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| International Academy of Practical Theology  <http://www.ia-pt.org> | IAPT | *President: Professor Heather Walton*  *Theology and Religious Studies*  *University of Glasgow*  *Glasgow*  *G12 8QQ*  *Scotland*  [president@ia-pt.org](mailto:president@ia-pt.org) |

Lent 2016

Dear IAPT Colleagues,

In this season of disciplined reflection and focused preparation it is good to have the chance to write to you once again concerning our own plans and hopes for the future.

First I am glad to say that the plans for our 2017 conference are now taking good shape. The Host and Programme Committees have been putting together an exciting and varied schedule for the event that will give us the chance to share research on topics of significance, spend time talking together and also learn something more about the context of the Nordic region. The committees have taken great care to listen to the feedback from the last conference and take members’ comments into account. Marking 500 years of Reformation history our theme, ‘Reforming: Space, Body and Politics’, will be explored **both** in terms of its broad implications for reforming processes in practical theology **and** more specifically in relation to:

* the spatial transformations resulting from migration and other boundary issues;
* changing understandings of embodied practice (including those related to sexual and identity positions that have been marginalized and discriminated against);
* the mutually reforming impact of theology and politics in the light of post-colonial thinking, environmental crisis and global conflicts.

We are confident that all members who have interests in the changing context in which we work as practical theologians will find resonances with their work at some point in the programme. We are also hoping to vary the ways in which members can contribute their research at this conference. We will be posting further details on our website about the event in the coming weeks. Please mark the dates April 20-24th 2017 in your diaries now.

Also in looking towards the future we are beginning to receive nominations for membership. This is an exciting time as we look towards welcoming new people and fresh thinking into the Academy. However, the nominations we have received so far do contain a larger proportion of men than women and we have had fewer nominations than we hoped for from regions outside the Europe and North America. Please remember that as our coming conference is in April that there are only a few more weeks for you to propose colleagues for consideration. Just to remind you once again the procedures for this 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 the nominee. In the interests of transparency, nominations should best be made from outside members’ own institutions.

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, we have continued to discuss wider issues of membership and participation in our Executive Committee meetings. We have explored a number of options and will set down our thinking for members to reflect upon before the summer. We realize that IAPT is dear to the heart of its members, and that changes in the way we think about membership and participation will be challenging. We can expect that the process of finding common ground may take a good deal of patience and discernment. However, we have found our conversations on the topic to have been very positive, stimulating and thought-provoking. They have necessitated an entirely healthy process of serious and self-critical thinking – which is very appropriate at this point in our common life. On the Executive Committee we are all united in our opinion that, whatever recommendations we make for changing the by-laws, it is only by an increased sense of our mutual obligations to each other (including financial obligations) that we will move closer towards being the kind of critically rigorous and radically inclusive community we wish to be. In relation to this our Treasurer, Tito Cruz, will be contacting you shortly about the IAPT Scholars Fund.

May a faithful response to the reforming challenge of Lent bring you to the refreshment of Easter!



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)