

EEF - NET

News • Information • Discussions on Ecumenical Learning

Edited by the Education and Ecumenical Formation Staff of the World Council of Churches

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*Christian
education
belongs ...
to the
whole church*

EEF - NET 14 - April 2004

Newsletter for Education and Ecumenical Formation • World Council of Churches

EEF-NET is produced twice a year by the Education and Ecumenical Formation staff of the Mission and Ecumenical Formation team of World Council of Churches. Contributions of articles or use of material (quoting the source) are most welcome. Editorial board: Nyambura Njoroge, Simon Oxley, Tara Tautari, Editor: Simon Oxley. Editorial assistant: Judith Kocher. Spanish translation: Suecia & Oneida Méndez. Printed by: Imprimerie Arduino. Address: Education & Ecumenical Formation, World Council of Churches, P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. Tel: +41 22 791 6115 Fax: +42 22 710 2444 E-mail: simon.oxley@wcc-coe.org or judith.kocher@wcc-coe.org Web: <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/education/index-e.html>

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Dear Colleagues in Education and Ecumenical Formation

Learning to live together. It seems to be something that we, as humanity, are not very good at. From the local to the global community we seem to find it increasingly difficult to live together in any meaningful sense of that phrase. Even within faith communities, living separately seems a much easier option than living together.

The 1996 Delors Report from UNESCO, 'Learning: The Treasure Within', pointed to four pillars of education - learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. Knowing, doing and being had been implied in the earlier 1972 Faure Report, 'Learning to Be'. Learning to live together was the new element identified as a pillar of education in 1996. The succeeding years have emphasised just how much we need to take that seriously.

Learning to live together is, of course, a vital aspect of ecumenical learning. All the big questions of the ecumenical movement from its traditional concern for the unity of the church to the contemporarily sharp issues of globalisation and HIV/AIDS can be seen through the lens of learning to live together.

For the churches, learning to live together needs to begin in the local congregation or parish. In this issue of EEF-NET, you will find an article on 'Seasons of the Spirit' which is an ecumenical and international lectionary-based resource, equipping ministries of Christian education, worship, and service. Another article looks at an educational approach to social work in Orthodox parishes in Russia. It gives

an insight into 'social pedagogy' which as a concept and or in practice may not be familiar to all readers.

Differences can lead to behaviour that is patronising or discriminatory from those who perceive themselves to be 'more able' towards those who they categorise as 'less able'. The Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN) working with WCC Faith and Order have produced a statement 'A Church of All and for All'. The statement encourages us to learn to live together.

The universally accepted (in theory, if not reality) right to education has often been interpreted in terms of access. This is a massive challenge in itself. The article 'How you learn and what you learn are both essential' reminds us that the right to education is to quality as well as access. Not surprisingly, we can find echoes of all four pillars of education in this piece.

The WCC Internship programme offers a unique opportunity for ecumenical learning to a small group of young people each year. One of this year's interns reflects on their experience of working in the WCC.

Our all too obvious failure to live together within the church and the whole human community should encourage us to make learning to live together a priority in all our ecumenical education and formation activities. We hope that this issue of EEF-NET will encourage you in doing that.

The education and ecumenical formation staff of the WCC

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Seasons of the Spirit

Engaging Scripture with the Global Church

The expression of church in our time is increasingly ecumenical, both at denominational levels and also between local parishes seeking new ways to share ministries. Out of this culture of church change, *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum has taken shape, and is emerging.

Seasons of the Spirit is an ecumenical and international lectionary-based resource equipping ministries of Christian education, worship, and service. Seasons is particularly interested in the way ritual and imagination help to shape and nurture faith.

Seasons of the Spirit is being developed out of a unique collaboration between denominational and independent publishers from Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States: Logos Productions, MediaCom Education, The United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Publishing House, and Wood Lake Books. Several lectionary-based curricula have helped to inform the development of *Seasons* resources, including *Celebrating the Lectionary*, *The Inviting Word*, and *The Whole People of God*. The goal of *Seasons of the Spirit*, articulated in its *Theological and Educational Foundations Paper (TEF)* is to provide God's people with lectionary-based, ecumenical resources that empower all ages to be transformed in Christ as they:

- explore meaning and mystery in the Bible;
- celebrate in worship, sacraments, education, and service;

- engage in ministries of love, justice, and witness;
- live in inclusive communities of faith shaped and led by the Holy Spirit.

At the outset of its collaboration, the *Seasons* partnership identified hungers among Christian congregation for spiritual renewal; vital and meaningful worship; competence in biblical and theological knowledge; and connections between worship and education, faith formation and discipleship. In response, *Seasons of the Spirit* is intended to be a distinct gift to congregations. In the words of the *TEF Paper*, *Seasons* resources:

1. invite us to explore meaning and mystery in the Bible through the lectionary.
2. encourage us to experience the transforming power of Christ as together worship, sacraments, and education work in our lives.
3. call us into the ecumenical, global, and inclusive heart of the church where these resources are grounded and shaped.
4. nurture faith by engaging the imagination through the Bible, tradition, science, technology, and the arts.
5. engage responsibly and creatively the contemporary teaching and learning environment of Christian congregations and parishes.

6. and send us into the contemporary world- its current events, issues, knowledge, and discoveries - as an arena to test, share, and live out our faith.

The components of *Seasons of the Spirit*

Seasons of the Spirit is a family of lectionary-based resources that are divided into four yearly sections according to the seasons of the church year: Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany; Lent and Easter; with the Season after Pentecost is divided into Pentecost 1 and Pentecost 2.

At the heart of the program is *Congregational Life* which encourages integration of ministries of worship, learning and serving, and provides weekly materials for worship leaders and planners, coordinators of Christian education, and those who organize congregational service opportunities. Packaged with *Congregational Life* is a data CD which includes text files of *Congregational Life's* reproducible resources - such as prayers and liturgies, seasonal song lyrics, articles, forms and certificates, and at-home materials. The data CD also contains projectable seasonal images provided in age-level resources. Christian education resources are created to equip a single group of learners and their leader, offering full session plans, reproducible resource sheets for learners, printed music, and arts resources to engage learners in Bible exploration and faith formation. *Seasons'* age level resources include *Ages 3-5*, *Ages 6-8*, *Ages 9-11*, *Multiage* (for use with *ages 5-12*), *Ages 12-14*, *Ages 15-18*, and *Adult*. Full resources for ministry with children from Birth - Age 2 are still under development, but a basic packet of resources including music and young children's board books is currently available.

Seasons' commitment to arts engagement is based on observations about the power of imagery in our culture and in the church's life throughout history. Sandra Bowden, president of CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts) writes, "How wonderful for the church to actually supply images to an image-saturated world - this is how we need to communicate to this generation." The arts illustrate - they reinforce or validate the words of our story. The arts evoke - they touch the heart, and emotions are stirred. In deep ways, the arts reveal to us who we are. They may also critique or challenge traditional assumptions. The arts illicit multiple meanings - they cannot be controlled. The arts connect with our past while urging us on to the future. The arts both challenge and empower *Seasons* to create resources that engage the imagination in forming faith. Arts resources include the *Seasons Music CDs* and *Seasons Songbooks*, which offer a variety of global music for all ages. *Behold: Arts for the Church Year* is a seasonal arts resource currently packaged with *Ages 12-14*, *Ages 15-18*, *Adult*, and *Congregational Life*. *Behold* and the posters offered in the age level resources provide a variety of visual arts that speak into and out of the seasonal focus passages, and spark dialogue between the Bible and the imagination.

In addition to its printed material, *Seasons of the Spirit* offers a variety of web resources. Online access to the content of *Congregational Life* is available to all who purchase this resource via password. Other resources are available to all:

- Spirit Sightings is a weekly posting, making connections between world events and the weekly focus passage. It includes a news story summary, exploration questions, and prayer suggestions.
- Ask the Rabbi, hosted by Rabbi Adam Morris, provides background on Jewish

history and traditions, toward new understandings and interpretation of focus passages.

- Seasonal online activities offer additional learning options that can be used in class or at home.
- Spirit Talk offers three online discussion groups for leaders: learning, worship, and serving. The web makes it possible to connect with other users from around the world for fellowship, support, and ideas.

Through all its various expressions, *Seasons of the Spirit* intends to offer learners and leaders the opportunity to be transformed in faith.

The development process (practice)

A dialogue between two key processes has helped to shape and inform *Seasons of the Spirit's* ongoing collaboration, as well as the development of its specific resources: a worship flow to learning paradigm, and a process of spiritual discernment.

The worship flow to learning is expressed in the session flow of the resources, and experienced in the way the community works together: Gather, Engage, Respond, Bless. This rhythm of worship gives structure to each week of resources.

The spiritual discernment process presented in a book called *Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church* invites participants to enter into a transformative decision-making process. Rather than a strict, linear process, the stages of spiritual discernment can be thought of like stepping stones across a pond. There is a suggested order, but steps

can be taken in various orders and revisited as needed. In brief they are:

Framing - focusing in on an area for discernment

Grounding - setting the ground rules

Shedding - naming concerns and being willing to set them aside for the time being

Rooting - looking to the Bible for wisdom in this matter

Listening - listening to voices who bring considerations to this discernment. Including those not present at the table

Exploring - proposing ideas

Improving - fine tuning ideas

Weighing - considering options and moving toward a discerned direction

Closing - drawing the discernment toward completion

Resting - waiting with the decision to note feelings of comfort and discomfort.

The process of spiritual discernment assumes that God is present and available to guide us. Our task is to be vulnerable and to seek to be indifferent to all but God's will. Using this process, the Seasons partnership agreed upon a business plan, a governance structure, and collaboratively created the project's *TEF Paper* mentioned earlier.

