

Christian Leadership Conference VIII



CALL FOR PAPERS

20-22 September 2027
in Pretoria, South Africa

LEADERSHIP BEYOND 'SUCCESS' AND 'FAILURE'

The eighth Christian Leadership Conference (CLC) will be held in Pretoria, South Africa. Prior conferences were held in Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Norway and South Africa.

The conference is hosted by

- University of Pretoria, Faculty of Theology and Religion
- University of South Africa, Research Institute for Theology and Religion
- Gesellschaft für Bildung und Forschung in Europa (GBFE), Germany



Faculty of Theology
and Religion
Fakulteit Teologie en Religie
Lekala la Thutatumelo le Bodumedi

Make today matter
www.up.ac.za

UNISA



university
of south africa



Venue: Faculty of Theology and Religion,

University of Pretoria, Hatfield Campus, Lynwood Road

Conference date: **20-22 September 2027.**

The CLC will start on Monday, 14h00, and end on Wednesday 16h00.

Conference abstract

Leaders usually strive for success and want to avoid failure. A leader's quality is often measured by how successful they are. But is this binary view helpful? Some so-called 'successes' can lead to overconfidence and contain the seeds of future failure. Conversely, some so-called 'mistakes' turn out to be blessings in disguise. The next Christian Leadership Conference (CLC) will explore the relationship between 'success' and 'failure'. In today's world opinions are formed in an instant. Judgments are made about leadership, reputations and capabilities. Leadership is particularly exposed to this situation and in fact finds itself under a different type of magnifying glass. In oppositional thinking (or binary thinking), leadership is often framed as either 'successful' or 'a failure. Responsible leadership, in light of the world's focus on Sustainable Development, has increasingly implied social and ethical responsibility towards each other, and the environment. An increased focus on accountability, authority and leadership-followership dynamics are also witnessed. In light of this, CLC 2027 aims to explore what leadership implies, beyond the binaries of 'success' and 'failure'. It aims to explore the very definition of what success and failure looks like, also particularly in light of the broken human condition of humanity, that many religions confess as humanity's nature. The conference will explore the notion of leadership as a process and leadership as development in a world that is continuously seeking hard and fast responses. What would hopeful leadership look like in such a context? Accountability? How does one approach the 'taboo of failure'? Do different contexts, cultures and religion define success and failure in different or similar ways?

The conference organisers invite conference proposals that explore this conference theme. Specific topics, for example, could include:

- Leadership and the taboo of failure
- Leadership and hope
- Leadership and complexity
- Navigating leadership challenges and or barriers in a world of oppositional thinking
- Biblical perspectives/ Religious perspectives on the broken human condition, accountability, 'success' and 'failure'
- Psychological and sociological perspectives on 'success' and 'failure'
- Leadership as a process of failing forward
- Leadership and social and environmental justice
- Multi-dimensional/ cross-disciplinary perspectives **or narratives of experience** of what "successful" leadership might look like in this reality

The conference is open for scholars from all academic disciplines and for reflective practitioners.

How to submit a proposal

The organisers invite proposals (abstracts) of 200–250 words. Kindly also include the following:

1. Full name, academic designation and affiliation, mail address
2. A clear statement on how the proposal links to the conference theme

The deadline for proposals is 31 January 2027.

Mail your proposal to info@gbfe.eu, either as Word-Document or as PDF.

You will receive feedback from the organising committee until 28 February 2027.

Publication: Papers will be published within a peer-reviewed book. Details about the publication process will be shared before the conference.

Social programme: Especially, for participants from outside of South Africa we will organise a visiting tour in Pretoria and surroundings on Thursday and Friday. Details will follow.

From the organising committee:

- Prof Tanya van Wyk (UP)
- Prof Wessel Bentley (UNISA)
- Prof Volker Kessler (GBFE)
- Dr Peter Graf (GBFE)
- Ms Marian Winter (GBFE)

