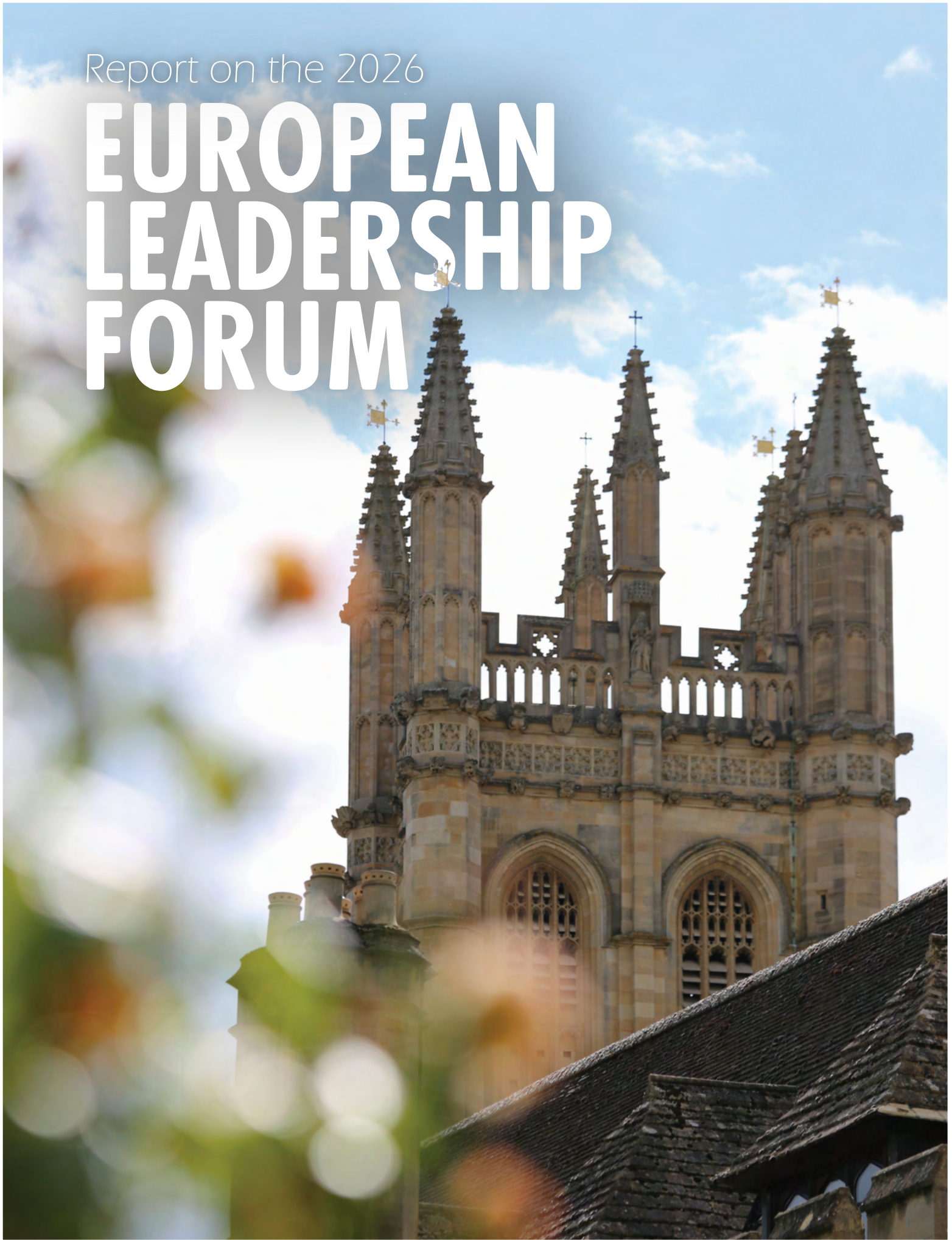


Report on the 2026

EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP FORUM



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My grandfather fought in World War II and shared many amazing stories with us, his grandchildren. I remember him saying repeatedly, ***“Those who are on the front lines witness the greatest miracles with their own eyes.”*** We were captivated by his stories.

Today, as I see how real and intense the spiritual war on the European mission field is, I find myself experiencing that same sense of wonder as I also see firsthand what God is doing through the European Leadership Forum. I feel like a child again – filled with fascination, gratitude, and renewed confidence in His work across Europe.

Each year, the Forum brings together Evangelical leaders from across the European continent to unite, equip, and resource them in their own ministries. But what strikes me most is not only what happens during that week together, but ***how powerfully the Lord uses the investments of everyone involved to multiply the Forum’s impact across Europe throughout the year.***

I believe this multiplication happens because the Forum is a uniquely leveraged Gospel movement, supported by the many who sacrificially give their time, talent, and treasure. Partners offer their loaves and fishes, and God multiplies them to accomplish extraordinary things. Forum Speakers, Network Leaders, and Mentors share their gifts and time freely and cover their own expenses because they believe deeply in the Forum’s mission. Through their sacrificial giving, Gospel leaders attending the Forum receive the training that they need to minister fruitfully in their own contexts.