On a practical level, eight editors work closely together in this project, although few of them live in the same time zone. They meet regularly through email and on conference calls. The collaboration of this team is only a part of the whole *Seasons of the Spirit* project.

Other collaborative efforts flow out from Marketing and Interpretation, Customer Service, Production, Business Operations, and Publishing Teams. All are guided by the same *TEF Paper* and a shared vision.

Two ministry models help to further describe Seasons content development process. First, Robert Carkhuff's "pastoral conversation" model looks to the relationship between helper / helpee. This relationship mirrors Seasons environment where facilitator, writers, editors, and local congregations stand alongside one another as partners in development.

Kathleen Billman expresses such partnerships in terms of a midwife "breathing with." This is an image of collaboration that, for Seasons, equips, enables, and empowers each participant to participate in birthing these resources. In turn, God's Spirit "breathes with" the users of the materials, helping them to bring these resources to life in their own contexts.

From its beginning, *Seasons of the Spirit* content has relied on a community development process that takes place in five phases. First, through the online Seasons International Bible Study, local study groups initiate Seasons' development process by offering feedback on the lections through the web. This information comes to the Developer Conference where participants consider the year of lections, recommend focus passages for each week, and identify potential directions for seasonal themes. Next, participants in the Arts Conference gather images, music, and texts that are in dialogue with the focus passages and may open new windows of interpretation. Finally, the Writer Conference brings together editors and writers - along with the fruits of the previous conferences - to continue the community development of Seasons resources. The voices

of writers add the gifts and perspectives of congregational and age-level context.

All these contributors are labouring and cooperating together. The image of a midwife - fully present, alert to signs and stages, observant and in tune, moving with, and birthing together is an image present in the *Seasons'* process.

Seasons' diverse international and ecumenical writing and editing team reflects the many shapes and forms of church. The team works together through several steps in the spiritual discernment process through email, prior to meeting in person. This fires imagination and expands our vision about what it is to be church together.

Framing is the first step in the spiritual discernment practice. Before meeting together in person, writers and editors are invited to articulate what they hope to receive, to experience, and to offer to the writing tasks, as well as what they would like to take with them from the event. Once the community has agreed to a framing statement, it is important to name grounding principles that will build and sustain the community as it lives and works together, both at the writer conference and into the future when the community will continue its work away from one another.

Having laid these sorts of foundations, the next steps of the discernment process - *Shedding, Rooting, Listening, Exploring and Improving* - take place in the daily work of the physically gathered community. *Seasons'* Writer Conferences call together a writer and editor for each age level plus a group facilitator. Each day the *Seasons sessions flow* - *Gather, Engage, Respond, Bless* - guides the rhythm of the work. This liturgical movement of daily engagement also pulses through *Seasons'* worship, education, and serving resources.

Gather is an invitation into the worship and learning experience for the day. The theme of the day is introduced in a variety of ways: in how the space is set, in how the worship table is “dressed,” through engaging visuals and other arts, and in the way we greet one another. In the writing context, these Gather experiences encourage writers to offer ideas and guidelines to users about setting their own space to invite learners into the experience.

Engage offers an opportunity to encounter scripture in various ways: arts engagement, theological reflection, and a variety of approaches to storytelling, interpretation, and exploration. As we engage with scripture, we might wonder what is contained between and under the lines, in the blank spaces, and in the silences. This invites our imaginations and voices into the heart of the biblical story and helps give voice to the silences, and imagination to the blank spaces.

Respond is a natural outgrowth of the biblical engagement. In *Seasons* resources, Respond is a bridge back to our world, challenging learners to “speak back” to their biblical encounter. In this section we consider how the experience of the Bible story will be lived. At the Writer Conference, this might happen through music or a creative activity, through discussions, through individual reflection, or other methods.

Bless is a closure time when writers and editors who have worked together in small groups throughout the day celebrate new learnings and transformations and finish with a ritual. Within the resources, Bless takes on a similar quality as learners move out of various Respond options, come together as a group, and offer and receive a benediction on the session.

The later steps of the process - *Weighing*, *Closing*, and *Resting* - take place at the event

as the community shares closure, but they are also experienced after the event through manuscript reviews and the consultative editorial process. In all of this, the *Seasons* editors experience “breathing with” writers and eventually with congregations who will use these resources.

The publishers of *Seasons of the Spirit* acknowledge in their *TEF paper*, “The congregations we serve are often the prophetic voices that call us to collaboration. We have heard that call and are responding faithfully through this venture.” As you consider ecumenical partnerships in your own context, we ask God’s blessings on your ministry and hope that *Seasons’* story might encourage you as you seek God’s leading.

For Further Reading

Billman, Kathleen D. “Pastoral Care as an Art of Community” in Christie Cozad Neuger, *The Arts of Ministry*, ed. Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky (1996).

Carkhuff, Robert R. *The Art of Helping in the 21st Century*, (8th Edition) HRD Press, Amherst, Massachusetts (2000).

Olsen, Charles and Danny Morris. *Discerning God’s Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church*. The Upper Room (1997).

The Seasons of the Spirit website includes the Theological and Educational Foundations Paper:

www.spiritseasons.com

Susan Burt is the Coordinating Editor and Lori Rosenkvist the Editorial Team Leader for Seasons of the Spirit.

Orthodox Social Pedagogy in Russia

Tatyana V. Sklyarova

Editor's Note: English speaking readers may find the term 'social pedagogy' unfamiliar or difficult. There is comparatively little written about it in English whereas it would be a more familiar term to German readers. Sozial Pädagogik has a long history in German social thought and practice. There are two aspects of social work in Germany - Sozialarbeit (casework) and Sozial Pädagogik. In its contemporary form, social pedagogy has been described as:

a perspective, including social action which aims to promote human welfare through child-rearing and education practices; and to prevent or ease social problems by providing people with the means to manage their own lives, and make changes in their circumstances. (Cannan, C. et al (1992) Social Work and Europe, London: Macmillan 73-74).

We could say that social work as casework is based on sociology and social pedagogy is based on educational theory. In Germany, there is a common foundation year in the training for the two areas. This differs from Britain, for example, where the work of community educators (in itself a loose term) is contrasted with both social work and the formal education system.

As official professions, 'social worker' and 'social pedagogue' were only recognised in Russia in 1991. Writing elsewhere about the Russian context, the author of the article says "a social pedagogue makes an educational influence on his client, while a social worker only gives his client a particular aid" and "social pedagogy is understood as an academic discipline taught in pedagogical educational institutions. As scientific research on socio-pedagogical problems is still being developed, the practical work of a social pedagogue is a matter of debate among scientists and experts. The main issue in this debate is who is the primary object for a social pedagogue - the child or the adult, too."

Subject and contents of socio-pedagogical work

The impact that social processes make on the education of younger generations has been taken into account in lesser or greater degree in all societies and in all times. In Russia, the socio-pedagogical direction in education was traditionally a responsibility of the family and the Church who determined the measure and degree to which children and young people were to be influenced by society. The social aspect of education in

Russian pedagogy was viewed through the prism of family and religious education, thus making it unnecessary to single out social pedagogy as a special area of education.

Social pedagogy as an academic discipline emerged in the second part of the 19th century. The socio-cultural changes that took place in most countries at that time also affected the public education system. Industrialisation caused the traditionally rural population to move to cities en masse only to find themselves maladjusted to life in the new conditions. In the West and America, indus-

trialisation also generated mass migration to more developed countries in which the need arose to cultivate certain values, declared or implied as national. Urbanisation contributed to a breach of many traditional values. The mass secularisation of people's awareness, caused by the above-mentioned developments and conditioned by the growing authority of natural scientific knowledge, also generated the problem of social education in the sphere where the Church used to be the only educator for centuries. It was in this situation that a separate area of pedagogical theory and practice, social pedagogy, was born. It was called to accomplish the tasks which were now beyond the traditional system of education. First of all, it became a pressing task to educate not only children, but also youth and people of older age. Secondly, the need arose to re-educate those who did not fit in the social system or violated its norms and to help them readjust themselves to the new conditions.

From the very conception of the socio-pedagogical theory at the turn of the 20th century, a discussion began as to the subject of social pedagogy. Some of its founders, such as Hermann Nohl and Gertruda Beumer, saw its subject as social aid to destitute children and prevention of juvenile delinquency. Paul Natorp defined the subject of social pedagogy in a fundamentally different way. He believed that the task of social pedagogy was to integrate the educational forces of society in order to raise the cultural level of the people. Thus, the discussion on social pedagogy focused on the problem of "causes and effects". If social pedagogy was to engage in analysis of the processes in society which influenced the education of its members, then it would have to find the causes of anti-social behaviour and propose effective means of preventing it. In this case, a social pedagogue was to work for the "improvement" of social climate, not for rectifying the already committed distortions in its development, such as abandoned children, deviant

social behaviour, etc. There was a different view presupposing that a social pedagogue should work as an "ambulance paramedic" giving aid to a child or an adult afflicted with a social illness, such as a juvenile delinquent, an orphaned child, a victim of violence or disaster, a released prisoner, an immigrant mastering a new way of life in a new country, etc. In this case, socio-pedagogical skills should be such as to help a needy person to restore as soon as possible his or her ability to live in that society.

These two approaches to socio-pedagogical problems remain relevant today. Thus, some educational aids on social pedagogy, such as *Social Pedagogy* edited by M. Galaguzova, Moscow 2001, and *Social Pedagogy* by Yu. Vasilkov and T. Vasilkov, Moscow 1999, in introducing readers to the basics of socio-pedagogical work, put a greater emphasis on the work of a social pedagogue with children with development disorders, deviations from social and moral norms and delinquent behaviour. Others, for instance A. Mudrik in his *Introduction to Social Pedagogy*, Moscow 1997, in vindicating the methods of social education, views socio-pedagogical work in a broader perspective. Following not only Paul Natorp, but also K. Ushinsky, who wrote in his *Pedagogical Anthropology* that the most important thing in education is the atmosphere around those educated, Mudrik sets a social pedagogue the task to master the pedagogical potential of the milieu. To do it, the process of socialisation should be studied as the basic problem of social pedagogy. A person's family and micro-socium, neighbours, mates, educational institutions - governmental, social and religious, country, ethnic origin - all these factors influence the formation of a person. Therefore, a social pedagogue should be able not only to make a correct analysis of the process of socialisation but also to use the educational potential of the milieu. For an Orthodox pedagogue, both

positions on the subject of social pedagogy are relevant and complementary.

