

Welcome from LTI's New Director

Lincoln Theological Institute's New Director, Dr. Peter Scott, writes:



Welcome to this Newsletter, the first in a new series. I hope that you enjoy reading it and learning about some of the current work of the Lincoln Theological Institute.

There is a great deal happening at the Institute including a celebration event to which all alumni are warmly invited (see below).

As this is the first Newsletter under my Directorship, I would like briefly to introduce myself. I joined the Institute from the University of Gloucestershire, where I taught constructive, systematic theology for 16 years. In both teaching and research, I am deeply committed to relating theological insights to the dilemmas and issues of modern life. My work thereby cuts across disciplinary boundaries and draws

(Continued on page 3)

LTI International Conference on Women and Ordination 12-14 July 2006

July 2006 sees researchers and clergy from around the world gather in Manchester for the Lincoln Theological Institute's first international conference, 'Women and Ordination in the Christian Churches: International Perspectives'.

Keynote lectures will be given by Dr. Adair Lummis (Hartford Institute for Religious Research, USA), a sociologist who has written prolifically on Christian ministry; Revd Professor Frances Young (University of Birmingham, UK), who will speak on women's ordination in the light of biblical and patristic typologies; Dr. Esther Mombo (St. Paul's United Theological Seminary, Limuru, Kenya) on women and ordination in Africa; and Christina Odenburg, the first woman to

(Continued on page 2)

LTI Reception at Women and Ordination Conference

Thursday 13 July, the middle day of the conference, sees a special reception for conference participants sponsored by Lincoln Trustees. **All alumni are invited**—details,

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- LTI Conferences News *page 2*
- New Chair of Lincoln Trustees Announced *page 3*
- Meet LTI's new international doctoral student *page 3*
- How to receive this newsletter by email *page 3*
- News of recent research by LTI's staff *page 4*

VISIT OUR WEBSITE for conference booking and latest news:
<http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/religionstheology/research/crpc/lti/>

(Continued from page 1)

be made bishop in the Church of Sweden. In addition to the main speakers, around thirty short papers will be presented by contributors from the UK and as far afield as Australia, Nigeria, France and Poland.

Comparative Perspectives

A particular focus for the conference is to draw together both academic researchers and clergy, to make comparisons between the experiences of ordaining women as priests in different cultures and denominational contexts. What common patterns emerge? Why have the key issues been handled differently in different contexts? What can we learn by hearing the experiences of others?

Besides the conference itself, plans are afoot to produce an edited collection of the best conference papers, and to this end talks with a leading academic publisher are currently in progress.

Lincoln Trustees' Support

Plans for the conference have come to fruition partly thanks to generous financial support from the Lincoln Trustees, including for 10 bursaries of £100 each (with priority given to postgraduates offering papers).

The conference is open to all; Lincoln alumni are particularly invited to attend on the middle day of the conference—Thursday 13 July (see bottom of page 4).

For further details about the conference, please contact Ian Jones on (0161) 275 8596 or: ian.jones@manchester.ac.uk, or see LTI's website (details, p.1).

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LTI Conferences News

International Conference

God/City/Place: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

**8 December 2006
University of Manchester**

Keynote Speakers:

Prof Edward Soja, Dept. of Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), author of *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (2000).

Prof Sigurd Bergmann, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, author of *Creation Set Free: The Spirit as the Liberator of Nature* (2005).

Prof Timothy Gorrige, University of Exeter, UK, author of *A Theology of the Built Environment* (2003).

This conference is designed to advance the discussion in this area by bringing together two theologians and a critical theorist of space to engage critically with the question: how are the spaces of cities to be developed as habitable places, and what religious resources are relevant to this discussion?

The conference is open to all those with an interest in the relationship between religion and place in an urban context. The conference will conclude with a plenary session focussing on responses to the conference by delegates.

(for further details, contact Peter Scott or see LTI website)

International Conference

Remoralising Britain? An International Conference to mark the 10th Anniversary of Tony Blair's Premiership

**17-18 May 2007, University of
Manchester**

(for further details, contact Peter Scott or see LTI website)

LTI's International Doctoral Student begins work



Samson Hailegiorgis is the first recipient of LTI's international doctoral student bursary, made available by the Lincoln Theological Institute's Trustees to assist in paying the fees of an international student pursuing PhD research with the Institute.

A medical doctor by background, Samson is also active in leadership in the Mennonite Church of Ethiopia, has an MTh from the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology and an MSc in Population Health Economics from Manchester University.

Samson writes:

My research topic is: 'Unity amongst the Evangelical Churches of Ethiopia: A Theological and Empirical Study'.

