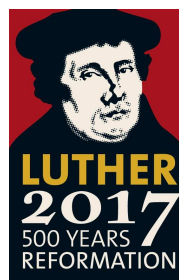


Wittenberg Zentrum des Lutherischen Weltbundes

Wittenberg Center of the Lutheran World Federation

LWB-Zentrum Wittenberg – Töpferstr. 9 – 06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg



Direktor Pastor Hans W. Kasch

Töpferstrasse 9
06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg

E-Mail kasch@dnk-lwb.de

Tgb.-Nr./Ref.-No.:
Bitte bei Antwort diese Nummer angeben/Please quote

Datum/Date

Studying Luther in Wittenberg - Invitation to the Third International Seminar within the Luther Decade

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation:

The International Seminar number one and number two within the Luther Decade took place in 2009 and 2010. For all the participants, teachers, and organizers, it was a wonderful experience to study Luther's theology in such international setting in this historical place; and to listen to each other, to learn from each other, and to experience spiritual community.

We would now like to extend the invitation to the 3rd seminar. Kindly we ask you to identify appropriate female or male pastors in your churches. Please consider the requirements:

- excellent knowledge of English, because the seminar is conducted in English
- pastors with some years of parish experience, or students with special competency in Lutheran theology
- basic theological education
- endorsement of the leadership of the church

Since we had within the first two seminars much more male than female participants, we ask all member churches to send women pastors whenever possible. All member churches know about the policy in the LWF about gender balance.

The aim of the seminar is, again, to become better acquainted with Luther's theology, particularly in relation to the participants' respective contexts and with an ecumenical openness to other confessions. Knowledge of one's own tradition is a prerequisite for entering into a fruitful and constructive dialogue with other confessions, beliefs, and worldviews. It provides the basis for a positive self-understanding and the corresponding approach that prevents us from falling into the traps of unfruitful apologetics and fundamentalism.

Again we invite 14 participants: half from the regions of North America, the Nordic Countries, and Western and Central Europe; and half from Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This will ensure a fruitful, cross-cultural dialogue that will strengthen the communion of the LWF.

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Töpferstr. 9 06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg
Telefon: 03491 – 69 54 84 • FAX: 03491 – 69 54 85 • E-Mail: kasch@dnk-lwb.de
Evangelische Kreditgenossenschaft eG • 06 15 021 • BLZ 520 604 10
IBAN DE45 5206 0410 0000 6150 21 • BIC GENODEF1EK1

Successful participants will receive a certificate. We hope that participants will return to their respective home churches better equipped to spread Lutheran theology, and willing to announce the Luther Decade and the events for the 500th anniversary; and so to involve their churches in the preparations. For the home churches, these seminars will provide the opportunity to offer their pastors additional theological education.

The seminar will take place in Wittenberg from March 12th until March 26th, 2011. It will be led by Professor Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, Jena, Germany, and Professor Faustin Mahali, Makumira, Tanzania. The theme of the seminar will be: „Reading the Bible with Luther today". It will deal with the understanding of the Scripture in Luther's work and with hermeneutical methods of reading texts today. All participants will receive some relevant texts in advance so that they can prepare for the seminar.

The itinerary of the seminar will be as follows:

- 11. or 12. - arrival
- 13. - worship service and sightseeing in Wittenberg
- 14. - 18. - seminar, part one
- 19./20. - day trip to Wartburg, worship service in Wittenberg, visiting Torgau
- 21. - 25. - seminar, part two
- 26. - departure

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Participants in the seminar are required to be present for the entire seminar program. Personal trips or excursions before or after the seminar are possible at one's own cost and responsibility, **and should be mentioned with the application form.**

Please find attached the nomination/registration form, which should be returned to us as soon as possible, but not later than December 5th, 2010. Because of limited funds we have to ask the churches in North America, in the Nordic Countries, and Central-Western Europe to cover the costs or to subsidize their participants. They will get an invoice after finishing the seminar. In addition to travel expenses, participants need about 950 Euro for accommodation, food, the day trip to the Wartburg, entrance fees, materials, etc. Delegates from churches of other regions we ask kindly to consider which costs they can contribute. The fair membership fees for all member churches could be a model for that. The more money we can save, the more participants we can invite.

We need your cooperation and ask you to invite pastors from your church. For the two first seminars; we received many applications from the Global South, but only a few from Middle Europe, Northern Europe, and the U.S. Thus we ask the Lutheran churches in these areas to encourage pastors to apply for the seminar. This invitation will come via different channels to you. All those who applied for the 2nd seminar but were not able to be accepted will receive the invitation directly.

We kindly ask for your understanding if not all applications are accepted. We can select only 14 participants in total. But there will be seminars in the future as well, the next taking place in November 2011.

We do hope that this study opportunity will be of interest to member churches and their pastors. We look forward to a fruitful exchange within the communion of the LWF.

On behalf of Professor Niebuhr and Professor Mahali, and myself, I send you kindest regards,

Yours in Christ,