Any educational concept is based on a certain set of anthropological ideas. Anthropology gives answers to such questions as what is man, what is his physical, mental and moral essence, what is his place in the world and what is his ultimate calling. In Orthodoxy, education is based on the anthropological approach which can be described as open. The openness of man to changes determines the possibility and even need for an external educational impact on him, taking into account his freedom. Orthodox education is peculiar in that it assesses the “external man” by the degree in which the “inner man” is enlightened. This lies in the heart of Orthodox understanding of socio-pedagogical work. To help a person to turn to the spiritual richness of Orthodoxy and to introduce him to the liturgical life of the Church is the primary task in pedagogical process. It is the final goal, while the auxiliary but very important means for achieving it are all the forms and methods of socio-pedagogical process. On the one hand, it is work with an individual regardless of his or her age and socialisation conditions. Equally important is pedagogical work with the milieu in which this individual lives, or, what social pedagogy describes as “pedagogisation of an individual’s space”.

The creating of an educating milieu under the church care appears to be the only possible aim in the work of an Orthodox social pedagogue. Both unsuccessful and successful people, families and other groups need pedagogical influence.

A social pedagogue in a parish

In some Christian confessions, a pedagogue who helps parish clergy is called “parish pedagogue”. Thus the concept of *parish*

pedagogics (Gemeindepädagogik) has taken root in German religious-pedagogical literature for the last 20 years. This concept was considered in the dissertation of A. Sergeyev on Socio-Pedagogical Work of Christian Parishes Today in Russia and Germany (Moscow 1997). The author of the parish pedagogics concept, Enno Rosenbum, maintains that it is parish that constitutes the subject of pedagogical work. He points out that the entire process of parish life and work should be viewed as an education process. Christian education proper takes place initially not in training but in living communication which explains life and all that happens in it from the viewpoint of faith and allows a person to develop his or her own view of the world. Such Christian education should be understood as a vital dimension of a community, while common life is perceived through the notion of education. Only after that purposeful educational work can be carried out by certain institutions through certain pedagogical means and methods. A. Sergeyev identified differences in Lutheran and Orthodox socio-pedagogical work and pointed out that the work of Orthodox parishes is essentially directed towards introducing a person to the experience of the Church, the experience of spiritual life, and towards his or her attainment of church life. The primary aim of most forms of parish work in Orthodoxy is to prepare a person for participation in the liturgy or for organisation of the liturgy. These forms, in their turn, presuppose common participation of the faithful as the very place where “social Christian” skills should be acquired. Lutheran parishes, on the contrary, give more emphasis to educating for social competence and to discovering one’s own identity. Church forms are helpful in attaining these goals.

The role of parish in organising socio-pedagogical work is also understood differently. According to German Lutherans, the parish should become at the same time the *subject, object* (formation of a community)

and *place* (common life) of the church educational work. But in the Russian Orthodox Church, the integration of all the aspects of parish life and work in educating the faithful is seldom discussed. Various areas of educational work organised by the parish are believed to be auxiliary in fulfilling the central tasks of the parish which is introduction to the experience of church life.

In parish socio-pedagogical work, which can be described as “parish pedagogics”, all the ways of educational impact that a parish can make need to be taken into account in organising parish life. Moreover, professional qualification is required of not only pedagogues and social workers, but of deacons and priests as well. It consists in both theological and secular humanitarian knowledge in such fields as pedagogy, psychology and sociology, as well as practical skills.

Parish socio-pedagogical work concerns those forms of parish activities which have expressly educational aims. In the Russian Orthodox Church, these are mission and enlightenment, catechism, cultural education (church education and leisure), charity (parish diakonia) and their combinations. Besides, there are church events, for instance a prayer at the academic year commencement, and various forms of parish activities, for instance pilgrimages, which are considered to be important educational means in the church tradition.

At the heart of socio-pedagogical effort in the parish is the creation of an educational milieu. A socio-pedagogical analysis of parish life and work today shows that this effort has very diverse manifestations from creating a *spiritual-cultural* milieu at a parish, which helps to revive and transform the soul of a believer, to making it a base for continued religious education, a place for social work, a platform for developing the creative abilities of Christians. The declared principle of continuity presupposes the establish-

ment of a complex of educational units at a parish, united by a common concept and having one administration, common programs and a team of like-minded educators. In this case, the problem of organising parish life is perceived as restoring the significance of the parish as a spiritual center on which the life of a Christian is focused.

The parish is certainly the primary and basic “social” structure of the Church. It is parish setting that determines in many ways how effective it is in its educational impact not only on parishioners, but also its entire social environment. The process in which society and the individual develop their relationships and make mutual impact in a broad sense is described as socialisation. If the parish pedagogue is aware of the problem of socialisation as fundamental in social pedagogy, this awareness will benefit the whole social and pedagogical work at the parish and especially the rector of the parish in his primary task of spiritual care, as it is precisely the task of a social pedagogue working at a parish to help its rector in organising the whole complex of educational impact of his parish.

There are many factors acting in the socialisation of a person. Among them are micro-factors including family, religious community, mates group, neighbours and all those social groups in which a person lives and which influence him or her. One of the functions of a social pedagogue working at a parish is to examine all the characteristics of the parishioners’ immediate environment including their families, living conditions and many other things. Taking into account the nature of this environment, a social pedagogue will competently build a strategy for organising, for instance, Sunday school groups of different ages or will see the need to form small family groups for parents with preschool children.

Another group of factors, called mesofactors,

make an indirect impact on a person. These include the mass media, the type of a settlement in which a person lives, regional conditions and all that makes an influence through family, school and social environment. The intermediate position of these conditions makes it difficult to take them into account, but to do it is still necessary. Thus, parish life in a large city is basically different from that in a rural area. Or, a prison or an orphanage built next to a parish church will invariably change the socio-psychological atmosphere at the parish. After an analysis of the situation, a parish pedagogue will be able to propose to the rector a work program not only for the Sunday school, but also other services offered at the parish.

The work of a social pedagogue at the parish can and must be manifold, beginning from co-operation with the mass media and organisation of the parish's own media to the formation of parish youth groups and interaction with "external" associations which come to the rector with various requests or proposals.

The object of the work of a parish pedagogue certainly includes all that belongs to care - care of orphans, disabled, the elderly, the temporarily disabled and all those who need continued or occasional aid. In this case, the pedagogue acts as a doctor who defines the strategy for healing the sick, determining the directions and methods of work with them. The practical work itself can be carried out not only by pedagogues themselves, but also social workers and parishioners who have the desire and blessing to serve in social field.

It is impossible to describe in one article all the range of socio-pedagogical work at parish. It is difficult to do it also for the reason that reality always proves to be much richer than its descriptions. The socio-pedagogical work at parishes in the Russian Orthodox Church has developed some original patterns of creating an educational

milieu which can be included by right in educational aids for training parish pedagogues.

For instance, the Sunday school at the Parish of Our Lady the Life-Giving Spring in Moscow, directed for many years by I.N. Moshkova, has given priority to work with the family, taking into account the peculiarities of a typical Moscow family, its social and financial situation, the rhythm of its work and rest and other socio-demographical and psychological characteristics. The psychological counselling functioning at the parish has helped parishioners tackle many domestic and social problems.

The family temperance community at the Parish of St. Nicholas at the Romashkovo village with its rector Archpriest Alexey Baburin is also focused on work with the families of parishioners. This work is special in that the community through joint efforts helps the families with alcoholic members.

An introduction to the work of these and many other parish socio-pedagogical units helps teachers and students of social pedagogy to find out which methods and forms of work carried out by a parish social pedagogue are the most effective in the present-day situation.

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This first appeared in the Round Table Newsletter of the Department for External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, November 2003.

www.rondtb.msk.ru/home_en.htm

How you learn and what you learn are both essential

Mary Joy Pigozzi

In asserting that the right to education includes quality as well as access, Mary Joy Pigozzi's comments have a relevance to all educators, including those in the churches and ecumenical movement.

The sixth goal of the Dakar Framework on Education for All (2000) is clear. Every learner has the right to a quality basic education.¹ The access dimension of the right to education has been well understood, although its implementation remains an unachieved goal for almost 1 billion illiterates in the world today. Unfortunately, the magnitude of the world's inability to address the issue of educational access has masked, until recently, the equally enormous challenge of content and methods as part of the right to education.²

A. The relationships between access and quality

There is a common misunderstanding that access to education must always precede attention to quality. This is not, in fact, the case. There is evidence from the field that, in some cases, learners are not taking advantage of school places even when they are available, and in other cases, learners drop out when what they are learning is not relevant to their current or future needs. The following points are now clear, however:

- educational access and quality are distinct concepts

- these two concepts are intricately linked, especially when supply and demand are considered;
- while quality is impossible without access, access without quality is often meaningless to those for whom access is made possible.

In the final analysis, our interest is in the outcomes from analysis, our learning achievement. Thus, access is critical, but not very meaningful without evidence of learning. The complex interplay between access and quality is fairly well covered in the literature, so this will not be discussed here. The point is that both content and processes (or methodology) are an important component of the right to education.