That means every gift to the Forum is multiplied by the commitment and sacrifice of many others, and the Lord is using this shared investment – His people working together – to renew the biblical church and re-evangelize Europe.

If you have supported the Forum through prayer, financial giving, or volunteering, thank you!

You are helping to encourage and equip leaders throughout Europe who work tirelessly to spread the Gospel across the continent every day of the year!

From the bottom of my heart, thank you,



Emanuel Tundrea

Pastor and Associate Professor, Emanuel University of Oradea in Romania
European Leadership Forum Steering Committee Member



The Forum's Annual Meeting

We praise God for how powerfully He used the 2026 European Leadership Forum's Annual Meeting!

Gospel leaders from around Europe were inspired by ELF's vibrant worship, challenged by clear Bible teaching, and encouraged by relationships with peers and mentors. They were able to think deeply, ask difficult questions, develop new skills, receive prayer for their families and ministries, and learn from others facing similar challenges.

While many arrived tired and discouraged, **they left the Forum refreshed** from being with God's people and armed with new training, partnerships, and best practices to bring the Gospel to the nations.

This report serves to glorify God for a wonderful Annual Meeting, but the true impact of His work in Wisla will be seen through what happens next! As the Gospel leaders who were trained at ELF 2026 return to their churches, organizations, and communities, **we are excited to see how God continues to use them to light a fire of Gospel renewal across Europe.** We pray that He will powerfully use what He began here to produce lasting fruit throughout Europe and the world.



The Leveraged Nature of the Forum

The Forum is a Gospel movement fueled by sacrifice, generosity, and a commitment to renewing biblical Christianity across Europe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The result is extraordinarily leveraged.

- **Forum Speakers** volunteer their time, prepare hundreds of talks, and cover their own travel expenses because they believe in the Forum's mission: to unite, equip, and resource Gospel leaders.
- **Forum Network Leaders, National Leaders, and Mentors** volunteer countless hours throughout the year to organize training initiatives, mentor emerging leaders, and strengthen ministries across Europe.



And the Gospel leverage extends beyond the speakers, leaders, and mentors:

- **Christian publishers** provide books for the Forum Bookstore at cost, allowing leaders from countries with limited resources to access high-quality theological materials at a fraction of their normal price.
- **Volunteers** travel from across the world to serve their brothers and sisters and pay their own expenses. These volunteers are vital to ELF running smoothly, and they spend many hours praying with and for their European brothers and sisters.
- **Participants** frequently save for months to pay their portion of the costs because they are convinced that the training, encouragement, and relationships they gain will strengthen their ministries and help them better serve the Lord in their communities.



The Forum is a coalition of Evangelical leaders who are uniting to invest in other Gospel leaders. Because of their sacrifice and by God's power and grace, leaders are developed to spiritual maturity, ministries are strengthened, resources are multiplied, and the Gospel continues to spread throughout Europe.

For every dollar directly invested in the Forum, approximately \$5.20 is contributed through volunteer service, donated resources, and personal financial sacrifice!

**Lisette Gonzalez Torres,
Director of the Women Leader & Women Entrepreneur Project, Ireland**



“Being at ELF has truly been one of the most beautiful answers to prayer I have ever experienced. God knew exactly what I needed, and He provided it through this place. The training, the mentorship, and the connections I have built here are equipping me to carry this ministry forward with greater excellence and confidence. I leave each session not only with knowledge, but with a renewed hunger to obey and honor Him in everything I do.”

**Hristian Staykov,
M.D. and Assistant Professor, Bulgaria**



“I am so thankful that I was able to be trained and equipped at ELF 2026. I have learned so much, made so many contacts, and received so many valuable ideas and opportunities! I was also able to minister to my brothers and sisters in Christ who are here. **I am so excited to dream and plan for what lies ahead!**”

**Dávid Szarka,
Discipleship School Director, Hungary**



“Being here at the Forum was so helpful for me and my ministry. I made so many connections with leaders from different countries, and we could encourage one another and share experiences. I joined the Bible Study Leaders Network and its Year-Round Mentoring group. It was a great opportunity to develop some of the gifts God created in me. **ELF will have a huge impact on my ministry, helping the younger generation love Scripture and get to know the Lord more.**”

Rita Vlaovic, Evangelist, Serbia



“My time at ELF was really valuable, encouraging, and deeply blessed. During the Forum, I learned a great deal and was strengthened in my faith, encouraged through fellowship with believers from many countries, and inspired by the wisdom and experience of the speakers and mentors. **ELF gave me not only knowledge and practical tools but also improved motivation and encouragement to continue serving where God has called me.**”

Pavlius Vadeikis, Pastor, Lithuania



“God used my time at the Forum to refresh my vision and connect with experienced Evangelical leaders and mentors. **I learned practical ways to strengthen our church and effectively multiply leaders.** The materials and tools I’ve gained here will allow me to directly impact my ministry and train new mentors, who will ultimately bless many more.”



