

Conference on Theology and Leadership

In a world marked by leadership fatigue, fragmented authority, and organizational disillusionment, scholars from around the world will discuss a vital question:

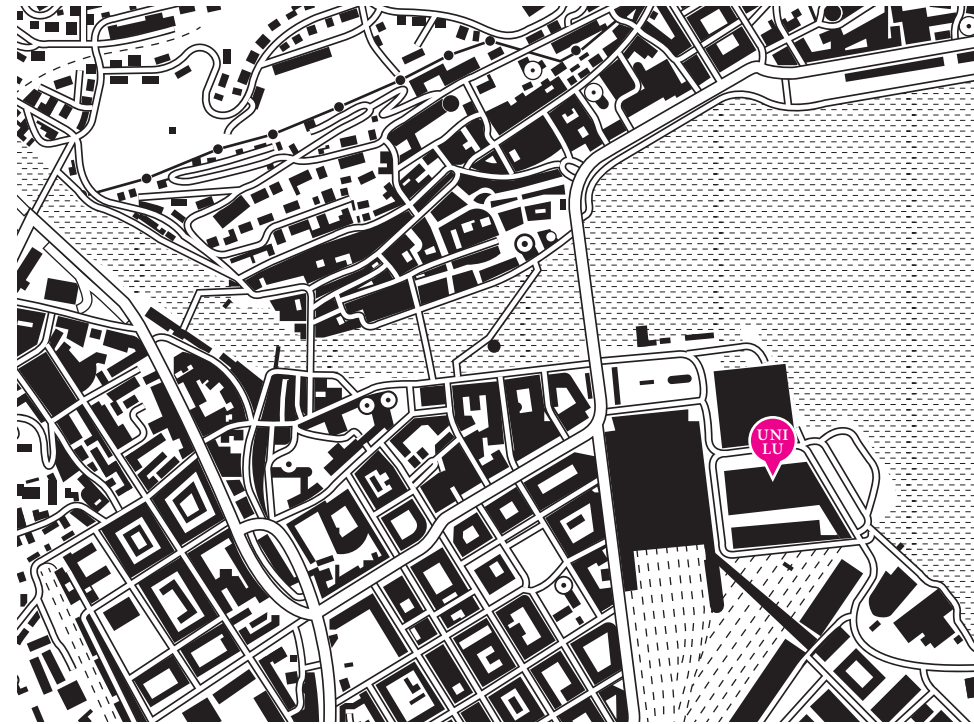
How can we invite the S/spirit into our leadership?

This conference seeks to examine how “spirit” – understood both theologically as the Holy Spirit (with a capital S) and, from a social-scientific perspective, as the “good or bad” spirit within a team, group, or organization – animates leadership practices, shapes collective purpose, and enables moral and organizational transformation.

This conference is designed for those who are willing to:

- **Rethink leadership from its foundations**
in the foundations and conceptual grounding sessions—exploring how **spirit** enters leadership.
- **Engage leadership as practice**
in practices of leadership and verticalization—through communication, relationships, and team processes.
- **Learn from diverse contexts**
in global and institutional contexts across cultures, organizations, and traditions.
- **Stay with the tensions of leadership**
in sessions on power, conflict, and the dark sides of leadership.
- **Experience leadership as transformation**
in the identity and transformation block—towards whole-person leadership.

Thanks to our supporters:



ORGANISATION

University of Lucerne
Faculty of Theology
Pastoral Theology
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CONFERENCE VENUE

University of Lucerne
Frohburgstrasse 3
6002 Luzern

(next to the Lake of Lucerne
and the prestigious «KKL -
Kultur- und Kongresszent-
rum Luzern»)

REGISTRATION

A registration is required and
can be done online on
www.unilu.ch/ictl2026

UNIVERSITY OF
LUCERNE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
THEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

**INVITING THE S/spirit
INTO LEADERSHIP**

JUNE 17–19, 2026



Programme

JUNE 18, 2026 — OPENING & ENACTING VERTICALIZATION

08:15 **Arrival & Registration**

OPENING

09:00 **Welcome & Introduction**

09:10 **Keynote — Felix Eiffler**

Empowerment, Leadership and the Spirit (Verticalization through empowerment)