B. Why is there a right to a 'quality' education?

This is an important question, but one that is often overlooked because of the earlier focus on quantitative achievements rather than on learning achievement. As acknowledged by over 120 ministers of education at a recent meeting: 'we live in an unequal world-a world where disparities make the

possibility of equal opportunity for all to participate in a quality education a dream that is currently unattainable for many".³ Thus, the focus on access at the expense of quality has meant that even for those who have had the opportunity to participate in education, the playing field has not been level. Those participating in good education systems benefit far more than those who are restricted to poor systems, frequently those that are relatively under-resourced.

The obvious conclusion from this is that what the education system offers is crucially important. As a consequence, a commitment to the universality of the right to education, and a reading of the different legal instruments that address this topic, must include a commitment to a quality education, as underscored in the Dakar Framework for Action. The important question, and one that was addressed by the Ministers of Education in October 2003, is what is meant by a quality education.

C. Content and processes as part of a quality education

Quality education has many dimensions. The understanding of what constitutes a quality education is evolving. The conventional definition remains important to understanding quality education. It includes literacy, numeracy and life-skills, and is linked directly to such critical components as teachers, content, methodologies, curriculum, examination systems, policy, planning, and management and administration. Basic academic skills remain essential.

There is a demand, however, for education to reflect upon its relevance to the modern world. While in the past much of the emphasis on education related to cognitive understanding and development, now there is a

need to also address the social and other dimensions of learning. Education is expected to make a contribution to addressing sustainable human development, peace and security, and the quality of life at individual, family, societal and global levels. At a practical level, UNESCO is concerned about six key dimensions of quality education from a rights perspective. These are noted below.

1. Seek out learners. Quality education is one that seeks out learners and assists them to learn using a wide range of modalities, recognising that learning is linked to experience, language and cultural practices, gifts, traits, the external environment and interests. We learn in different ways, each emphasising different senses and abilities. A quality education is one that welcomes the learner and can adapt to meet learning needs. It is inclusive. Thus, a quality education strives to ensure that all learners, regardless of sex, language, religion, and ethnicity, for example, are reached—that they have the possibility of participating in and learning from organised learning activities. And, within the learning experience there are several components that affect quality: the learner, content, processes and environment.⁴

2. What the learner brings. What the learner brings to her or his own learning and to that of a group is extremely important. It can vary from work skills, to traumatic experiences, to excellent early childhood development opportunities, to illness or hunger, for example. These variations in student characteristics must be taken into account.

3. Content. Educational content is well understood as a component of quality, but this needs to be re-examined in light of the changes that have occurred in the world, and information technologies and globalisation processes that have brought societies closer together in some ways.

4. *Processes.* The processes of education are a frequently overlooked aspect of quality. How learners are enabled to frame and solve problems, different learners in the same group are treated, teachers and administrators are treated and behave, and families and communities are engaged in education are all processes that affect the quality of education. Quality educational processes require well-trained teachers able to use learner-centred teaching and learning methods, and life-skills approaches. But, the term 'learner-centred' must be reconstructed to address issues of disparity and discrimination, and the different perspectives and experiences that learners bring to the learning environment.

5. *Learning environment.* Evidence is mounting that the learning environment must also be considered part of educational quality. There must be adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities, and, if possible, health and nutrition services in the vicinity. School policies and their implementation must promote physical and mental health, safety, and security. While the physical environment is better understood, the psychosocial one, which is at least as important, deserves serious attention so that practices such as gender discrimination, bullying, corporal punishment and forced work are eliminated.

6. *Enabling environment.* The importance of an enabling environment that is rights-based. Quality education must be offered within a managerial and administrative system that also supports effective learning. This presupposes a system that is well managed, with transparent processes guided by implementation of good policies and an appropriate legislative framework. It also requires sufficient resources, recognising the full range that can be brought to bear in support of education.

D. Educational content and processes in practice

On a day-to-day basis educational content and processes are a result of the curriculum, both intended and unintended, and the ways in which the learning/teaching process occurs. Thus, content and processes are directly tied to curriculum and, sometimes, syllabuses; the textbooks and other learning materials that are used to convey the curriculum; the ways teachers teach; and the environments in which organised learning takes place.

1. *Content.* Content is one of the more conventionally accepted elements of quality education. It is dear, however, that this needs to be rethought somewhat because much of what is taught worldwide is no longer relevant to learners. There is a need for relevant curricula and materials for literacy, numeracy and 'facts and skills for life', which include education on rights, gender equality, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, peace, and respect for and appreciation of diversity. In particular, it is the skills for life and the commitment to gender equality that can make a long-term difference with regard to lifetime achievements. For it is the skills for life, self-confidence and good decision-making, for example, that will stand learners in good stead to use the other knowledge and competencies gained from a basic education. While most content needs to be strengthened, the tendency toward male bias in curricula and materials means that girls are often doubly disadvantaged.

Culture has particular and valuable contributions to make to the content of education. It plays a major role in shaping the perspectives of how problems are articulated and their solutions sought. At the same time, an understanding of different cultures and their

contributions, as well as the concept of multiculturalism itself, are important contributions themselves to the content of education. Of particular importance here is the tension, which should be a healthy one, between the common elements in content, regardless of where a learner resides, that will equip women and men, boys and girls, to be both 'fully participating members of their own communities and also citizens of the world'⁵ and those aspects of learning that assist us to form and understand our individual and social identities. In addition to essential academics, which have been referred to above, there are basic knowledge, values, competencies, and behaviours that all learners should have the opportunity to gain so that they can participate in and contribute to a globalising world. At the same time, educational content must take into account the diversity that manifests itself in our world and that expresses itself in many different forms, including language, culture, spirituality and beliefs.

2. Processes. There is sufficient evidence from educational research to know that students learn from both what is intended by the curriculum and the teacher/facilitator, as well as from aspects of their educational experience that are not intentionally part of the curriculum or learning experience.

Students who are expected to obey the teacher's authority and not ask any questions tend to learn to accept what they are told by authority figures and not practise, for example, ways of solving problems on their own. Students who see and/or experience disrespect or violence in their learning environment understand that these are acceptable behaviours and learn how to practise them. Within the same classroom girls and boys, or rich and poor students, often have very different and inequitable learning experiences. This is due to the different identities and, therefore, interpretations of shared

experiences, as well as due to different treatments that are given to different students. For example, harassment of those who are 'different' is common. In particular, classroom processes are very susceptible to unintended gender discrimination, such as teachers calling on boys more than on girls to answer questions, or assigning science to boys and arts to girls. These practices reinforce negative gender relations and discriminatory early learning practices, for example. Bias in classroom practices conveys a curriculum, usually unintended, that all learners are not equal; that some learners should always receive differential treatment, good or bad, on the basis of human characteristics or attributes. Both teachers and other learners can be the ones that foster inequality in a learning environment. This lack of equality is counter to quality education based on human rights.

By the same token, teachers who do not value other cultures, that do not accept the perspectives that present themselves as a result of culture, or that tend to overlook or undervalue learners that represent different cultural backgrounds foster learning processes that are not conducive to achievement by all. A quality education does not do this.

E. Implications for learning materials and teacher education

The implications of the above are enormous if education systems really are to provide quality education for all. The implications reach through all aspects of education systems, but there are five areas where change can have an immediate impact.

1. Improve the curriculum. Curricula must be updated and made relevant to the world in

which we find ourselves today. They must address both the local and the global, to enable learners to live in their own communities and contribute to a world undergoing globalisation.

2. Change the content of learning materials. It has become evident that many textbooks and other learning materials contain incorrect information or biases that must be eliminated so as not to give learners a false basis on which to continue learning and on which they will interpret and live their lives.

3. Teach learners to recognise bias and to respect diversity. Simply improving the learning materials provided is insufficient, however, as there are many sources of learning that are found outside of organised education, whether formal or non-formal. These sources include families and communities, other institutions and the media. It is essential that learners be taught to look for, understand and respect different perspectives, and that they be able to recognise and understand bias when they are presented with it.

4. Recognise that teachers themselves are part of the curriculum. Teachers need to understand that they are, in some ways, part of the curriculum and as such they are role models for the life-skills, values and behaviours that are expected outcomes of a quality education. The rest of us—either in or users of the education system—must understand the expectations we have of teachers and equip them and reward them accordingly.

5. Improve teacher education. Teacher education, both pre- and in-service needs to take into account the fast changing world of the twenty-first century. Over the span of a teacher's career there will be many things that teachers have to learn in order to understand what their students bring into learning environments, and how they view

and analyse the world in which they live. This perhaps argues for greater attention to on-going teacher development through in-service options.

More than this, it is necessary to ensure sustainable change, but if we do not pay attention to the content and processes of education, we shall not achieve a quality education for all.

¹ The Dakar Framework for Action is consistent with other international declarations, recommendations, and conventions that all affirm a global commitment on the universality of the right to a quality education.

² As important, as well, but not addressed in this article, are questions related to the legislative framework relating to education in many countries.

³ Round Table of Ministers of Education on Quality Education, 3-4 October 2003, held during the 32nd UNESCO General Conference.

⁴ See UNICEF working paper on quality education.

⁵ Communiqué of the Ministerial Round Table on Quality Education, 4 October 2003, p. 1.

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Youth learning about ecumenical present and shaping an ecumenical future

WCC Internship Programme

Lisa Yablonsky

What is the World Council of Churches and what does it do? Well, each year the WCC invites a group of interns to find out. This year's interns, six in total, have come from the four corners of the globe to learn more about ecumenism, bringing a new voice and a new understanding to the WCC.

Since its founding in 1948, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has been a focal point in the ecumenical movement, bringing together Christians from different communions and regions around the world - Christians with different backgrounds, cultures, interpretations and understandings of Christ. That makes 56 years of arguments and resolutions, 56 years to identify problems and implement solutions and, more importantly, 56 years of ecumenical leaders affecting generations of Christians to come.

