

The Changing Contours of World Mission and Christianity:
Extending the Legacy of Edinburgh 1910

November 4-7, 2010

Boston, Massachusetts

Hosted by the Boston Theological Institute:
International Mission and Ecumenism Committee

Call for Papers

The Boston Theological Institute is a consortium of nine member schools: Andover Newton Theological School, Boston College, Boston University, Episcopal Divinity School, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, Harvard Divinity School, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Saint John's Seminary, and Weston Jesuit School of Theology. The International Mission and Ecumenism Committee is made up of faculty in the fields of mission and ecumenism from each of the nine schools. It offers a certificate program, provides a yearly international workshop, and hosts the annual Costas Consultation on Global Mission.

The committee requests graduate student papers related to the eight themes of the conference (see reverse). Papers will be adjudicated by faculty from the appropriate discipline(s). Six papers will be selected from each theme for presentation at the conference and publication on the conference website. Registration fees will be covered for those presenting papers. Papers are due to the committee coordinator, Br. Lawrence A. Whitney, LC+, by email or print mail by April 1, 2010. The selected papers will be announced in September 2010.

Submit papers by email to lwhitney@bu.edu.

Print submissions should be sent to:

Br. Lawrence A. Whitney, LC+
Marsh Chapel, Boston University
735 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

Changing Contours of Christian Unity

The stress on the importance of unity and cooperation at the Edinburgh Mission Conference has led to a century of ecumenical exploration. Now, as we face a new century of mission and church life, it is necessary to articulate a mission ecclesiology that places the church squarely as recipient and herald of the good news offered by Jesus Christ.

Mission in Context

The context of mission enterprise has shifted dramatically since 1910, perhaps most strikingly in the shift from a north-south directionality to south-north. Furthermore, mission takes place in the context of the increasingly prevalent forces of globalization. Christian mission movements must be able to interpret the variety of contexts they encounter as well as their mutual interaction.

Disciples in Mission

If there is one thing that has been learned in the century since the Edinburgh Mission Conference, it is that discipleship is costly. It is necessary to recover and renew spiritual practices that ground mission enterprises and articulate visions of Christian life that are both credible and authentic.

Education for Mission

Who is a missionary? Who is responsible for mission enterprise? These questions engender reflection about the catechetical formation of missionaries as well as the theological education of clergy and others responsible for them. Special attention should be given to the role of student movements both in the process of being educated and serving as educators of others.

Mission Post-Colonialism

With the downfall of colonial models of mission since 1910, contextual theologians have launched a strong critique of Christian mission. A post-colonial mission paradigm must be developed that both takes up these critiques and finds ways to remain true to the universality of the Gospel.

Mission Theology in a Pluralist World

One of the major changes in the past century is a greater prevalence and cognizance of the fact of religious plurality. A 21st century mission theology must grapple with both the diversity of religious beliefs and their increasing and often violent interactions.

Mission Post-Modernity

Apart from intra-Christian and inter-religious critiques of mission, the rise of secular postmodernity challenges the very relevance of Christianity and therefore her impulse to reach out. Mission paradigms of the 21st century must successfully answer the battle cries of secularism and relativism while taking up the tools of information technology and communications.

Saving the World

This area might key into different ways of conceiving of “saving” and draw in secular-related ways of dealing with issues that represent “bridges” or cross-over areas with secular or non-Christian entities, such as “human flourishing” and ways that such a topic might relate to the Millennium Development Goals, etc.