

Academy of Religious Leadership 2024 Annual Conference
Minneapolis, MN USA, and Online
April 25-27, 2024

Call for Proposals
“Exploring Different Religious Leadership Models”

Many religious communities and institutions in the U.S. assume a clergy-centric model of leadership, where clergy are religious professionals/experts, lay leaders “run the church” and ministry is focused on what the church does. Presently, in religious communities and institutions where this has been the predominant model, participation in weekly services by congregants has declined, financial support for congregations and judicatories has decreased, and enrollment in theological degree programs has dropped significantly. These shifts have implications for theological institutions, congregations, and religious leaders, and call for reflection, understanding, and exploration.

What other possibilities exist? How might the decrease in congregations supported by full-time clergy provide new opportunities for communities to reimagine religious leadership and leadership development at this time? What implications do these changes have on theological education and leadership formation?

The Academy of Religious Leadership 2024 Annual Conference will explore the future of religious leadership under the theme “Exploring Different Religious Leadership Models.” It will explore different forms of religious leadership structures, processes, and development within current realities while imagining possibilities for moving forward: what theological, leadership, and change theories can inform religious leadership structures; where and how are different models of religious leadership and leadership development being practiced; what values do these different structures and processes offer to individuals, institutions, and society; and what challenges might they create for theological institutions, congregations, and religious leaders.

The 2024 Annual Conference of the Academy of Religious Leadership invites proposals for presentations from religious leaders and scholars with experience or interest in religious leadership development. We welcome solo and multi-authored papers, panel presentations, workshops, and case studies that offer theoretical, theological, praxiological, pedagogical, and/or organizational perspectives on “Exploring Different Religious Leadership Models” and that will engage practitioners, educators, and students from a variety of settings and denominational backgrounds.

Presentation proposals should include the following:

- Working title
- Presentation type: solo presenter, multiple co-presenters, workshop
- Abstract that provides the thesis, context, and general overview of the presentation (500-word maximum)
- Sample bibliography of primary resources or conversation partners
- Name and a brief bio of each presenter
- Indication of whether the presenter intends to attend in person or virtually.

Proposals should be formatted as Word documents and emailed as an attachment to agranholm001@luthersem.edu with the subject “ARL Proposal.”

Presenters at the annual ARL conference will also have the opportunity to submit a paper for review for the fall Journal of Religious Leadership issue.

Deadline for proposals is December 1, 2023. Decisions will be made by December 20, 2023.