



I never dreamed I would end up teaching a class on Arab culture while on internship. I am so thankful for the information I gathered and the friends who shared their faith stories with me.

Deborah Thompson
2010 M.Div.

A Center of Christian-Muslim Engagement for Peace and Justice

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Mission

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

Vision

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

History

Since its founding, LSTC has drawn on Chicago's many cultures and various

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

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

The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) is a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) located in the Hyde Park area of Chicago. Through its five degree programs (M.A., M.Div., Th.M., D.Min. and Ph.D.), it trains leaders who serve in the ELCA and other churches around the world, and scholars who teach in a variety of academic institutions. LSTC is a member of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools, which allows students to cross-register among the 12 member seminaries and draw on a wealth of ecumenical resources. LSTC enjoys a number of cooperative arrangements with the University of Chicago. To learn more about the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, visit www.lstc.edu



CCME encourages students to form friendships, interacting as people first and letting interfaith dialogue occur as a natural outcome of living in relationship with others of different faiths.

Rebecca A. Smith
2009 Dual Degree M.A./A.M.



Who is it for?

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

What do we do?

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

Among the courses regularly taught by Swanson, Aasi, Shelley and others: Toward Understanding Islam, History of Islamic Religious Thought, History of Christian-Muslim Relations, The

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

Interfaith Emphasis Study Program

Through a strong core of courses, activities, and a final project, students pursuing the M.Div. or M.A. degrees may study and acquire some familiarity with at least one religious tradition other than their own.

Speaking and teaching; congregational and community resources

Center staff are available for speaking and teaching assignments in a variety



of scholarly, ecclesiastical, community and congregational venues. The Center is ready to offer assistance to congregations and community groups in developing multi-week studies, and is developing educational resources to be posted on its website.

Student activities

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

Lectures and dialogues

Guest and faculty speakers regularly provide insights on important and timely topics. Leaders of local faith communities are often called upon to make presentations and join together for dialogue in a variety of settings.

Conferences and seminars

CCME sponsors an annual 'Sacred Texts' conference as well as various educational events on interfaith understanding and cooperation.

Hosting visitors

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

Staff

The Rev. Dr. Michael T. Shelley, director

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

Ms. Sara Trumm, program coordinator

