelius' house, a Roman centurion. Peter who was also impressed by what was happening (v. 34: "... I realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ..."), a Peter who dreamed THREE TIMES "do not call anything impure that God has made clean"(v.15).

Peter goes to Cornelius' house to preach the Gospel, and the incredible happens: The Holy Spirit is also poured out over the gentiles.

And do you want to know how the story went on? (11:2-3: "So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him and said: You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them?"

It is evident that it has always been difficult for us to accept the other, the different, the impure. We are very willing to catechize the other, to indoctrinate the other... but we despair at the idea that the other can express the power of God ... just like us, and even better than us. It was difficult for Peter, for the Jerusalem church (and to think that we idealize the first Christians so much!). We want the church to grow, but we want it to grow with people like us, who think, live and worship as we do.



But let's go back to the image of the vine and the branches. What is expected from the branches? Fruit. ... Branches are different from fruits, right? Or do any of us eat apples and apple-tree branches indistinctly?

How much it costs us to bear fruit! How it hurts to bear fruit! If what grows from us is exactly like us ... it is not fruit! It's more like a branch!

Those who have orchard or fruit trees, do you know what it means for a plant to "go in vice"? {...} A plant that went in vice can be very large, even larger than a plant that bears fruit. The question is: What is the use of a plant that went in vice?

Besides, it is a sterile plant because, where are the seeds?

Peter's affirmation sounds tremendously naive: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism" Poor Peter! He felt a pioneer, someone who was taking Christ's message to some miserable lost pagans! And when he arrived, he realized that CHRIST WAS ALREADY THERE! He had been there, who knows for how long!

(A suggestive definition of mission: identify where God is acting and working ... and join Him.)

Lutheran churches moved by the mission of God. Lutheran churches that want to know where God is acting in the world and join Him. Lutheran churches capable of not confusing fruits (the different, the fertile) with branches (more of the same).

The story of Acts that we shared has been interpreted as the "Pentecost of the Gentiles" (in the same way that HE, poured out on the Jewish people so the Gentiles could believe).

From the encounter between the apostle Peter and the centurion Cornelius, who gets more evangelized? Who ends up converted?

The story of Acts offers us clues to reconcile the "moving" with the "remaining." To stay in the love of Christ leads us to accept that love. To endure and not to deny that this love goes far beyond our most noble and generous perspectives.

The fruit does not arrive without pruning. If a branch grows without being pruned, the only thing it will achieve is to go in vice.

May our Lord take the veil of pettiness and hypocrisy from our eyes, so that we can also say: "We now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism", and may that love be what moves us.

Rev. Gustavo Gómez Pascua
Pastor President IELU.