

Unionism and Confessional Lutheranism

Theological Conference 2025

*The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Office of
International Mission, Eurasia in cooperation with
Lutherova společnost (The Luther Society, CZE)*

13–15 October 2025, KRAKOW (POL)

Accommodation and conference hall:

Hotel Warszawski, ul. Pawia 4-6, 31-154 Krakow, Poland

Application deadline:

30 Jun 2025 (or sooner or later depending on capacity)

Conference fee:

200 EUR

*The organizers will support 20 participants from so-called
Eastern (post-communist) Europe by paying 1/2 of the fee, i.e.
these participants will pay 100 EUR*

Your application should be sent to:

martin@luther.cz

*You will receive a confirmation of your application
and further information (payment, transportation, etc.)*



PROGRAM

Monday 13 October

12.30-13.30	Housing check-in and conference registration
13.45-14.00	Opening of the Conference
14.00-15.15	<u>Klaus Detlev Schulz</u> – Unionism and Sasse
15.15-15.30	Discussion
15.30-16.00	Break/refreshment
16.00-17.15	<u>David Preus</u> – Doctrina qua: Lutheran Union in Doctrine and Practice
17.15-17.30	Discussion
18.30	Dinner

Tuesday 14 October

07.00-08.00	Breakfast
08.30-09.45	<u>Jonathan Shaw</u> – Finding the Focus of Fellowship: Options in Unionism, Reductionism, and Confessional Unity
09.45-10.00	Discussion
10.00-10.30	Break/refreshment
10.30-11.45	<u>Darius Petkūnas</u> – The Prussian Union Agenda and the Awakening of Lutheran Confessional Consciousness
11.45-12.00	Discussion
12.15-13.00	Lunch

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 13.15-14.15 | <u>Józef Szymeczek</u> – An attempt to integrate Lutheran congregations in Cieszyn Silesia into the structures of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (1945-1950) |
| 14.15-14.30 | Discussion |
| 14.30-14.45 | Break |
| 14.45-15.45 | <u>Miloslav Gdovin</u> – Lutheran identity in the territory of today's Slovakia then and now (16th – 21st centuries). The struggle for the purity of doctrine |
| 15.45-16.00 | Discussion |
| 16.00 | Free time to rest or wander about Krakow (Supper is on your own, not provided by the conference fee) |

Wednesday 15 October

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 07.00-08.00 | Breakfast |
| 08.30-09.45 | <u>Martin Grombířík</u> – Unionism Czech Way |
| 09.45-10.00 | Discussion |
| 10.00-11.00 | CHECK-OUT OF HOTEL & Break/refreshment |
| 11.00-12.15 | <u>Panel Discussion:</u> Unionism and Confessional Lutheranism |
| 12.15-12.30 | Closing of the Conference |
| 12.45 | Lunch & Departure |

SPEAKERS

Miloslav Gdovin

Graduate of the Evangelical Faculty of Theology and the Faculty of Philosophy of Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia). He completed study stays at universities in Prague, Vienna and Brno (CZ). In 2007-2019, he was an editor and dramaturg of religious broadcasting on Slovak Television. Author of many documentary films about evangelical figures in Slovakia. Since 2019, he has been a pastor in the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia in the Svätý Kríž – Lazisko congregation. Since 2024, he has been the editor-in-chief of the Tranoscius publishing house.

Martin Grombiřík

Did not grow up in a church environment and came to the Evangelical Lutheran faith through music, as an organist studying the works of J. S. Bach. From 1993-2004 he studied at the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Charles University in the master's and PhD program with a focus on liturgics; he returned to doctoral studies in 2022 in systematic theology. In the meantime, he worked first as a vicar and congregational pastor at the CCE (2005-2010), later as a Lutheran pastor for students and youth people in Brno (2009-2016), and most recently as a congregational pastor there (2023-). His academic interests include the tradition of Lutheran orthodoxy in confrontation with contemporary postliberal theological currents, especially the so-called "Radical Orthodoxy" of J. Milbank. In addition, he is active in the church as

a choirmaster and organist. In parallel, he works in a civilian job in the IT sector. He is a founding member of the Evangelical Liturgical Initiative Coena, for which he has created a web portal.

Darius Petkūnas

Habilitated doctor of theology, docent at the University of Helsinki, senior research fellow at the University of Klaipėda, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania, author of nine monographs and several dozen articles on liturgy, theology of the Lutheran Reformation and church history in academic journals.