Where are the voices of these generations, the voice of Christian youth? If the truth be told, they were heard nearly a century before the WCC came together as a formal ecumenical body: in the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations (YMCA/YWCA) formed in 1844 and 1855. These organisations, shortly followed by Student Christian Movements founded in countries around the world, as well as the cohesive World Student Christian Federation, continue to take part in ecumenical dialogue today.

The voice of Christian youth continues to be heard within the ecumenical movement, not

only through ecumenical youth organisations, but also through the WCC itself. Each year, a new class of interns brings fresh insights to the work of the WCC, while contributing to a new understanding of the WCC and its role in ecumenism.

Katherine Pastukhova (Russian Orthodox Church), 28, of Belarus, working on the WCC study on Ecclesiology and Baptism, describes the Council as a living organism exuding a positive impulse of ecumenism and unity. Katherine notes that her ecumenical ideas have not always been well received, but as she continues to study the life of the church, she finds ecumenism to be more relevant, more necessary than ever before.

However, Katherine's role at the WCC is not limited to concrete tasks. As part of the third class of interns to take part in an ecumenical formation process, Katherine is able to share her experience and her perspective, giving shape to an ever-changing youth constituency. The WCC programme executive in charge of the internship programme, Rev. Freddy Knutsen, argues that it is an important asset for the WCC to have young people with ecumenical knowledge and experience in the churches, people we can count on to bring ecumenism further and who can contribute with substance. The interns challenge the WCC as an organisation to see things from a new perspective. Their contribution to the ecumenical movement is not only the ecumenical realities they bring to

the WCC, but also what they take back home.

Marlone Zakeyo (The Church of the Province of Central Africa), a 23-year-old intern from Zimbabwe working with International Affairs, aspires to be one of these people. He hopes to become better equipped to tackle human rights issues with fellow Christians in Zimbabwe. Marlone, who recently finished his Bachelor of Law degree, has continued to be actively involved in political movements during a time when his country is experiencing increasing economic stress and high inflation. Through his hands-on experience with ecumenism, he continues to question his governments domestic policy and its treatment of human rights activism in the country. Marlone sees the emphasis on service, human rights and economic justice as among the most vital work that the WCC is doing.

There is human rights work to be tackled in other regions as well. Churches are not responding to the issues of Dalits, states Mrinal Lankapalli (Andhrea Evangelical Lutheran Church), a 26-year-old Dalit from India working with the WCC Dalit programme. Dalits, previously known as untouchables under the now-illegal caste system, continue to experience discrimination in both public and private spheres. Mrinal, who has completed a Bachelor of Law and a Master of Social Work, is active in both Dalit and Christian movements in India, and now continues that work through the WCC. He sees the internship programme as an opportunity to observe ecumenism more closely while contributing to the relationship between the WCC, Dalits and the churches. Through his internship and his ecumenical study with the WCC, he hopes to gain a rich experience to bring back to his country and his cause.

Before coming to the WCC, Rachel Medema (Reformed Church of America), 24, from the United States, studied Latin American devel-

opment issues in Guatemala and Honduras. Yet her work in the WCC on service and justice issues in developing countries has not merely reflected her previous education; it has suggested a new dimension for further studies. Rachel is beginning to think about graduate school in theology, specifically related to social ethics, and she finds this a great introduction.

Rachel is not alone in her ecumenical and academic pursuits. Eva Osterlind (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark), 25, from Denmark believes that ecumenism gives a broader perspective to her theological studies. Following her internship in the General Secretariat of the WCC, she will return to her studies to become a pastor. Practical experience, and knowing what goes on in the real world is as important - if not more so - as theoretical knowledge.

As an intern myself, I agree. Since our arrival in September, I have learned a lot, shared a little, and begun to search for more direction in my own academic future, as well as my role as a Christian and an ecumenist. I am 22, from the United States and a member of the Presbyterian Church USA. For me, the WCC is a crossroads: a place to teach and to be taught, and a place to listen and to be heard.

For Katherine, Marlone, Mrinal, Rachel, Eva and myself, the WCC represents more than 56 years of arguments and resolutions, problems and solutions; it is a place that facilitates service and justice where Christians can gather to learn, to listen and to share new ideas. It is also 56 years of ecumenical Christian youth challenging each idea and presenting their own. After all, without young people, where will the WCC, and the ecumenical movement, be in another 56 years?

Lisa Yablonsky is a WCC intern in the Media Relations office. She studies Comparative Literature, and is currently developing her ecumenical communications skills.

A Church of All and for All

Disabilities advocates have challenged churches to accept that “We are not a full community without one another.”

A statement prepared for the 2003 World Council of Churches (WCC) Central Committee by the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocates Network (EDAN) urges a reconsideration of Jesus' parable of the great banquet in Matthew 22, and says: “When all are invited to this feast, to one church, the list will include people with physical and mental impairments and chronic illness.”

The implications of this admission for worship include making certain that people with learning disabilities are not excluded on the grounds that “they do not understand”, being careful over the choice of metaphors - for instance not speaking of being “disfigured by sin” - and including a range of sensory experiences rather than relying wholly on words.

Practical issues include making physical provision for people with disabilities, such as space for wheelchairs, large-print books, and assisted listening devices for those who are hard of hearing. However, it is the full participation of people with disabilities which needs to be enabled.

Entitled “A Church of All and for All”, the EDAN statement builds on the theological and pastoral contributions of disabled people, parents and those who experience life

alongside them. Identifying the vulnerability of disabled people both to discriminatory social trends and manipulation by religious groups, it says that while disabled people “find strength in the care of Christ”, many have found “that the church's teaching on this truth has been too limited”.

The statement identifies negative perceptions of disabled people as objects of charity, sometimes based on flawed theological readings of the Bible. It urges Christians to make the link between the disabilities they may see around them today, and the disability of Christ on the cross. “Often, we choose to forego or forget the crucifixion, preferring to turn directly to the resurrection. Christ rose from the dead with his wounds.”

Pastoral concerns are underpinned by theological reflection on the notion of humanity created in the image of God. Criticising the idea that the mind or soul alone is in God's image, the statement suggests that “This understanding of human nature is both inherently elitist and dualist. It ultimately tends to exclude those whose mental or physical incapacities profoundly affect their entire personality and existence.”

According to the statement, a more appropriate theology of disability takes account of

the corporate nature of being “in Christ”. “Christ was abused, disabled and put to death. Some aspects of God’s image in Christ can only be reflected in the church as the Body of Christ by the full inclusion and honouring of those who have bodies that are likewise impaired.”

This understanding of the Image of God has implications for the church’s teaching on healing and wholeness. “Jesus did not make any distinction between social restoration and physical healing. Both always happened at any given time of healing. Consequently, the integral relationship of health, salvation and healing is an imperative for a holistic theological interpretation of disability.”

However, the statement continues, “Disability in all its forms is a negation

of God’s good intention.” Healing is “an act, event, system and structure which encourages and facilitates God’s empowering, renewing, reconciling, and liberating processes in order to reverse the negation of God’s intended good for God’s creation.”

It also speaks of the gifts which disabled people are able to bring: “We have become skilful in areas we never intended to master. We have become accidental experts with skills and expertise to share with the wider community and church.”

Appealing to churches, the statement says that disabled people “do not need pity, or mercy, but compassionate understanding, and opportunities to develop their vocations, possibilities and abilities”.

The full text of the statement, “*A Church of All and for All*” is available at:

<http://www2.wcc-coe.org/ccdocuments2003.nsf/index/plen-1.1-en.html>

Resources

Facing the Future - Ecumenical Youth Encounter

WCC Video (available in VHS-PAL and VHS-NTSC) and DVD

Addressing the theme "Facing the Future", more than 30 young people from churches and student Christian movements (SCMs) in many nations gather in Cuba for a 3-week leadership programme co-sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the World Student Christian Federation. Through an intensive series of encounters, participants come to see themselves and their cultures from new perspectives. Returning home, they embark on local ministry projects with a sense of belonging to one, worldwide Christian movement.

This video follows the diverse youth leaders as they engage in Bible study, worship, dance and song, role-playing exercises and acts of fellowship, as well as frank exchanges on such topics as economic globalisation, relations between women and men, challenges presented by HIV/AIDS, and other issues concerning faith and practice. Their experience provides a wealth of possibilities for further discussion.

The philosophy behind this multicultural interaction is summed up by one participant: "Tell me about it, and I'll forget. Show me, and I'll remember. Involve me, and I'll understand."

The DVD also contains additional material:

Globalisation, HIV/AIDS & Gender

How does economic globalisation impact young people and their faith?

What are the challenges of HIV/AIDS and what can young people do?

Gender and marriage; What are the differences in dating and getting married between young people from different countries, cultures and churches?

Faith, Culture and Boyfriends

From Denmark to Kenya: Faith's cultural challenge.

'Dorte from Denmark visits the twins Emily and Gladys in their home in Kenya. She is introduced to the rich church life of the area and to the problems of AIDS, widespread also among Christians. Dorte does not find it easy to face deprivation and hardship. Should she feel guilty because of her rich life in Europe? One night the girls tell each other about boyfriends. They think they know what to expect when they reveal their secrets. But they don't...

Cultural shock

From Nairobi to Copenhagen: seeing Christianity from the other side.

'It wasn't what we thought it would be. It was a shock.' The twins Emily and Gladys from Kenya were speaking after a visit to the Lutheran state church in Denmark. They had expected to find a church similar to their own. Instead they found a church with plenty of money but very few people caring about church life. They met a couple who paid church tax but never used the church, a choir paid to sing in the church on Sundays without being part of the congregation, a gay pastor and his partner living together in the community-house. It was all a shock, but the question is, can you judge a church on your own expectations?

