

Trauma and Hope: From the Old Testament to Our Congregational Context

10-11 Maart 2016,

Communitas/ Ekklesia, Stellenbosch University

In this two day VBO workshop, we will reflect together on the role of trauma and hope – in the biblical text as well as in congregations.

Presenters:

Prof Louis Stulman is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Findlay, Ohio and co-author of the book *You are my People: An Introduction to Prophetic Literature* (with Hyun Chul Paul Kim; Abingdon, 2010)

Prof Juliana Claassens is Professor of Old Testament at Stellenbosch University and author of the book *Mourner, Mother, Midwife: Reimagining God's Liberating Presence* (Westminster John Knox 2012)

Dr Pierre Goossen is a minister for the Dutch Reformed Church Synod with the specific task of accompaniment of pastors and congregations.

Thursday 10 March

9-11 AM **Louis Stulman, "Trauma and Hope: the DNA of the Prophetic Literature."**

By reading the Prophets (and beyond) as disaster and survival literature, pastors and pastoral councillors are not only reading the biblical text through the lens of pain/vulnerability as well as hope/survival, they are also reading their parishes.

11-11:30 **Tea**

11:30-13:00 **Juliana Claassens, "Tragic Laughter: Laughter as Resistance in the Book of Job"**

Tragic laughter emerges out of a context of trauma and has the purpose of interrupting a system of oppression, so serving as a form of resistance and protest in the face of the devastating psychological effects of trauma. By transforming tragedy into comedy, tragic laughter plays an important role in fostering hope, so enabling the survival of the human spirit.

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-16:00 Louis Stulman, "Healing the Wounds (Trauma) of the Broken through the Prophet's Non-Language."

We will explore prophetic symbolic actions and their role in post-war communities which call to mind the role of art, silence, and physicality in community and individual recovery and survival.

Friday 11 March

9-1 AM Pierre Goossen

- *A congregation is hurled into turmoil after their beloved minister, who had been with them for 12 years, unexpectedly dies.*
- *Sunday after Sunday, the minister of a neighbouring congregation had to inform his congregants that yet another family is leaving the congregation due to the closing of the mine and business opportunities in town.*
- *The dire economic reality is forcing these two congregations to merge and to sell off one of the church buildings.*

These and many other examples can have an emotional and traumatic effect on congregants. How do congregations deal with such traumas?

The workshop will give participants the opportunity to share their experiences and to put models of trauma interventions to the test

To registration contact wler@sun.ac.za (021) 8083624

Registration Fee R550

Subsidized Fee R200 (DRC/URCSA pastors Western and Southern Cape/ Students)