FOUNDATIONS & CONCEPTUAL GROUNDING

10:10 **Jack Barentsen**

Leadership with Vulnerability: Anthropological and Theological Foundations of Verticalization

Babak Moradi

Integrating Organisational and Self-Leadership through SLDS: The Moradi Process

10:50 **Break**

11:20 **Chukwuemeka Peter Dike / Christian Preidel / Patrick Renz**

Verticalization as Leadership Practice: Measuring and Enacting the S/spirit

Eliška Vančová

The Holy Spirit in the Ordination Liturgy of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

12:00 **Michael Bendorf**

The Competence Cube of Spiritual Leadership: A Pneumatologically Extended Model

Cees Tulp

Fostering Verticalization Through Jürgen Moltmann's Ethics of Life and Theology of the Spirit of Life

12:40 **Lunch**

PRACTICES OF VERTICALIZATION

13:40 **Hadley Bennet**

Participation & Co-constructing conversation

Heini Kesti

Digital Fasting and Clearing Liminal Space

14:20 **Peter Frühmorgen**

From the Wilderness to Leadership: Christian Storytelling as a Transformative

Practice of Sense-Making

Jen Smith

Relational Leading and Learning by the Spirit While in the Flesh (and potentially on a computer!)

15:00 **Dave de la Fuente / Kate André / Andria Seneviratne**

Inviting the Spirit Together After 2020: Reflections on the Ignatian CLA Program

Claus Schreier / Kevalin Puangyoykeaw Setthakorn

Religious Beliefs and Decision Logic in Family Firms: Christianity, Buddhism, and Confucianism in Thailand

15:40 **Break**

CONTEXTUALIZING VERTICALIZATION

16:10 **Francis Adebayo / John Ojo**

The Great Men of God: Spirit-led Leadership and Growth in Nigerian Pentecostalism

Massimiliano Monaci

Reclaiming Institutional Leadership: Values-Work, Sacralization and Purposive Action

HOLDING THE SPACE

16:50 **Keynote — Matthew Barber**

Curating Spaces of Hope (Safeguarding processes for verticalization)

17:50 **Book Pre-Launch**

of the Conference 2024 Publication

18:20 **Social Event**

JUNE 19, 2026 — TESTING, GROUNDING & INTEGRATING LEADERSHIP

OPENING DISRUPTION

08:30 **Keynote — Armin Kummer**

Dark Sides of Leadership (When verticalization veers off course)

FROM CRITIQUE TO PRACTICE

09:30 **Matthias Ederer / Patrick Renz**

Inviting S/spirit into Leadership: Old Testament Practices of Team Genesis and Collective Emergence

Michael Schroth

The S/spirit of Leadership in Pastoral Practice and Self-Image

10:10 **Break**

10:40 **Mark Fox**

Alternative Swiss Approaches to the Inclusion of Spirit in Church-State and Interreligious Dialogue Leadership

Erika Huamani Rimachi

Power Conflicts and Synodality: An analysis for the reconstitution of faith praxis in the SDAC

GLOBAL & RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

11:20 **Hussein Elkamel**

Being Promised Haven Yet Criticized: The Spirit of Muslim Individualism

Tobias Bruegger

See How Happy He Is

12:00 **Lunch**

IDENTITY & TRANSFORMATION

13:00 **Sampson Ndoga**

From Skill to Soul: Albert Luthuli and the Verticalization of Leadership Competence

Tabitha van Krimpen

In Search of the S/spirit of Leadership: A Narrative Approach to Moral Courage

LEADERSHIP BEYOND FUNCTIONALITY

13:40 **Giorgia Nigri**

Leading with Love: Loving action as a catalyst for transformation

Hanlie Smuts

A guideline for Christian leadership in the digital age: a balance between immanence and transcendence

14:20 **Short Break**

INTEGRATION: LEADING THE WHOLE PERSON

14:35 **Keynote — Alessandra Smerilli**

Leading with the Whole Person in Mind: Synodality, Economic Wisdom, and the Art of Accompanying Communities

HARVEST & CLOSING

15:35 **Collective reflection, synthesis, and closing**

As of 16:00 Farewell drinks at KKL Luzern, Lakeview Bar

Please note that the programme is still subject to change.

Speakers listed within the same time slot will present in two parallel sessions.

The conference language is English.