Participants in this cohort:

- Solidify perspectives on the Church’s theological identity as a historic agent of peace-making and reconciliation.
- Develop a wide theological, theoretical and analytical exposure to dimensions of conflict transformation processes (issues, actors, rules, structure and outcomes).
- Distinguish between positions, underlying interests and conflictual methods practiced to advance those interests.
- Gain increasing applied mastery in narrative mediation protocol, styles of conflict, organizational diagnostics for peace-building and transformational intervention.

Faculty Bio

Dr. Virginia T. Holeman is currently Professor of Counseling at Asbury Seminary, where she has served since 1995. Known as “Toddy” to one and all (that is short for her middle name), Toddy is passionate about teaching in general and about helping people learn how to repent, forgive and reconcile. Toddy’s professional interests include active participation in the Kentucky Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and in the Christian Association for Psychological Studies. She is a licensed professional counselor and a licensed marriage and family therapist in Kentucky.

With a commitment to socially engaged theological praxis, Dr. Sègbégnon Mathieu Gnonhosso is a Certified Trainer in workplace conflict mediation, a Board Certified Coach, and a court-approved Family Mediator at the Court of Justice of Kentucky. He’s been in ministry for the past 16 years and is most known for his passion for church renewal aimed at positive impacts on society. This has led him into a number of ministry ventures, including co-founding an indigenous missional movement (Mouvement Missionnaire pour l’Evangile de Christ), as well as current efforts at introducing restorative justice in neighborhoods and schools in Benin.
“You meant it for evil, but God has used it for good.”
– Genesis 50:20

**Class Descriptions**

**I. Foundations for Conflict and Peacemaking Through the Church**

Using a peacemaking ethos, this course explores the distinctive grounds upon which Christian ministry can approach conflict transformation. Participants interact with cutting edge approaches and theories, building biblical, theological and conceptual frameworks. Faculty mentors engage participants in discussions, role-plays, exercises, and case studies to develop analytical and conflict transformation skills. Participants become aware of their own identity and learn to see conflict as a means of personal and congregational renewal.

**III. Conflict Transformation: Ethnic-Racial Reconciliation**

This course focuses on ways the church of the 21st century can be a hub for racial/ethnic healing in light of the failing strategies of the past. Using assessment tools, participants will decode racialized expressions and systems in order to practice relevant and racially/ethnically conscious education and action. Through site visits to churches and ministries, participants will encounter both racial/ethnic wounds and the subsequent healing.

**II. Conflict Transformation: Principles and Practices**

This course surveys a variety of approaches to deal with conflicts and analyzes strengths, weaknesses and best practices for reconciliation. Participants acquire theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, methods, approaches, tools and strategies to deal with various dimensions of conflicts and learn to recognize the effective dimensions of conflict transformation.

**IV. Conflict Transformation: Organizing the Church**

This course focuses on a specific area of conflict transformation within each participant’s ministry setting. Through a professional practioner training session, participants build professional competencies in a specialized area of conflict transformation with a biblical and theological foundation. Class conversations provide constructive feedback from peers, encouraging and sharpening all to effectively catalyze the transformation of persons and systems entangled in conflict.