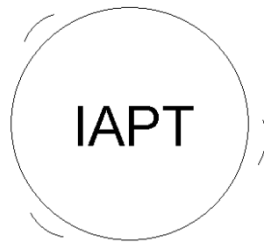


International Academy  
of Practical Theology

<http://www.ia-pt.org>



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Advent 2015

Dear IAPT Colleagues,

Greetings from Scotland on a cold, wet and windy day. From here it does seem as if our meeting in Pretoria lies a world away. However, we have been remembering our time together and discussing in the Executive Committee the things we can learn from the conference and take forward into our future planning. Attached with this newsletter is a summary of the evaluation exercise conducted by the EC. As you will see there were positive responses overall and many members expressed heartfelt thanks to those responsible for organizing the event. I would like you to know that the EC is aware how much work Malan Nel undertook on our behalf and how he contributed to the event in unsparing use of his time and his personal resources. Partly due to Malan's efforts the Conference accounts are healthy. We have made a gift to Malan on your behalf in recognition of his service to us.

Your responses to our short survey have already been fed into the planning process for the Oslo conference in 2017. With Nordic energy and efficiency the planners are making very good progress in organizing this conference on the resonant theme of 'Reforming: Space, Body, Politics.' The theme reflects 500 years of Reformation culture in the Nordic region but, pertinently, asks what is the future of a reforming heritage in its widest spiritual, cultural and social sense. These concerns are clearly ecumenical and global and we shall inquire together as to how reforming processes impact upon practical theology as it engages with a context in which space, identity and beliefs are increasingly contested. We are all aware how the current desperate conflicts in several parts of the world are challenging us to contemplate very different national and international futures. The theme we have chosen will give us great scope to explore some of these enormous challenges. Please mark the dates April 20-24th 2017 in your diaries now.

One of the key debates at the Pretoria meeting was the membership basis of IAPT and the EC was charged with considering our current bylaws and bringing forward plans for change to the Oslo meeting. We have already begun what will be a slow and painstaking process of carefully examining different options and considering their strengths and limitations. Clearly we all wish to preserve what is precious about the identity of our academic community but realize that we must become a more inclusive body in the future. While these debates are taking place, however, the current bylaws mandate the procedures for admitting new members. The process and requirements are as follows:

**Nominations:** These are due no later than one year before the next scheduled meeting of the academy – thus by April 19th 2016.

**Eligibility:** Nominees should be in sympathy with the aims of the academy; be researchers and scholars in the discipline; have a distinguished record of publications in the field or have made other significant contributions to practical theology. They should also possess a PhD or similar academic qualification.

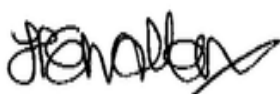
**Process:** Members may nominate one or more persons by sending a letter of nomination to the President. Letters of nomination should be supported and signed by another member and (i) summarize the academic and other contributions of the nominee (ii) include a brief CV with publications (iii) include full contact details of nominee. In the interests of transparency nominations should best be made from outside members' own institutions.

**Representation:** While membership is approved on the basis of academic merit please bear in mind that it is important to secure, as far as possible, gender equality and members from underrepresented regions and groups.

Whilst looking forward to the reception of new colleagues it is my sad responsibility to mark the death of one of our most celebrated members, Jim Fowler. We express our thanks for his great contribution to practical theology and our sympathies to his wife and family. IAPT members will also be sad to hear of the death of another significant practical theologian of the same generation, Donald Capps.

This has been a busy period for the EC. We have been holding regular Skype meetings and these have been spent discussing (animatedly!) issues of vital concern for the future of our corporate life. I would like to express my thanks to the members of the Committee for their commitment and hard work.

Wishing you hope and peace this season as we welcome God with us through the advent of a homeless child.



Heather Walton, President.

On behalf of the Executive Committee:

Robert Mager (Vice President)  
Annemie Dillen (Secretary)  
Faustino Cruz (Treasurer)  
Constanze Thierfelder (Member at Large)  
Cas Wepener (Member at Large)  
Auli Vähäkangas (Programme Committee)  
Trygve Wyller (Host Committee)