For online ordering:

<http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/news/videos/index-e.html>

Student Ecumenism

Web resources

One of the ecumenical movements which gave life to the development of the World Council of Churches (alongside such as the YMCA, YWCA and the Sunday school movement) was the Student Christian Movement. The global body bringing together students from national SCMs was established in 1895 - the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, WSCF encouraged students to engage actively in the work of spreading the gospel, emphasising the importance of mutual communication, co-operation, and challenge with the mainline institutional churches. In doing so, the Federation has played a fundamental role in both the modern missionary and ecumenical movements.

The work of the WSCF continues today, calling students to live out the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, providing a meeting place for students across boundaries of culture, race, and denomination. It is a space for leadership development, empowerment of women, a critique of higher education in the context of globalisation, the development of alternatives to globalisation, as well as the exploration of a theology and spirituality rooted in the hopes and struggles of students worldwide.

To discover more about the activities of WSCF and the resources available, check out their website:

<http://www.servingthetruth.org>

DOV - discipline or violence?

Web resources

If one adult hits another they can expect to find themselves charged with assault. If an adult hits a child, it can be called discipline.

We encourage our children to adopt non-violent and non-confrontational ways of resolving their conflicts, yet some parents use physical punishment on their children. Churches in the UK have formed the **Churches Network for Non-Violence (CNNV)** which aims to:

- promote respect for children in churches
- support positive non-violent discipline
- inform and resource Christians in working towards law reform to end physical punishment
- effectively challenge the view that physical punishment is a biblical doctrine
- link with interested groups and make wider connections.

CNNV has developed out of a concern that the physical punishment of children has been advocated by some Christian groups as integral to Christian parenting. This has largely been unchallenged by the Christian community as a whole. The churches are amongst those who are supporting a Children are Unbeatable! (CAU!) Campaign in the UK. The issue of apparently sanctioned violence against children by parents cannot be ignored by churches who have committed themselves to the Decade to Overcome Violence.

The CAU! website, although it has much material specific to the UK situation, also contains useful practical material for those who want to practice positive non-violent discipline for their own children as parents or promote it in their own context -

www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk

At a global level there is a campaign launched in 2001 - the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. Their website enables you to check the legislative position in your own country, to understand the issue from a human rights perspective, to access research papers on corporal punishment and has links to web resources on positive discipline -

www.endcorporalpunishment.org

The Challenge of Ecumenical Formation

Summary Report on Education and Ecumenical Formation in 2003

Introduction

The common factor and primary issue throughout all the our activities is ecumenical formation. The given objective of this programme is *to revitalise and support ecumenical formation within the churches and the ecumenical movement*. Whether it be working with churches, educational institutions, networks and councils or giving financial support for study or producing resource materials, the priority is ecumenical formation and not simply contributing to the general good. The World Council of Churches is the only global body with the responsibility of advocating forms of learning which nurture ecumenical attitudes, behaviour and ways of relating.

Promoting and delivering ecumenical learning

The most significant change in 2003 was in relation to OIKOSNET (the global ecumenical network of Christian Laity Centres, Academies and Movements for Social Concern). Responsibility for its administration passed from the WCC to the network itself. We paid tribute in EEF-NET November 2003 to the work done over many years with OIKOSNET and for laity in the ecumenical movement by Evelyn Appiah. The WCC is committed to a creative relationship with OIKOSNET, albeit with significantly reduced staff resources. With the aid of an external evaluation

process, OIKOSNET has been considering its purpose, activities and structure.

Pilot projects in ecumenical formation for staff in the Ecumenical Centre and with staff of one specialised ministry have taken place and been evaluated. Out of this experience and that of other work on ecumenical formation, an experimental version of a CD-ROM containing ecumenical formation resources and methodologies is being produced in collaboration with Ecu-Learn, Germany. *The Resource Book on Holistic Education* is nearing completion and will be published in 2004 by the Comenius Institute. A series of *Good Practice Guides in Ecumenical Learning* was launched on the web with five Guides on general principles and three on specific methodologies. Further *Guides* will be added over the next years.

Regional collaboration on ecumenical formation continued to develop. The most significant example was the collaboration in the Asia Religious Educators Forum organised by the Christian Conference of Asia.

Interfaith learning continued to be of significance. Although this is undertaken in collaboration with WCC' work on interreligious dialogue, educational and dialogical processes are different. The papers from three WCC consultations on interfaith learning were published by the Comenius Institute under the title *Shared Learning in a Plural Word*. Looking to the future, work began on developing a project to produce a resource for interreligious education which would assist educators in faith communities and in education systems.

Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE)

ETE continued to work through three regional consultants in addition to the Geneva based staff - Asia/Pacific (50%); Latin America/Caribbean (50%); Central & Eastern Europe (full time). Overall coordination and responsibility for the Africa/Middle East region is undertaken from Geneva. The annual meeting of the ETE Working Group reflected on and analysed regional theological education trends and the opportunities of offering an ecumenical perspective. They allocated funds for the projects that are ecumenically shared with theological institutions and regional associations.

Whilst in some regions and sub-regions there are effective networks for ecumenical theological education, others require more encouragement. Thus visits were paid, for example, to theological educators in Indochina and the Pacific and a consultation was held on "Ecumenical Cooperation on Theological and religious Education in Post Communist Europe".

Support for ecumenical theological education generally was given through involvement with the regional/national theological education associations or institutions - eg the Association for Theological Education in Myanmar Faculty Development Round Table; the Theological Workday of the Comunidad de Educación Teológica Ecuémica Latinoamericana/Caribeña; the consultation on the Way Ahead for Theological Education (St Paul's United Theological College, Kenya). Of equal importance, four issues received particular attention:

- The empowerment of women and indigenous people in theological education.

Examples of this are: a workshop on "Equipping Women for Transformational Leadership" in Asia; a workshop with indigenous theological educators and pastoral leaders in Latin America; a seminar on "Femmes et Nouvelle Société en Afrique, les Taches des Theologiennes"

- HIV/AIDS. Collaboration with WCC Health & Healing continued in helping this issue to be taken into theological education curricula. This began with the curriculum for Africa. This concern has extended in 2003 to South Asia and Central and Eastern Europe.
- Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV). For example, a workshop was held for theological teachers from India on "Overcoming Violence".
- Librarians. Good library provision is one of the keys to theological institutions being able to offer degree and higher level courses.

Scholarships

This gives support to the ecumenical movement and its educational ministry by making awards for individual study and for group training. In 2003, the awards were 92 and 10 respectively. The emphasis in selection is on the potential benefit for the requesting body and the community they serve. Participants return better equipped and trained, having hopefully gained a thorough ecumenical formation experience. They also become multipliers of training. Group training is increasingly being found to be effective in this latter respect.

Two meetings of the Scholarships Working Group were held discuss policy and practice

and to consider applications. Four thematic areas of priority for study/training (including group training) for the years 2004-2006 have been selected. These are: *Interfaith Relations; Globalisation; Overcoming Violence; and HIV/AIDS.*

Two Regional Consultations were planned in 2003 to offer on-going training and education of Scholarships National Correspondents so that they can better assume their responsibilities within their own churches and communities. Also to increase awareness, stories from former scholarships holders have been made available both on the internet and in an annual written publication.

A pilot regional initiative with the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation (Zambia) has been established to make possible the award of forty World Council of Churches' Scholarships (twenty scholarships each year for two years) for African students. A review of the initiative will be undertaken by the Scholarships Programme at the end of the pilot period.

A donor roundtable meeting was held in November 2003 to discuss partnership concerns, including the ongoing disparity between theological funding and non-theological funding received for the Scholarships Programme. Although a small incremental increase was seen in 2003, the overall disparity remains.

EEF-NET and Ministerial Formation

Two issues of each were published in 2003 in print and on the WCC website. EEF-NET is available in Spanish as well as English.

Both serve as means of promoting ecumenical formation through the information and reflective articles they contain.

Evaluation

The outcomes of parts of this overall Programme are susceptible to assessment processes. The evaluations of experiments in the ecumenical formation of staff have been encouraging. There has been positive feedback on most of the resource material that has been produced. Awards made for study, both through Scholarships and faculty development through ETE have been of demonstrable benefit.

Effectiveness in the task of revitalising ecumenical formation within the churches and the ecumenical movement is less easy to measure. It seems reasonable, though, to make the following two points:

- There is an increasing recognition of the need for ecumenical formation. However, there is not often a corresponding willingness to devote time and resources to doing it.
- The model of ecumenical formation which concentrates on learning about the ecumenical movement still predominates in much educational work. Forms of ecumenical formation which encourage critical thinking and changed attitudes, behaviour and relationships are not always welcomed. This makes the title of this Programme Report - the Challenge of Ecumenical Formation - still highly relevant.

News from the Networks

Ecumenism in Africa

Following up on the 2003 Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and in response to the urgency for the renewal of the African ecumenical movement, a meeting of representatives of the ecumenical movement in Africa and beyond took place in Nairobi, Kenya in January 2004. The meeting received several presentations on setting the *scene for re-building, Serving together and building resources together*. It also included an opportunity to consider the work of the WCC Scholarships programme.

The need to theologise together was reinforced. Ecumenical learning as well as the need to enrich ecumenical co-operation in Africa was given prominence. The meeting adopted a Common Statement of Purpose and Action which included:

Ecumenical Learning

For the Church to impact on society positively, ecumenical action cannot be underestimated. This requires serious attention to ecumenical learning and formation. It was observed that training is more effective when contextualised. Training is beneficial when priorities and the required relevant skills are developed and delivered by ecumenical institutions which have the capacity to do so at low cost. Attention is to be given to the establishing of a training centre for ecumenical learning for the Francophone and the Lusophone.

