

Receptive Ecumenism within Congregations: A Practical Local Example from Gotland, Sweden

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Current position:

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Three keywords that best describe the subject of my submission:

Local transforming ecumenism

Abstract:

Being a member of the Working Group for Missiological Theology of the Christian Council of Sweden and the Swedish Mission Council who is working on Receptive Ecumenism, I have initiated a local work on Receptive Ecumenism on Gotland, Sweden. I am a member of the board of the Christian Council of Gotland and have introduced Receptive Ecumenism as a method reflecting on the life and work of the local congregations. Coming from different traditions and denominations we (the board) have visited each other in order to listen and learn from the other reflecting on their life and work of their specific congregation. The board members are from the Catholic Church, the Church of Sweden (Lutheran), the Swedish Evangelical Mission (part of Church of Sweden), the Pentecostal Church, and the Uniting Church. We have chosen to reflect on the life and work of our different local congregations as that is where we live, work, breath, and experience joy as well as struggles.

Having served in various international ecumenical communities since I was in my twenties, including more than twenty years within the World Council of Churches, I am convinced that international ecumenical work needs to have its base in the national as well as local ecumenical work. In the same way, the local ecumenical work needs to provide inputs to the national and international ecumenical work. The three different arenas and communities are interrelated and are trustworthy only when they relate to each other.