David Preus

Earned his Master's of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana and his PhD in Historical Theology from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. His doctoral education included a research fellowship at the Institute for European History in Mainz, Germany in 2011. He was ordained into the Preaching Office on August 28, 2011 at Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Billings Montana, where served as pastor from 2011 to 2015. Today, David lives with his wife, Jenny, and their nine children in Brasov, Romania, where he serves as regional director of LCMS Eurasia. As regional director, he supervises LCMS missionaries, oversees mission operations, and cooperates in church planting and theological education with LCMS partner churches throughout the Eurasian region. He also serves as assistant pastor and

church planter in Brasov. Before moving to Romania, David was a church planter and professor at Seminario Concordia, el Reformador in Palmar Arriba, Dominican Republic (2015–2021).

Klaus Detlev Schulz

Joined the Concordia Theological Seminary (CTSFW), Fort Wayne, faculty in the fall of 1998. He serves as professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, dean of Graduate Studies and director of the PhD in Missiology Program. In 1984, Schulz earned his BA degree at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. In 1988, he successfully completed his MDiv studies at the Lutherische Theologische Hochschule in Oberursel, Germany. In 1990, he earned his STM degree at CTSFW. He then served in the Independent Evangelical–Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK) as vicar in Heidelberg, Germany, from 1990–1992. In 1994, he concluded his studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, by earning a ThD in Systematics. From 1994–1998, Dr. Schulz was a missionary in Serowe, Botswana, for the Lutheran Church Mission of the SELK. He also served as a guest lecturer at CTSFW during the Fall Quarter in 1997.

Jonathan E. Shaw

Is Assistant to the President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, and LCMS Director of Church Relations. Dr. Shaw is a pastor, writer, educator, retired U.S. Army chaplain, and LCMS leader. As Director of Church Relations, he assists the LCMS President, the chief ecumenical officer of the Synod, in inter-church

relations in 60 countries with 103 church bodies. Of these, 43 are sister churches united in altar and pulpit fellowship; 37 are associated churches cooperating in theological education, theological conversation, and/or mercy programs toward future fellowship; and 23 are churches bodies in other relationships. The purpose of LCMS Church Relations is to advance church fellowship in Christ worldwide. Before becoming Director of Church Relations in April 2021, Dr. Shaw served as a U.S. Army chaplain (colonel), retiring from the Pentagon in October 2020 with 39 years of service. From 1984 to 1988, he also served as pastor of All Saints Lutheran Church, Guadalajara, Mexico, and Our Savior Lutheran Church, Winchester, Virginia. He is founding editor of the journal *Gottesdienst* (1992) and has published numerous articles in systematic and exegetical theology, liturgics, ethics, the doctrine of fellowship, the two-kingdoms doctrine, religious liberty, religion in policy and strategy, moral injury, and just war. Dr. Shaw and his wife, Brenda, married in 1980 and are blessed with three adult children and seven grandchildren.

Józef Szymeczek

Doctor of Humanities in History and Doctor of Evangelical Theology, employee of the Department of Civic Education of the Faculty of Education of the University of Ostrava and simultaneously head of the Center for Research on Culture and Identity of the Region of the Faculty of Education of the University of Ostrava. Historian, whose research interests focus on the issues of Silesian Protestantism, the theosophical movement in the Czech lands and the history of the Polish minority in

the Czech Republic. Author of six books and numerous studies in these areas. His works have been published in many European countries and in the United States. He participated in international research projects, such as the Lexicon of Myths, Symbols and Heroes of Upper Silesia in the 19th-20th Centuries (2012-2015) or Polish Culture in Relation to Western Esoteric Philosophy in the Years 1890-1939 (2016-2019). Together with Krzysztof Szelong, he initiated the publication of the Bibliotheca Tessinensis, an edition of historical sources on the history of Cieszyn Silesia. Scout, social activist of the Polish minority in the Czech Republic, in 2002-2006 member of the Council of the Government of the Czech Republic for National Minorities, 2001-2007 member of the Appeals Commission of the Czech-German Future Fund in Prague, 2002-2016 chairman of the Congress of Poles in the Czech Republic. Foreign expert of the Polish Accreditation Commission. Awarded the Golden Cross of Merit (2014) and the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland by the President of the Republic of Poland (2016).

