Luther Seminary

21st Century Faith Formation

*Envisioning Dynamic, Engaging and Inspiring Faith Formation for the 21st Century*

June 6-10, 2011

###### Guest Lecturer: John Roberto, LifelongFaith Associates (jroberto@lifelongfaith.com)

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Course Description

*What could congregational faith formation look like in 2020? How can faith formation flourish in Christian churches over the next ten years? How can congregations prepare for the future of faith formation and address the diverse spiritual and religious needs of people today? What are the hopeful signs and promising innovations that can guide faith formation for all ages and generations?*

The first decade of the 21st century has brought dramatic political, economic, social and cultural changes affecting virtually every dimension of American religious life. Faith formation in the 21st century will require new principles, models, approaches, and technologies. First, this course will explore the driving forces influencing faith formation (social, cultural, religious, demographic, economic, technological) and the diversity of spiritual and religious needs of people and communities today. Second, it presents four scenarios for envisioning the future of faith formation in churches from 2010-2020 by viewing people through four profiles: 1) people of vibrant faith and active engagement in the church community, 2) people who participate occasionally but are not actively engaged or spiritually committed, 3) people who are spiritual but not religious, and 4) people who are uninterested in the spiritual life and unaffiliated with religion. Third, the course offers a variety of practical strategies, ideas, and resources for targeting the spiritual and religious needs of people in all four scenarios; and engages the participants in designing innovations to respond to the challenges of the four scenarios. Finally, the course examines new qualities and competencies for faith formation leadership in the 21st century.

Course Outline

###### Monday

**Topic #1. How Christianity is Changing and Why & the Implications for 21st Century Faith Formation**

(Reading: *The Great Emergence* by Phyllis Tickle)

**Topic #2. Social, Cultural, and Religious Forces Affecting 21st Century Faith Formation**

(Reading: *Faith Formation 2020* by John Roberto)

**Topic #3. Envisioning the Future of Faith Formation through Four Scenarios**

* Exploring four scenarios for the future
* Interpreting the religious and spiritual needs of people through the four scenarios

(Reading: *Faith Formation 2020* by John Roberto)

###### Tuesday

**Topic #4. Discipleship in the 21st Century: Characteristics and Dynamics of Discipleship for all Ages and Generations in a 21st Century World**

(Reading: *Christianity Beyond Belief: Following Jesus for the Sake of Others* by Todd Hunter)

**Topic #5. Designing the Shape of 21st Century Faith Formation: A Lifelong Faith Formation Network**

(Reading: *Faith Formation 2020* by John Roberto)

**Wednesday**

**Topic #6. Designing Innovations for 21st Century Faith Formation**

* Surveying innovations in faith formation today
* Designing innovations in faith formation to address the religious and spiritual needs of people today

 (Reading: *Faith Formation 2020* by John Roberto)

###### Thursday

**Topic #7. Cracking Open the New**

(Reading: *Vibrant Faith in the Congregation* by David Anderson)

###### Friday

**Topic #8. Leading Faith Formation 2020: Qualities and Competencies for 21st Century Leaders**

* Competencies: adaptive leadership, change leadership, curator of religious content and experiences

(Reading: *Faith Formation 2020* by John Roberto; *Leadership for 21st Century Faith Formation* – Lifelong Faith Journal Volume 5.1; and *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath)

Course Assignments

1. Create an annotated bibliography for “futuring” faith formation based on class reading, the Faith Formation Learning Exchange, and the ***Recommended Reading*** list below with a minimum of 25 entries, with a paragraph about each entry. **Due Friday, June 10.**
2. Write an article (5 pages) for the people of your church describing your vision of “Discipleship in the 21st Century”—connecting your current practices with your vision statement with the spiritual hungers of 21st century people, proposing characteristics and dynamics of discipleship, and principles and practices for discipleship and faith growth for all ages and generations. Include at least one section of theological reflection. **Due Friday, June 17.**
3. **Final Project** Design a model of the “Lifelong Faith Formation Network” for your congregation using the *Faith Formation 2020* book and the course content in Topics #3 and #5. Include one “Innovation for 21st Century Faith Formation” that you can implement in your congregation using the *Faith Formation 2020* book and the design process and strategies in Topic #6 of the course. 10 pages minimum descriptive text. May include tables and graphics beyond that. **Due by student elected date.**

Course Resources

###### Required Reading

Anderson, David. *Vibrant Faith in the Congregation.* Minneapolis: Vibrant Faith Ministries, 2011.