The Leveraged Impact Of Investing in a Gospel Leader



When Mihail Stefanov was 16 years old and eager to defend his faith, he found himself preparing to debate his biology teacher about creation. The only problem was that he didn't know where to begin.

With a desire to communicate that the Gospel is true, he turned to an online discussion forum to ask for help. To his surprise, Christian scientists from around the world responded, sending packages of books, articles, and other materials that equipped him far beyond what he could have found on his own.

When Mihail's teacher saw that he was prepared with a mountain of persuasive arguments and evidence, she canceled the debate.

"This experience gave me the courage and boldness in my faith to know that Christianity can not only be communicated, but also defended rationally."

It was a formative event for Mihail and led him to his current ministry.



Today, Mihail serves as a pastor of Crossroads Church in Sofia, Bulgaria. He also works as an organizational research consultant, leadership development coach, and ministry trainer. His ministry is focused on persuasively communicating the Gospel and helping others grow in faith and service to God. This focus on investing in people is one reason the European Leadership Forum (ELF) resonates so deeply with him.

Mihail first encountered ELF in 2020. Soon afterwards, he joined a Forum Year-Round Mentoring group and began connecting with leaders from across Europe.

At the time, he was already deeply involved in ministry. He was pastoring, consulting, and completing a master's degree in theology. However, despite his passion for persuasive evangelism, he often felt that thoughtful Christian engagement was not always appreciated in the circles around him.

"My first year at ELF was a revelation. In Evangelical churches in Bulgaria, there is strong distrust of intellectual issues. Whereas here, I saw hundreds of people who love the Lord, are passionate, and at the same time, they live such rich intellectual lives. I was greatly inspired."

Mihail found himself surrounded by pastors, scholars, scientists, and ministry leaders who loved Christ deeply and were equally committed to thinking deeply.



One of the people who left a lasting impression on him was Alexander Fink, leader of the Scientists Network and of the Year-Round Mentoring group in which Mihail participated. Alexander's academic credentials were impressive, but that is not what Mihail remembers most.

“The warmth, the generosity, and the patience of Alexander were genuine. This man, who was a very serious scientist, was also passionate and loving. Having such a person invest their time in you and become a friend is very special.”



For Mihail, that captures something essential about the Forum. It is not built around numbers; ELF invests in people. Leaders give their time, knowledge, and experience to help others grow. The investment Mihail received has shaped the way he now serves others.



Following his participation in the Forum, he began mentoring a small group of five or six young people in persuasive evangelism at his church. Now, those former mentees are training others around Bulgaria.

“I think it’s all about relationships. Someone experienced in a field deciding to give their time to mentor a small group is very special. I believe that it has a transformative effect.”

At the Forum, Mihail now co-leads the Apologetics (Advanced) Network, and he developed the Cultural Apologetics Year-Round Mentoring because he wants to give back what he has received. He believes that participation in the Forum requires more than passive listening.

“I noticed many people who came to ELF needed training in skills. And I thought, ‘I can give back. I can help provide that training.’”

Mihail's story beautifully illustrates the leveraged nature of the Forum. When someone invests in ELF, they are helping equip leaders who go on to equip hundreds more. The Lord is using ELF, and the impact continues to multiply.

As he reflects on the Forum's impact on the Gospel across Europe, Mihail's gratitude is evident.

“I think investing in the European Leadership Forum, in any way, shape, or form, is crucial for the European church. I saw the effect it had on myself. Now, I see it in the young leaders that I work with; the effect is transforming generations. The impact of the Forum is invaluable.”



Forum Plenary Speakers

The plenary sessions at ELF 2026 – a central point of contact for everyone at the Annual Meeting – were filled with worship, prayer, and excellent teaching. There is something truly special about 850 people gathered together in one place to give praise to our Lord!



This year's morning teaching was presented by **Pastor Colin Smith**, *President of Open the Bible*. Colin spoke for four days on biblical leadership: our need for godly leaders, how to persevere in Christian leadership, how leaders are called to shepherd, and the hope that comes to us through the Gospel.



During each evening plenary, a respected and gifted speaker further encouraged and equipped Forum participants to live faithfully for the Gospel in their contexts:



Pablo Martinez (*Christian Psychiatrist and Former President of the Spanish Evangelical Alliance*) spoke on finding rest, refreshment, and hope in ministry.



