



Mission

A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice (CCME) at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) fosters and deepens relations between Christians and Muslims as a significant part of its larger purpose of building bridges of mutual understanding, respect and cooperation among people of all faiths.

Vision

CCME was founded on the conviction that Christians, Muslims, and neighbors of other faith traditions, in their co-humanity, created by and responsible before God, are called to know, respect and learn from one another, despite or even because of our differences.

History

Since its founding, LSTC has drawn on Chicago's many cultures and various faith communities to teach Christian

(The adult education classes CCME facilitated) "dispelled many of my congregation's fears about Islam and opened up the door for us to love our Muslim neighbors. Ten Muslims from a local mosque joined us in the lectures, and had great praise for the evenhandedness of the presenters...it has opened the door for me to answer the questions that Muslims are increasingly asking me about Christ and Christianity."

Pastor Dan Hoeger,
Our Saviour's Lutheran
Arlington Heights, Ill.

leaders how to articulate and live out their Christian convictions while striving to understand, respect and learn from the faiths of others. From 1990, Dr. Harold S. Vogelaar and Dr. Ghulam-Haider Aasi together taught well-received courses in Christian-Muslim studies. In recent years, a number of Muslims (from the USA, Thailand, Indonesia, and Turkey) have come to LSTC to earn degrees.

CCME was founded in 2006 thanks to a generous gift that also established the Harold S. Vogelaar Chair of Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations. The Center and the Chair make it possible for seminary students and other religious leaders to learn from Islam in its breadth and depth, our Muslim neighbors in their rich diversity, and the history of relations between our faith communities.

A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
1100 East 55th Street
Chicago, IL 60615
Phone: 773-256-0708
Fax: 773-256-0782
ccme@lstc.edu
<http://centers.lstc.edu/ccme/>

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC), a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), forms visionary leaders to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. Its students come from all parts of the United States and from around the world to study in one of five advanced degree programs. Graduates become pastors, other church leaders, and scholars who teach in a variety of academic institutions. LSTC is a member of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools, which allows students to cross-register among the 11 member seminaries and draw on a wealth of ecumenical resources. LSTC enjoys a number of cooperative arrangements with the University of Chicago. To learn more about the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, visit www.lstc.edu



"A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement has been an awesome blessing for the dialogue and relationship-forming between the students of LSTC and the larger global community."

Meredith Harber,
M.Div., Class of 2014

Who is it for?

- Students (LSTC and others from the Association of Chicago Theological Schools)
- Faculty colleagues
- Members of Christian and Muslim communities in the Chicago area
- Visiting groups from around the world
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and other church bodies
- Other strategic partners (scholars, centers, schools and institutes)

What do we do?

Promote and provide logistical support to the academic programs in Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations at LSTC

Among the courses regularly taught by Swanson, Aasi, Shelley and others:

Toward Understanding Islam, History of Islamic Religious Thought, History of Christian-Muslim Relations, The Bible and the Qur'an, Religions in Dialogue, Islam Today, Travel Seminar to the Middle East, Arabic language, and other electives. A student may concentrate in Christian-Muslim studies and/or interfaith relations in an M.A. program; earn such an M.A. together with an M.Div.; or pursue advanced studies in these areas.

Administer Interfaith Emphasis Program

Through a strong core of courses, activities, and a final project, students



(Above) Dr. Ghulam Haider Aasi, Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies, regularly teaches at LSTC; and (left) students spread compost as a part of an interfaith gardening project.

pursuing the M.Div. or M.A. degrees may study and acquire some familiarity with at least one religious tradition other than their own.

Speaking and teaching; congregational and community resources

Center staff are available for speaking and teaching assignments in a variety of scholarly, ecclesiastical, community and congregational venues. The Center is ready to offer assistance to congregations and community groups in developing multi-week studies, and offers a variety of educational resources on its website <http://centers.lstc.edu/ccme/>.

Student activities

The Center strives to provide a rich menu of interfaith activities to students, and provides support to student-initiated activities.

Public Presentations

Guest and faculty speakers regularly provide insights on important and timely topics. A variety of musical, theatrical and artistic events explore our cultural heritages.

Conferences and seminars

CCME sponsors an annual "Sacred Texts" conference as well as various educational events on interfaith understanding and cooperation, such as "Shared Earth: An Interfaith Conference on the Environment" in March 2010.

Hosting visitors

The Center welcomes individuals and groups from around the world who are interested in learning more about our programs and the context in which we work.

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Michael T. Shelley, director

The Rev. Dr. Mark N. Swanson, associate director, and Harold S. Vogelaar Professor of Christian-Muslim Studies and Interfaith Relations

Ms. Sara Trumm, program coordinator