Hunter, Todd*. Christianity Beyond Belief: Following Jesus for the Sake of Others.* Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2009.

*Leadership for Lifelong Faith Formation*. *Lifelong Faith* Journal, Volume 5.1, Spring 2011. Naugatuck: LifelongFaith Associates, 2011.

Roberto, John. *Faith Formation 2020: Designing the Future of Faith Formation*. Naugatuck: LifelongFaith Associates, 2010.

Tickle, Phyllis. *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.

###### Key Websites

* Articles to accompany the course topics will be available for reading and downloading on the Lifelong Faith website: www.lifelongfaith.com/luther-seminary-course.html
* Faith Formation Learning Exchange: www.faithformationlearningexchange.net
* Faith Formation 2020: www.faithformation2020.net

###### Recommend Books

Croft, Steven, Ian Mobsby, and Stephanie Spellers, editors. *Ancient Faith, Future Mission: Fresh Expressions in the Sacramental Tradition*. New York: Seabury, 2010.

Curtis J Bonk. *The World Is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2009.

Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2010.

Flory, Richard W. and Donald E. Miller. *Finding Faith: The Spiritual Quest of the Post-Boomer Generation*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008.

Hanson, Amy. *Baby Boomers and Beyond: Tapping the Ministry Talents and Passions of Adults Over Fifty*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2010.

Haynes, Brian. *Shift—What It Takes to Finally Reach Families Today.* Loveland: Group, 2009.

Heath, Chip and Dan Heath. *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*. New York: Broadway Books, 2010.

Heifetz, Ronald. *Leadership without Easy Answers*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Heifetz, Ronald, and Marty Linsky. *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

Heifetz, Ronald, Marty Linsky, and Alexander Groshow. *The Practice of Adaptive* *Leadership*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2009.

Hunter, Todd*. Giving Church Another Chance: Finding New Meaning in Spiritual Practices.* Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2009.

Imbelli, Robert, editor. *Handing on the Faith: The Church’s Mission and Challenge.* New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2006.

Keeley, Robert J., editor. *Shaped by God: Twelve Essential Practices for Nurturing Faith in Children, Youth, and Adults*. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2010.

Martinson, Roland, Wes Black, and John Roberto. *The Spirit and Culture of Youth Ministry*. Saint Paul: EYM Publications, 2010.

Merritt, Carol Howard. *Tribal Church: Ministering to the Missing Generation.* Herndon: Alban Institute, 2007.

Merritt, Carol Howard. *Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation*. Herndon, Alban Institute, 2010.

Livermore, David A. *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009.

Livermore, David A. *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The New Secret to Success.* New York: American Management Association, 2010.

Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 2005.

Pearce, Lisa D., and Melinda Lundquist Denton. *A Faith of Their Own: Stability and Change in the Religiosity of America’s Adolescents.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Robinson, Anthony B. *Leadership for Vital Congregations*. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2006.

Shirky, Clay. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations*. New York: Penguin Press, 2008.

Smith, Christian with Patrician Snell. *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Stetzer, Ed, and Richie Stanley, and Jason Hayes. *Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them*. Nashville: B&H, 2009.

Stonehouse, Catherine, and Scottie May. *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey: Guidance for Those Who Teach and Nurture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.

Wright, N.T. *After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters.* San Francisco: Harper One, 2010.

Wright, N.T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. San Francisco: Harper One, 2006.

###### Recommended Websites

*Building Faith*: Online Christian Ed Community: [www.buildfaith.org](http://www.buildfaith.org/)

*Congregational Resource Guide*: www.congregationalresources.org

*Faith & Leadership*: [http://faithandleadership.com](http://faithandleadership.com/)

*Faith Formation 2020 Initiative*: www.faithformation2020.net

*Faith Formation Learning Exchange*: www.faithformaitonlearningexchange.net

*Fresh Expressions*: www.freshexpressions.org.uk

*Fuller Youth Institute*: http://fulleryouthinstitute.org

*Insights into Religion*: http://religioninsights.org

*Leadership Network*: www.leadnet.org

*Lifelong Faith*: www.lifelongfaith.com

*Ministry Matters*: www.ministrymatters.com

*Patheos*: www.patheos.com

*State of Formation*: www.stateofformation.org

*Vibrant Faith Ministries*: www.vibrantfaith.org