David McIlroy (*Lawyer and Global Distinguished Professor at the London branch of the University of Notre Dame*) presented a Christian understanding of freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and democracy.



Helen Thorne-Allenson (*Director of Training and Resources at Biblical Counselling UK*) shared about building Gospel-centered relationships in ministry.



John Dickson (*Professor at Wheaton College*) gave lessons on missions from the Book of Acts.



Make a Leveraged Investment for the Gospel

Stay Involved Throughout the Year!

- **Pray:** Everything the Forum does begins with prayer. We depend on God to guide, strengthen, and multiply the impact ELF is having for the Gospel in Europe. Please continue praying that the Lord would unite, equip, and resource Gospel leaders to renew the church and spread the Gospel. Sign up for the Forum's prayer newsletter by going to euroleadership.org/support-elf.
- **Serve:** Behind every Forum Annual Meeting is a team of volunteers who generously give their time and energy to welcome participants, support programs, and help create an environment where leaders can grow. If you would like to join a future ELF volunteer team, visit euroleadership.org/volunteer.
- **Connect:** Keep up with Forum news, stories, and ministry updates by following the European Leadership Forum and the Forum of Christian Leaders on Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, and YouTube.
- **Support:** You can make a leveraged investment in the next generation of Gospel leaders through a financial partnership. Monthly gifts, large or small, play a vital role in enabling the Forum to continue equipping, uniting, and resourcing Evangelical leaders throughout Europe. **We are asking everyone in the Forum Family to give monthly.** Simply scan the QR code to the right.





Aleksey Lobovi, Pastor, Georgia



“I had heard about ELF for some time, but didn’t think I needed to participate. However, last September, I became a pastor and discovered that I was not ready. So many challenges, questions, and doubts popped up, so I applied for the Forum. And it was such a blessing for me! I attended the Church Life, Leadership, and Planting Network and had one-on-one mentoring sessions. I was able to share my ministry challenges and highlights with others. **I received answers to many of my questions, and I now know that I am not alone.** I have people who are ready to listen, give advice, and pray for me.”

Dana Stanciu, PhD Student, Romania



“I leave the Forum encouraged, inspired, and with a renewed sense of calling! One of the most meaningful aspects of the Forum is realizing that I am not alone. Listening to the stories and testimonies of others, I see that many leaders across Europe face similar struggles, even though we come from different countries and contexts. There is something deeply encouraging in that, and it brings perspective, unity, and hope. Moreover, being part of the Scientists Network at the Forum is something I value deeply. It is truly a superb environment where faith and science come together in an intellectually honest way.”

Virgil Croitor, Pastor, Germany



“The Forum helped me recalibrate and strengthen the work God called me to do. It allowed me to connect with Christian leaders and ministry workers from many countries, learn from their experience, and build meaningful partnerships for the future. I am leaving encouraged, inspired, and freshly motivated to continue serving with renewed vision and passion.”

Dávid Cekov, Pastor, Slovakia



“I have a missional heart and calling, but when I heard from the Lord that He wanted me to become a pastor, I struggled with it. I wanted to plant new churches or do something similar,

but I understood that God wanted me to be in pastoral ministry. I have been really encouraged here at the Forum. The Church Revitalization in Today’s Context Network is very helpful. **The plenaries are the Word preached; I felt that God was talking to me.** I believe it wasn’t a coincidence I am here – it’s God’s will.”

Magdalena Panov, Women and Youth Leader, North Macedonia



“Participating in ELF has been incredibly valuable for me. For several days, I had the opportunity to listen to inspiring teachings about God that refreshed my soul and strengthened my faith. I also met many other servants of God from different countries and ministries, and I learned from their experiences and testimonies. One of the greatest blessings was connecting with people who are serving in similar ministries. Through these relationships, **I gained practical advice, ministry materials, and friendships that will last for many years.**”



Maciek Białecki, General Secretary of the Christian Student Association, Poland



“The 2026 Forum has been an immense encouragement for me. **In Poland, meeting so many mature, well-**

educated, and Bible-loving leaders is very rare. The Forum not only makes this possible, but it also makes the whole experience fuller by helping to bridge gaps between leaders so we can share our lives, experiences, and prayers as if we had known each other for a lifetime.”

Yelyzaveta Kaminska, Worship Leader, Ukraine



“ELF has been a profound blessing – a time of restructuring and restoration. It allowed me to connect with experienced leaders. After finishing the Year-

Round Mentoring this year, I can say that even one year with such mentors is not enough, and I will continue. **ELF has shifted something deep inside me, giving me the courage to pursue the next steps God has laid on my heart.**”

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CHRISTIAN
LEADERS

PO Box 1442, Wheaton, IL 60187 FOCLONLINE.ORG