The Ethiopian evangelical churches, although less than seventy years old, are growing at an average rate of 15% per year, and at present have nearly 11 million members, organised in nearly fifty denominations. The mushrooming of new churches is considered by some as part of church growth and by others as dividing the Body of Christ, a scandal. Prominent ministers leaving the local church and establishing their own has become a widely practiced phenomenon, and the majority have no visible unity amongst them. This has created confusion among the believing community and is a stumbling block to our evangelism. As a minister in this country, I have committed myself to searching for evidence with regard to church structure and unity. The lack of interdenominational networking is one of the major weakness of the Ethiopian churches, and working more on it will bring a significant impact in the country, and God's kingdom at large. The research will involve data collection from individual churches in Ethiopia, using questionnaires, interview, focus group discussion, and analysing statements of faith, basic doctrines and organisational structures.

A Change at the Top for Lincoln's Trustees

After three and a half years, the Lincoln Theological Institute bids farewell to John Packer, Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, who steps down as Chair of Trustees in the summer.

Bishop John writes: 'This has been a crucial time for the Lincoln Theological Institute and I have been delighted to be a part of the establishment of the Institute on a firm basis in Manchester. I am pleased that Stephen Platten, as a former staff member of the Lincoln Theological College, is now taking over the Chair'.

Bishop Stephen was Chaplain and Tutor in Ethics at the college from 1978 to 1982 and moved to Wakefield in 2003 after eight years as Dean of Norwich. He becomes Chair of Lincoln Trustees in the autumn. Meanwhile, many thanks to Bishop John—and to his PA, Heather Shipman—for their hard work for LTI.

(Continued from page 1)

on political theory and philosophy as well as Christian theological traditions.

I now regard myself as working in the area of political theology, and in 2003 published *A Political Theology of Nature* (Cambridge University Press) which explores the relationship between political philosophies of ecology and trinitarian theology. The result of this exploration, published in the Cambridge Series in Christian Doctrine, is a re-worked trinitarian and ecological doctrine of creation.

As you will know, the aims of the Institute are to create a national and international centre of expertise in the theological study of religion and society, and to promote theological research and study into a variety of ethical, pastoral, social and ecclesial issues. Whether by means of conferences, doctoral study or advanced research, this Newsletter is stuffed with reports about how this challenging and exciting programme of theological work is being taken forward. Subsequent newsletters will bring you news of other developments presently underway. If you would like further information on the work of the Institute, please visit our website or contact us.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

WANT TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE A BOOK REVIEW OR SHORT ARTICLE TO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER?

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AT LTI?

If so, please email us at: liti@manchester.ac.uk

Research and Publications by LTI Staff

DR PETER SCOTT, LTI DIRECTOR

Since his arrival at the Institute in September 2005, Peter has given papers at the Universities of Copenhagen (on Dietrich Bonhoeffer), Leuven (on religion and consumer society) and Gloucestershire (on Christ and scripture). An active member of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and the Environment, he has attended a planning meeting of the Forum at the University of Bamberg, and a working group on nature at the University of Chicago. This month he joins a seminar on climate change, hosted by Christian Aid UK.

With Celia Deane-Drummond, he has edited *Future Perfect: God, Medicine and Human Identity*, to be published by Continuum/T & T Clark next month and been guest editor for a special issue of *Ecotheology*, on the theme of Theology and Technology (published next month also). Among his publications are 'Anarchy in the UK? GM crops, political authority and the rioting of God', in *Ecotheology* 11.1 (2006), 32-56.

He is principal organiser for the conferences 'God/city/place' and 'Re-moralising Britain', reported on elsewhere in this Newsletter.

DR IAN JONES, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

In addition to being principal organiser for July's Women and Ordination conference, Ian has been continuing research on the history of Christianity in Britain since 1945 and is currently revising and developing his PhD thesis on the local church and generational change in post-war Birmingham for a book.

The next twelve months will also see publication of the first fruits of some new research, undertaken collaboratively with Dr. Peter Webster (Institute of Historical Research, University of London) on changing attitudes to music in the Church of England since the 1950s. The first of four forthcoming articles ('Anglican "Establishment" Attitudes to "Pop" Church Music in England, c. 1956-1990') will appear in vol. 42 of *Studies in Church History*, published in July 2006.

In the past year, Ian has spoken on the women and priesthood research to a group from the Diocese of Guildford and has been an invited speaker at two day-conferences on religion and music at the University of Birmingham and for the Study Group on the History of Christianity, in London.

Women and Ordination in the Christian Churches: International Perspectives

12- 14 July 2006
Hulme Hall, University of Manchester

INVITATION

Alumni are welcome to book their places for some or all of this conference, but are particularly invited to attend on Thursday 13 July, when Lincoln Theological Institute is hosting a reception for participants and alumni, sponsored by the Trustees.

The reception follows the afternoon's keynote lecture and is followed by the conference dinner. To view a copy of the draft programme and download a booking form, please visit:

<http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/religionstheology/research/crpc/lti/womenandordination>

or phone Janet Meredith (Conference Administrator) on (0161) 275 8950

FINAL DEADLINE FOR BOOKINGS: 26 JUNE 2006