

2021 Vocation of Lutheran Higher Education Conference
Called to Place: Community Responsive Education
(A virtual conference hosted by Augsburg University)
July 12 - 15, 2021

AGENDA

The sessions on July 12th, 14th and 15th will be held from 2:00 - 3:30 pm EDT
The session on July 13th will be held from 2:00 - 4:00 pm EDT

Note: Those who need any disability-related accommodation to fully participate in this event are encouraged to contact University Events at events@augsborg.edu or 612-330-1104. Remember to have the name, date, and time of the event with you when contacting their office. Please allow for sufficient time to arrange the accommodation.

Session 1: Mon., July 12, 2:00 - 3:30 pm EDT, via Zoom

Keynote presentation by Jason Mahn, Augustana College

The Gift of Being Placed: Vocation, Community, and Belonging in the Lutheran Tradition.

Knowing one's place can sound depreciating, humbling, or even humiliating. And yet, the proper humility accompanying that process of being placed and knowing one's place is *exactly* what is so empowering and enriching about an education that engages local landscapes and neighborhoods. This plenary will introduce the concept of place, and help us begin to take stock of the importance of our particular settings, including the physical and cultural geographies of our campuses and the surrounding communities. Over the course of these four days, participants will consider how local landscapes and neighborhoods can shape the missions, identities, and institutional callings of our schools. Throughout, we will ask critical questions about who has felt a deep sense of belonging in these places, and how we might develop anti-racist practices so that our campuses and neighborhoods become places of belonging for all.

The session will include an opportunity for posing questions to Prof. Mahn.

Session 2: Tues., July 13, 2:00 - 4:00 pm EDT, via Zoom

Concurrent Sessions. Participants will register to attend two of seven sessions.

Schedule:

Welcome: 2:00 - 2:10 pm
First concurrent sessions: 2:10 - 2:50 pm
Break: 2:50 - 3:00 pm
Second concurrent sessions: 3:00 pm - 3:40 pm
Closing plenary: 3:40 pm - 4:00 pm

Room 1: Creating Communities of Genuine Belonging: (Monica Smith, Augustana College).

What would it mean to make our campuses communities of genuine belonging? How do initiatives surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion relate to the places in which our campuses

are located? In this workshop, participants will think together about what the call to create communities of genuine belonging might look like in our particular settings.

Room 2: The Natural World and the Power of Place: (Chris Johnson, Prairie Oaks Institute). Discerning, reflecting on, and living into a sense of (individual and institutional) vocation is both a matter of WHO we are and WHERE we are. Especially in these tumultuous and “dis-locating” times, attending to “place” has great power to shape the inner and outer landscapes of vocation. What vocational wisdom can be learned from the natural ecosystems, environmental gifts and challenges in the places where we are rooted -- and perhaps in response to which we are being called to adapt?

Room 3: What is Lutheran Higher Education? (Kristen Glass Perez, Northwestern University). What is Lutheran higher education and all the talk about vocation? This session will explore the core commitments of Lutheran higher education and its understanding of the mission of higher education -- an education designed to call and empower students to serve the neighbor so that all may flourish.

Room 4: Finding Vocation in the Place You are Called to Serve: (Mark Wilhelm, NECU). How does one find one's vocation in a response to conditions and places culturally and racially foreign to you? What does it mean to be called to a vocation other than “your deep desire”? This session will explore how place can compel deeply engaging difference.

Room 5: Valuing a College's Geographical Place: (Thomas Johnson and Jeff Boeke, Luther College, Iowa). How can or should the distinctive terrains, communities, and resources of a college's geographical location shape its vocation? Luther College's situation in the “Driftless” region of northeast Iowa will serve as a case example.

Room 6: Engaging the Local Community: (TBD, Augsburg University). Augsburg University exists in one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the United States. This workshop will give participants a sense of the many ways that Augsburg has engaged in its geographic and cultural place to reflect both its Lutheran heritage and identity, as well as to serve the neighbor in the place it finds itself.

Room 7: Forming Students to Reflect Our Specific Location: (Lisa Sethre-Hofstad) Students choose to come to our campuses for any number of reasons. The years they spend on our campuses form them to become alumni that in some way reflect the place they matriculated. This workshop will examine the stories of two alumni from Montana, and their reflection on the undergraduate experience as it formed who they have become today.

Session 3: Wed., July 14, 2:00 - 3:30 pm EDT, via Zoom (Use the Day 1 Link)

Panel Discussion. Moderator: Guy Nave (Luther College). Panelists: Monica Smith (Augustana College), Krista Hughes (Newberry College), Melissa Maxwell-Dougherty (California Lutheran University)

Rooting Lutheran Colleges and Universities: The Institution's Engagement with Place

Panelists will discuss the ways that their institutions have engaged the communities they serve, and the ways the relationship between the institution and the place in which it is embedded have influenced the work that it does. The conversation will include a deep dive into the social realities present on and around our campuses, including reflection on how issues of diversity, equity and inclusion interface with place and the human environment our campuses occupy.

Session 4: Thurs., July 15, 2:00 - 3:30 pm EDT, via Zoom (Use the Day 2 link)

Conference Take-Aways: Planning Session. Moderator: Lynn Hunnicutt. This session will guide campus teams or ad hoc groups of persons from several campuses through a reflective activity designed to kick off their planning to incorporate the concept of “place” into campus activities related to vocational discernment. In this interactive session, campus teams will meet in breakout rooms to discuss a series of reflective questions, returning to the full group to report their progress. A breakout room for “solo” attendees will also be available to ensure that all participants have discussion partners as they think about future plans.