The commitment of Churches to ecumenical learning institutions requires enhance-

ment, to ensure that both clergy and laity (especially women and youth) benefit adequately from various categories of training in a systematic way. The meeting also observed that the data base on ecumenical learning institutions needs to be improved upon and shared among all stakeholders. Efforts are, therefore, needed to implement the plan of action developed out of the Conference on 'Theological Education and Ecumenical Formation' of 2002 in South Africa under *The Journey of Hope* Vision of the WCC.

It was also affirmed that Ecumenical networks of which the All Africa Conference of Churches had been accorded key status and motivating role such as the Ecumenical Lay Centres, The Conference of African Theological Institutions, (CATI), human resource training institutions for Churches, The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, Editions Cle, World Student Christian Federation, (WSCF), Young Men and Women Christian Associations (YMCA, YWCA), The Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, other religious publishing Institutions, be brought into discussions leading to the development of a common agenda of a focused ecumenical movement in Africa.

Other educational aspects were also noted, including:

- Liberating Education is necessary with research on how democratic concepts, language and words can be translated into local languages for use by all and the provision of civic education that will assist communities to actively participate in governance and to hold their governments accountable.

- The right of the African child to free basic education.
- The need for training and pastoral formation to help the member churches to be equipped to break the wall of silence, overcome fear and rise up to the challenge of fighting against human rights abuses and for the development of with materials for NCCs and clergy that can contribute towards the promotion of human rights.
- On HIV and AIDS, local churches should be encouraged to be involved in sex education from a biblical, theological and spiritual perspective.

Asia Ecumenical Academy (AEA) 2004

The mobile ecumenical formation and leadership development programme of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) offers a 3-week in-depth opportunity for ecumenical leaders, both those serving as resource persons in ecumenical gatherings and key leaders in church and ecumenical organisations, to enhance their knowledge, attitude and skills in participating in the ecumenical movement.

As CCA encourages national ecumenical organisations to have basic ecumenical course for new leaders, the AEA is meant to be a regional programme for those who are already ecumenically involved for at least 3 years.

The Asia Ecumenical Academy will take place in Thailand, 6-28 August, 2004. Dr. Preman Niles, is once again serving as Dean of the AEA. Other outstanding resource persons to challenge the participants' creative thinking and commitment have been invited. Intended participants are key

leaders under 45 years of age in denominations and ecumenical organisations and for seminary faculty who serve as resource persons in national ecumenical activities.

The *Aim* of the Ecumenical Academy is to strengthen the ecumenical leadership of church and ecumenical organisations through enhancing their capacity in rethinking the ecumenical tasks in the face of contemporary and emerging issues relevant to the churches' mission together in Asia.

The *Specific Objectives* are:

- To enhance the ecumenical leaders' knowledge of and commitment to the ecumenical movement;
- To be able to identify challenges to church mission in addressing the issues of globalisation and many faiths and cultures in Asia;
- To strengthen the network among ecumenical leaders through this gathering of 20-25 participants and resource persons;
- Produce written materials that will open up issues for discussion in the churches for contribution to the future shape and vision of the ecumenical movement.

School for Ecumenical Leadership Formation (SELF), Asia

SELF is a leadership development program, which aims to train and empower first line national ecumenical youth leaders with international training, preparing them to take prominent leadership roles in the ecumenical movement, nationally and internationally. The Youth Department of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) conducted the Second School for Ecumenical Leadership

Formation in September/October 2003 in Indonesia with 16 participants.

SELF 2003 incorporated the use of Bible Studies, exposure programs, field trips, session inputs by thematic experts, continuous theological reflections and understanding the theological and Biblical underpinnings of the SELF components, and sharing of personal and organisation real-life experiences to undertake the study of the courses according to the topics included in the programme.

An important element of the School was the “learn-as-you-do” pedagogy of learning. This required the participants to lead the general program and conduct the day-to-day activities. For this four groups of four participants each were formed balancing gender and sub-region. Hence, there was leadership development by practising how to lead an international program along with the theoretical inputs on different topics provided by resource people. The organisers maintained the overall facilitation of the duration of the School.

SELF 2003 consisted of the following topics:

1. Reading the Signs of Our Times: Deciphering the challenges of our times and the issues that the churches in Asia face.
2. Feminism and Gender Sensitisation and Mainstreaming: Analysing, and responding to, the role and place of women in the Asian societies and churches.
3. Globalisation and Economic Injustices: Analysing, and responding to, the realities of the economic effects of globalisation in Asia. Globalisation is also understood as a process affecting not just the economic being of people, but also their culture, language, society, safety, and security.

4. The Ecumenical Movement: An anamnesis (memory) of the global ecumenical movement based on the ideology that youth leaders should know where the movement comes from so as to be able to lead her.

5. Interfaith Dialogue and Peace Building in a Multi-religious Context: Responding to the issue of facilitating peaceful communities in Asia and around the world.

6. Networking and Communicating the Ecumenical Vision: Analysing and preparing oneself to be able to encourage people to become part of the ecumenical movement, and especially studying how one can communicate the ecumenical vision to the youth and other parties.

7. National Projects/Action Plans: Finally, at the conclusion of the theoretical and experiential input (through exposure programs and field trips), putting together concrete and pragmatic strategies for youth work in the national and international context. Emphasis on individual responsibility in the individual and organisational or group action plans.

SELF 2003 provided a strong bonding among the participants, where the participants mutually supported each other in their stay and learning.

Intereuropean Commission on Church and School (ICCS) Farewell to Hans Spinder

At the ICCS Conference last year the participants and the Board of ICCS said good bye to Hans Spinder, the long serving secretary and, later, President. After 25 years working for the Reformed Churches in the

Netherlands in the area of church and school, Hans Spinder begins a new job in 2004. He and his wife will become lecturers at the theological seminar in Matanzas/Cuba. Part of their work will be to support parishes in their activities. At a farewell party Hans expressed his thanks for the co-operation in ICCS. Hans has this to say in his farewell speech:

My conclusion is that ICCS has been very successful over the last ten years and that it is very important to keep this level of activity in the immediate future. The influence of Europe is becoming more and more apparent in all countries and affects the educational situation as well. Recognition of the potential and contribution of religion is crucial to the quality of education together with acceptance of religious education in all schools in Europe. It has been proved to be successful to work with two approaches alongside each other:

- a *bottom-up approach*: the work must be rooted in the daily, practical work of educationalists in groups, class rooms, adult education, church education, etc. For ICCS the task remains to organise conferences, working groups and other exchange possibilities, to support the professionalism of the participants and to develop a vision on religion and education within a European context.
- an *institutional* approach to monitor the education policy of the European Institutions, both the political and the church structures, with the aim to promote good Europeans laws and regulations to give room for religious education in formal and informal education. Monitoring, spreading information and political lobby work will still be needed in the future.

Both approaches need close co-operation with churches, church institutions, other religious communities and educational organisations, because there is a lot of work to do

and ICCS is limited in its resources and its possibilities.

New ICCS website

ICCS has established a new website: www.iccsweb.org. It will contain news, information and resources on church school relationships and projects across Europe. You will find information about ICCS activities e.g. a short report about the last ICCS conference or information about established working groups. There are also announcements about publications. ICCS is looking for translators and contributors for the website. If you would like to be involved please contact us via president@iccsweb.org.

The International Association on Christian Education (IV)

In December 2003 Frans Vos, former IV secretary, died unexpectedly at the age of 70. In addition to his great contribution to the work of IV, co-operation between different European educational networks was shaped by the remarkable influence of Frans Vos over many years. He was one of the fathers of the former European Co-ordinating Group that became later CoGREE. Frans Vos will be remembered as a charming and committed European friend and colleague.

Education and the Conference of European Churches (CEC)

The 12th CEC Assembly, held in Trondheim in June 2003 dealt with education as an important area of concern for the work in future. On the initiative of ICCS and IV, the

Work Programme for the Church and Society Commission (CSC) 2003 - 2009 includes also a chapter on education as a thematic element:

"12. Education. Several CEC and CSC partner organisations have expressed interest in a closer co-operation with the CSC on issues related to education. Education is not one of the European Union competences. But nevertheless, many of the European Union activities have an educational dimension and/or have an impact on the educational system and framework. This aspect might well increase, if and when a value-based Constitution of the European Union is adopted. What will be the role of education in implementing and transmitting these values? Which parameters are set by the European institutions, where do they foster or hinder education?"

Which role does specifically religious education play in this process? These are issues to be addressed in relation to the European institutes, not only the European Union, but also with regard to the Council of Europe, the OSCE and global organisation such as the UN and UNESCO, which are engaged in substantial educational projects. Education is yet another of those issues which have both external and internal dimensions for the future work of the CSC. Education does not only have to be addressed in relation to the European institution, but it also has to be seen as an integral dimension of all CEC's work. How far can education support the underlying aims and values of the CSC work programme? How far can the educational dimension and its implications be reflected in all sectors of the CSC work?"

Future objectives:

- to monitor and lobby the European institutions in respect of their impact on education and religious education in particular;

- to inform CEC member churches on developments in the field of education at the European institutional level;
- to reflect on education as an integral element of all aspects of the CSC work programme.

First discussions with the CSC partner organisations emphasised that this part of a future CSC work programme can only be and should only be implemented in close co-operation with educational organisations associated with the CSC.

Also the Final Report of the CEC Policy Reference Committee recommends:

"That CEC encourage and support the exchange and co-ordination between the churches in the field of religious instruction and ecumenical education of lay people and clergy and bring the importance of this matter to the attention of the European institutions. CEC and CCEE should encourage the theological faculties in Europe to form an interconfessional conference or network for ecumenical research and find ways to develop a research programme for examining the textbooks of religious education in Europe and develop criteria for an ecumenically balanced religious instruction."

