

PAPERS

Those who wish to present a paper should send a summary (500 words at most) by e-mail to St. Andrew's by 1 September 2013. The Organizing Committee selects papers for the Conference and sends invitations to the speakers. The full text of all selected papers will have to be submitted by 1 November 2013. The working language of the conference will be English.

Upon arrival at the conference every participant will receive summaries of all the papers and the conference programme. Papers are scheduled for 30 minutes each. Summaries and papers should be sent to:

Mikhail Tolstoluzhenko
St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute
Jerusalem St. 3, Moscow, 109316, Russia
Tel/Fax: +7 495 6702200; +7 495 6707644
Email: standrews@yandex.ru, info@standrews.ru

ORGANIZATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The conference will assemble on 6 November 2013 for a reception and opening ceremony in the evening. Participants will depart after breakfast on 9 November. Accommodation and meals will be provided by the organizers.

REGISTRATION

Numbers are limited and early registration is strongly advised. Registration forms can be found on St. Andrew's website *www.standrews.ru* and must be sent to the above address.

St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute (Moscow, Russia)
The Public Association FILOCALIA (Chisinau, Moldova)
DELM - Development of Ecumenical Leadership in Mission Network

with the support of
ICCO - Kerk in Actie (Utrecht, Netherlands)

Invitation and Call for Papers

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

6–9 November 2013

Chişinău, Moldova

THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

In contemporary Western society religious faith has largely become a matter of private life. Everyone has the right to hold his or her own religious (or non-religious) convictions but on the condition that these should not affect one's activities in the public sphere. If, for example, you are a practicing Christian and at the same time teach in a university or in a school, you are not allowed to use your position for spreading your religious views among your students; the wearing of religious attributes in public is not always welcome and can even be punishable by the law.

On the other hand, in recent decades we can witness the awakening and intensification of religious life among ordinary lay people as well as the growth of interest in religion in general driven by spiritual thirst and the search for the meaning of life in a society oriented mostly towards consumption and entertainment. A significant influx in the 20th century of representatives of Islam and other traditional religions into Western countries has also contributed to this process.

This however poses the question of how this 'religious need' – both on individual and communal levels – can be expressed in terms of public discourse, i.e. how we can reintroduce religious discourse to the public sphere from which it has been driven away. That such a discourse is necessary for solving many societal problems is pointed out by many contemporary thinkers such

as the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas and the British theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. The difficulty however is that this cannot be done easily and straightforwardly because almost any reference to religion and religious values in the public sphere comes into conflict with the secular model on which contemporary Western society has been built.

The aim of the forthcoming conference is to discuss the ways in which religious faith can express itself in the 'public square', i.e. how it can become an integral part of contemporary Western 'post-secular' society.

In the course of the Conference, it is intended to address the following questions:

- The place of religious faith in post-secular society: a private or public matter?
- Traditional religious values and the values of contemporary civil society: is it possible to bring them into accord?
- 'Religious' and 'secular' discourses: are they really different?
- Religious mission in the contemporary world: is it still necessary and possible?
- Interfaith dialogue in the context of post-secular society;
- Religious faith and religious ideology: can these be separated?
- Religious education in post-secular society.