



ICCJ 2017 Conference: Reforming, Rereading, Renewing

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Preparations for ICCJ's 2017 annual conference to be held in Bonn/Germany, July 2-5, are under way. The theme of next year's conference is "Reforming, Rereading, Renewing: Martin Luther and 500 Years of Tradition and Reform in Judaism and Christianity".

Together with our cooperation partners, ICCJ's German member organization "Deutscher Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für christlich-jüdische Zusammenarbeit" (DKR) and the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland (EKiR), we are looking forward to welcome guests from all over the world to an exciting conference in Germany in the year of the 500th anniversary of Protestant Reformation.

Reforming, Rereading, Renewing:

Martin Luther and 500 Years of Tradition and Reform in Judaism and Christianity

Introduction to the Conference Theme

(by Rev. Friedhelm Pieper, Co-Chair of the Conference Planning Committee)

The year 2017 is marked by "500 years of Protestant Reformation" in Germany. Based on an intense study of biblical texts, Martin Luther developed a new approach to the central meaning of these texts: the critical examination of one's own religious awareness combined with the willingness to repent and renew. This biblical impulse started well before Luther and has continued in the 500 years since, inspiring at different times reformist ferment in both Christianity and Judaism. Only very recently has this impetus grown to include a long overdue renewal in the relations of the Christian Churches to Judaism. Here the first European Reformers were blind to their own sometimes violent anti-Judaism. Today the rediscovery of the "other" in the Jewish-Christian relationship also leads to a new, enriching reading of biblical texts in Jewish-Christian conversation through the perception of the religious value of the traditions of the Jewish or Christian other.

Learning to see through each other's eyes is a valuable skill in our world of religious and cultural pluralism, and widens the circle of dialogue to include Muslims and the followers of other religions.

Today all religions are challenged to reinterpret their traditions for a diverse global context. They thereby experience a constructive tension between time-proven traditions and the need to reform.

The history of the Protestant Reformation, other Christian and Jewish reformations and renewals, and the history of religions in general demonstrate time and time again how reforms themselves can become traditions and how tradition has passed on the impulse to new reforms.

The ICCJ conference in Germany 2017 will raise the following related questions:

- What discoveries do we make in the shared interreligious re-reading of our Holy texts?
- What values can be shared and treasured together even though we come from different religious communities in the service of a world that sometimes threatens to fall apart?
- What reforms do we recognize as currently needed in our own religious communities, especially in light of current threats to our world?

A pdf-file of this article can be found [here](#) - please share it with colleagues and friends.

Further information will follow on ICCJ's website in due time.

To receive new information and updates promptly by e-mail, please register for the [ICCJ-newsletter](#).

The online-registration for participants in ICCJ's 2017 conference will open mid-February 2017.

Anette Adelman is ICCJ's General Secretary