



## *Studying Ecumenism in Strasbourg!*

Invitation to a new seminar offered by the Institute  
for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg

Strasbourg, October 2 - 12, 2019



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

The Institute for Ecumenical Research has established a new seminar for Lutheran pastors and advanced students that will be held for the first time in 2019 (October 2-12) in Strasbourg. The seminar is meant to contribute to a specific aspect of the self-understanding of the LWF: "To be Lutheran is to be ecumenical." This is a commitment that is not fulfilled automatically, rather it calls for serious efforts in order to honor it. The seminar will have three main goals:

*First*, LWF has an ecumenical history of more than 60 years with several historic achievements like the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification between the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church in 1999, the reconciliation between Lutherans and Mennonites at the LWF Assembly in Stuttgart in 2010, and the historic ecumenical prayer service in Lund with Pope Francis and the leaders of LWF in commemoration of 500 years of the Reformation in 2016. The basic events and documents of this history should be transmitted to the younger generation of Lutheran pastors and theologians so that what has been achieved can continue to influence the relations between the churches involved. Unfortunately, ecumenism is not very often taught at the universities or seminaries where Lutherans are educated. The Strasbourg Institute has been involved in all these processes, and it is committed to hand over the knowledge of these ecumenical dialogues to as many Lutheran pastors and students as possible. The teaching and studying will include the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, The Apostolicity of the Church, From Conflict to Communion (documents with respect to the Roman Catholic Church), the Leuenberg Agreement (with respect to the Reformed Churches), Healing Memories: Reconciling in Christ (with respect to the Mennonites), Lutheran-Orthodox and Lutheran-Pentecostal dialogues.

*Secondly*, the participants of the seminar will be asked to report about the relation between the churches in their respective countries. In hearing and discussing these reports, concepts and tools will be developed to describe and analyze the ecumenical situations in their countries. Bringing the contemporary experience of the LWF member churches into a dialogue with the insights and experience of LWF's ecumenical history will allow for developing and proposing steps for a rapprochement between churches in the countries of the participants.

*Thirdly*, the seminar will take 10 days with a maximum of 20 participants. This will give the rare opportunity for the participants coming from very different contexts in the South and the North, the East and the West to enter into a very intense transcultural dialogue about ecumenical theology and practice. This dialogue will be a major contribution to communion building within LWF.

The seminar will take place in Strasbourg (France), a beautiful old city with a rich Reformation history and with a conflicting history between Germany and France, a city that after World War II has become a symbol for reconciliation and a bridge between the German speaking world and the Latin world. The European Parliament meets every month for a week in Strasbourg.

We kindly ask you to identify appropriate female or male persons of whom you might expect that participating in the seminar will benefit themselves and your church. Please consider the following **requirements**:

- very good knowledge of English since the seminar is held in English
- good theological education
- endorsement of the leadership of your church
- pastors with some years of parish experience or advanced students with special knowledge in Lutheran theology

A certificate will be delivered upon successful participation.

The **itinerary** of the seminar will be as follows:

- Oct. 2 Arrival in Strasbourg
- Oct. 3-5 Seminar, part 1
- Oct. 6 Sunday worship service and outing into beautiful Alsace
- Oct. 7-11 Seminar, part 2
- Oct. 12 Departure

Please note that participants are requested to be present for the whole time of the seminar. Personal trips or excursions after the seminar are possible at one's own expense and responsibility and should be indicated in the application form.

Please find attached the registration form that should be returned to us as soon as possible, **but not later than January 31, 2019**. Due to the limited funds we have to ask the churches in North America and Western and Northern Europe to cover the costs or to subsidize their participants. In addition to travel expenses participants need EUR 1.000 for accommodation, food, the excursion, entrance fees, and materials etc. Participants from other regions of LWF are kindly asked to consider what they could contribute. The fair membership fees in the LWF for all member churches could be a model for this. The more money we save, the more participants we can invite in the future.

We kindly ask for your understanding if not all applications can be accepted. In 2019, we cannot have more than 20 participants. But there will be seminars in the future.

We ask for your cooperation, and we hope that this brand new seminar will be of interest for your church.

Best wishes and greetings from Strasbourg,

**Prof. Dr. Jennifer Wasmuth**  
(Director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research)

Strasbourg, November 2018

