DIFFERENT, BUT TOGETHER

Event: A Leadership Formation Conference for Pastors in Poland
Date: 21–23 September 2026
Place: Campus of Polish College of Theology and Humanities
Presenter: Dr Tihomir Lazic

'Different, but Together' is a journey of leadership formation for pastors navigating growing diversity, polarisation, and change in Poland. Beginning with the life of communion for which we were created, we explore what can hold us together amid genuine difference, how the other might become a gift in our continuing quest for truth, and how we can discern together what God is doing. The journey culminates in a practical challenge: how can we participate faithfully and creatively in God's mission in Poland today?

* * *

Monday · 11:45–12:45 | LECTURE 1

MADE FOR COMMUNION: Why Community Matters

Key question: *What kind of life were we made for?*

In a culture shaped by individualism and the quest for an authentic self, faith and spirituality are increasingly imagined as something we can pursue on our own. Yet the biblical vision of *koinonia* points to a different way of being: a shared life with God and one another in which we become more fully who we were created to be.

Monday · 14:30–15:30 | LECTURE 2

COMMUNION UNCOVERED: What Does Life in Koinonia Look Like?

Key question: *If we are made for communion, what does that actually look like?*

This lecture uncovers the rich vision of *koinonia* found in the New Testament. Far more than attendance, friendliness, or a feeling of togetherness, communion is a shared life shaped by God's presence, sustained through mutual participation, and expressed across every part of life. Exploring its essential dimensions, we ask what it would mean for this apostolic vision of communion to shape our churches today.

15:30–16:00 · Q&A / Workshop — Where do our churches experience genuine koinonia, and where do we settle for mere proximity or activity? What practices help shared life become real?

Monday · 16:30–17:30 | LECTURE 3

DIFFERENT, BUT TOGETHER: Adventisms within Adventism

Key question: *What holds us together when we see things so differently?*

Adventism is becoming increasingly diverse and polarised, with competing visions of what it means to be Adventist. What lies beneath these differences, and what can help us resist becoming competing tribes and continue the journey together?

17:30–18:00 · Q&A / Workshop — Where do we experience the strongest differences in our churches? When does difference become polarisation? What could help us remain in genuine relationship and continue the journey together?

Monday · 19:45 | Q&A / INTEGRATION

DIFFERENT, BUT TOGETHER: Digesting the Day

Key question: *What would it take to make communion possible amid genuine difference?*

An open space to revisit the day's questions, raise pastoral concerns, and explore how communion and difference are being experienced in local Adventist communities.

* * *

Tuesday · 09:45–10:45 | LECTURE 4

WHO ARE WE? The Quest That Shapes Us

Key question: *What makes us Adventist?*

Our differences are not simply about individual issues and preferences; they are shaped by deeper stories, assumptions, and ways of seeing. We explore the story beneath our different versions of Adventism—a story shaped by a continuing quest for truth through reading and rereading Scripture, learning and unlearning, questioning inherited assumptions, and pursuing further discovery. What might this quest reveal about who we are, what holds us together, and how we might remain open to God's future?

Tuesday · 11:30–12:30 | LECTURE 5

PRESENT TRUTH AS A COMMUNAL QUEST: Why We Need the Other

Key question: *What if we need the other to see what we cannot see alone?*

Adventism was born as a community on a continuing quest for present truth. But such a quest raises a deeper question: what kind of community must we become to discern truth faithfully together? If no single perspective can exhaust the truth, perhaps otherness is not a challenge to be overcome, but a gift that can help us see what we cannot see alone.

12:30–13:00 · Q&A / Workshop — Whose perspectives are easiest for us to dismiss? How can we listen across difference without surrendering conviction? What practices could make the search for truth genuinely communal?

Tuesday · 16:30–17:30 | LECTURE 6

DISCERNING TOGETHER: How Do We Discern What God Is Doing?

Key question: *How do we discern together what God is doing?*

Difference alone does not produce wisdom. We explore a communal practice of discernment rooted in the Word, attentive to the Spirit, and awake to what God may be doing within us, through us, and around us.

17:30–18:00 · Q&A / Workshop — Where might God already be at work within, through, and around our communities? How do we distinguish the movement of the Spirit from our own assumptions, preferences, and impulses? What practices can help us discern faithfully together?

Tuesday · 19:30 | Q&A / TESTIMONIES / INTEGRATION

WHERE IS GOD AT WORK? Discerning the Journey

Key question: *Where do we see God at work within us, through us, and around us?*

A space for testimony, questions, and shared discernment. Where are we noticing signs of God's activity—in our own lives, in our churches, and in the communities and contexts around us? Where might God be surprising us, unsettling our assumptions, or inviting us beyond what is familiar and comfortable?

* * *

Wednesday · 09:45–10:45 | LECTURE 7

REIMAGINING MISSION: The Spirit as the Ultimate Paradigm Shifter

Key question: *What changes when we understand mission as participating in what God is doing?*

Mission begins with God. Following Jesus' model of mission—first discerning what the Father is already doing and then participating in His work—we explore how the Spirit challenges and expands traditional Adventist approaches to mission, moving us from doing mission *for* God to participating in the mission *of* God. This shift reshapes our perspective, our attitudes toward others, the scope of our engagement, and the mode of our missional presence in the world.

10:45–11:15 · Q&A / Workshop — Where might our understanding of mission need to be challenged or expanded? How would our practice change if we began by discerning what God is already doing rather than by asking what we should do for God? How might this reshape our attitudes toward others, the scope of our engagement, and the mode of our presence in the world?

Wednesday · 11:30–12:30 | LECTURE 8

FAITHFUL IMPROVISATION: Participating in What God Is Doing in Poland

Key question: *Where is God at work in our local contexts, and how can we join Him in what He is doing?*

Our local contexts are not simply challenges to which the church must respond, but places in which God is already at work. In this final session, we bring the journey home to Poland, asking how churches rooted in Scripture and the Adventist story can attend carefully to their particular time and place, discern what God is doing, and participate faithfully and creatively in God's mission amid the changing realities of Poland.

12:30–13:00 · Q&A / Workshop — Where do we recognise God already at work in our local contexts in Poland? What are we learning as we attend more carefully to the people, questions, needs, and changes around us? What might faithful participation require us to preserve, challenge, adapt, reimagine, or begin?

THE JOURNEY

COMMUNION → IDENTITY → OTHERNESS → DISCERNMENT → PARTICIPATION → FAITHFUL IMPROVISATION