European Ministers of Education promote intercultural education

The European Ministers of Education of the 48 states signed up to the European Cultural Convention met in Athens in November 2003. The main focus of their conference was "Intercultural education: managing diversity, strengthening democracy." The text of the adopted declaration notes "with satisfaction the progress and results of the projects

and activities currently being carried out by the Council of Europe". Among other points, the launch of the project "the new intercultural challenge to education: religious diversity and dialogue in Europe" was mentioned. This will make a major contribution to the shared goals of mutual understanding, respect, and learning to live together."

The Ministers call on the Council to attach greater importance to education in general. They also promote a list of concrete proposals how "to implement strategies and give fresh impetus" to intercultural education. The Council should:

- Relaunch conceptual research on intercultural education;
- Develop analytical instruments and identify and disseminate examples of good practice emphasising intercultural and pluralist approaches in school textbooks;
- Encourage research focusing on social learning and co-operative learning in order to take into account "the "learning to live together" and intercultural aspects in all teaching activities.

The complete text of this declaration is available on:

<http://www.coe.int>

**On the Wings of a Dove
Worldwide campaign on
overcoming violence against
women and children
25 November - 10 December 2004**

This is a campaign initiated by the WCC to engage the churches in developing pastoral

and practical responses and actions to overcome violence against women and children.

Churches and individual congregations and groups are called to:

- provide safe spaces for the telling of stories of suffering, survival and resistance
- link with other groups and movements, international organisations working to overcome violence against women and children
- make alliances with other faith communities to address this common concern
- expose church practices and theologies that collude with the abuse of power and lead to violence
- develop practical and pastoral and pastoral responses towards justice and healing for survivors of violence; and counselling for perpetrators of violence.

This campaign is linked to the 16 Days movement - an international campaign which began in 1991. Every year, all around the world, imaginative action by grassroots organisations and women's networks raises awareness, and inspires change, to overcome different forms of gender violence. November 25 is the International Day Against Violence Against Women, and December 10 is International Human Rights Day. The 16 Day period also includes World AIDS Day and the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. So the campaign emphasises that all gender violence is an abuse of fundamental human rights.

For more information:

<http://www.overcomingviolence.org>

or write to the WCC.

OIKOSNET

A Global Ecumenical network of Christian Laity Centres, Academies, and Movements of Social Concern working for just, participatory, sustainable, and inclusive communities.

Oikosnet supports and enhances the work of this global network - through activities conducted globally and regional associations by:

Providing resources to bring global perspectives to the work of the regional associations and the Centres, Academies and Movements of Social Concern,

Facilitating and promoting training programs for global and regional ecumenical leadership,

Providing opportunities for inter-disciplinary and multi-cultural dialogue in safe spaces,

Promoting ecumenical solidarity through communication and actions on issues and themes of social concern.

website: <http://www.oikosnet.org>

The constituent associations are:

ACLCA: Association of Christian Lay Centres in Africa

ACISCA: Association of Christian Institutes for Social Concern in Asia

CEPACASA: Collaboration for Ecumenical Planning and Action in the Caribbean and South America

CONOSUR: Southern Cone Network of Centres

EAALCE: Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres in Europe

MEATRC: Middle East Association of Training and Retreat Centres

NARDA: An Ecumenical Christian Association of Retreat and Renewal Centres and Leaders in North America

III ➔ O I K O S N E T

Useful OIKOSNET-related Resources

Global

2003 was a year of evaluation and reflection for OIKOSNET globally. An external evaluation had been commissioned even before the decision was taken by the WCC to hand over responsibility for administration and finance to OIKOSNET. The evaluation was conducted by Johanna Linz (Germany) and Baffour Amoa (Ghana).

The Evaluation Report was presented to the 26th OIKOSNET Meeting which brought together representatives of the regional associations in Cairo, Egypt in November 2003. It was recognised that there was a need to clarify the purpose and objectives of OIKOSNET, to establish a legal structure and policies for governance, to produce action plans and a funding strategy and to communicate.

The Courses in Lay Leadership Training (CLLTs) also came under review - what they are trying to achieve in the life of church and society and whether their name was meaningful to the constituency.

Also under consideration was how this space in EEF-NET can best be used to share the experience of the regional associations and their member centres and networks in a way that is more informative and mutually encouraging than simply listing events.

All these issues will be further discussed in the OIOSNET meeting which takes place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2004.

Over recent years, three valuable global resources have been produced out of the experience of the CLLTs. One is new, the other two are well worth revisiting. These resources are ones which can help the current reflection on the purpose and activities of OIKOSNET.

Breaking Barriers

WCC Video (available in VHS-PAL and VHS-NTSC)

The WCC has a programme that brings visiting journalists to work in Geneva for a short period on particular projects, such as being guest editor of WCC News. In 2002, one 'visiting journalist' was not a writer but a film maker. Adela Peeva is an independent Orthodox film maker from Bulgaria whose productions have won prizes at film festivals. She agreed to make a documentary around the 2002 global CLLT based in the Middle East. The theme of that CLLT was 'To be Instruments of Peace' and you will find a report on it in EEF-NET December 2002.

The video is not simply an account of the CLLT in pictures rather than in words. Rather, it is a reflection on what happens when Christians come from around the world and experience worship and Christian reality in the Middle East. She follows participants in both their experiences of visiting communities in Egypt and the Lebanon and in their coming all together to reflect and learn in Cyprus.

Worship with the Coptic Orthodox, dialogue among Christians and Muslims, addressing

III➔ **O I K O S N E T**

social problems, this film beautifully shows how our world view and understanding expand when people really encounter one another "skin to skin".

Empowering Lay Leadership

A Manual on Ecumenical Courses in Lay Leadership Training

Edited by Evelyn Appiah and Gert Ruppell

This is a resource than anyone planning a CLLT or any ecumenical course for lay leaders should have to hand. The handbook was put together four years ago by two former WCC colleagues. Its contents come out of many years' practical experience of running such events and many of the items are those which were actually used in specific CLLTs.

There are background articles on

- the beginnings and development of CLLTs
- the role of the laity in the ecumenical movement
- the ecumenical movement and ecumenical learning.

The concept of community features strongly in the understanding of CLLTs. There is material on:

- visiting host communities
- a CLLT as a community event

- building a worshipping community
- building communities of commitment

To give practical help, the handbook contains a basic outline structure for a CLLT and actual programmes as examples. There are guidelines for those with particular responsibilities - moderators, listeners and drafters.

In an Annex there are various documents from CLLTs such as programme forms, registration forms, teaching material and statements written by particular CLLTs.

Empowering Lay Leadership really does contain everything you need to help you plan such a course.

History and Hopes of CLLTs

Mithra G Augustine

It is very instructive to go to the back of this book and read through the lists of participants in various CLLTs between 1968 and 1998. You will find the names of many people who are currently active in the ecumenical movement as members of govern bodies of ecumenical organisations like the WCC and regional & national councils of churches, who are members of staff of such bodies or who have responsibilities for lay educational institutions or networks. If you then move a little towards the front of the book, you will find almost 50 pages of testimonies of some of those people to the power and effectiveness of the CLLT experience. They talk of fresh understandings, changed attitudes, new vision and commitment and better practice.

The book sets out the development of the laity centres, lay academies and movements

of social concern that are now linked together through OIKOSNET. Centres “are sometimes havens for refugees ... places of empowerment and solidarity for groups which are marginalises ... places where people go for spiritual retreats ... spaces for different groups with diverse opinions to have a discourse ... bridge builders and catalysts - places for building communities of hope.”

Relationships between these centres, academies and movements were first formalised in 1972 in the World Collaboration Committee with encouragement from Asia and Africa. The Committee, which was the forerunner of OIKOSNET, organised its work in collaboration with the WCC. However, the first experimental CLLT was held in 1968 - a three month programme with exposure visits to Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the UK. Out of such exciting but uneconomic experiences the current shorter

CLLT with groups having each a different exposure to a community before coming together emerged.

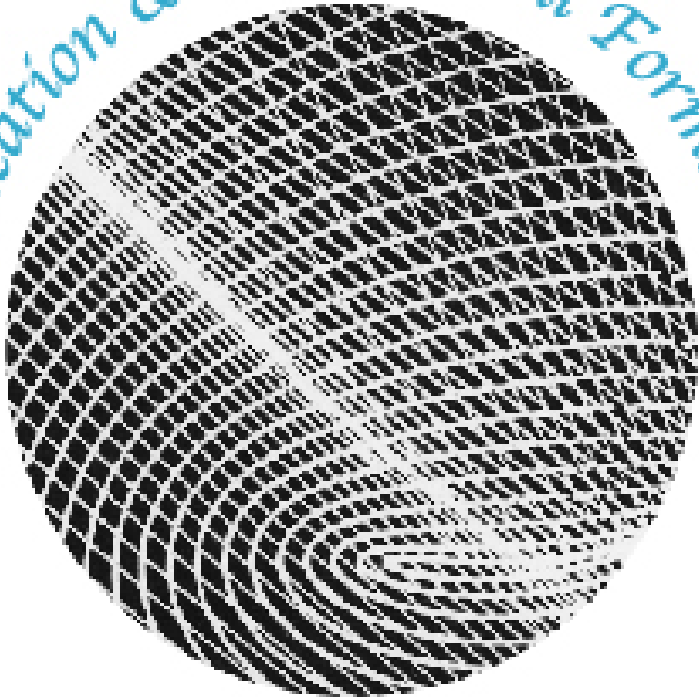
There is a fuller description of the philosophy of the CLLT and brief profiles of those that took place between 1968-98.

History and Hopes of CLLTs is a good source of information about why we have this particular form of lay training and the methodology and values that underpin them. Of equal importance is the testimony to the inspiration and change they can offer to participants. This should encourage us to learn from this wealth of experience and apply it appropriately in our own context.

Please contact the administrator for EEF-NET for details of how to obtain copies of any of these items.



Education & Ecumenical Formation



Education and Ecumenical Formation
World Council of Churches
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland