

INTERNATIONALE SCHLOSSKIRCHENGEMEINSCHAFT

Dear members of the International Castle Church Congregation,

an eventful and successful Reformation celebration with an exciting service in the Castle Church lies behind us. We would like to greet you today on this special day and report from the congregational life of the past days and months.

The service for the Reformation Festival was held by Prof. Dr. Heinrich Bedford-Strohm. As Chairman of the Council of the EKD, it was his last service, as his term of office ends in the next few days, and it was an honor for him to celebrate this service in the Schlosskirche.

Following the service, a digital reconstruction of the Schlosskirche was opened, which visitors will now be able to explore via smartphone or from a computer. When was the last time you were in Wittenberg? Why not look at the digital Schlosskirche right now? See <https://www.schlosskirche-wittenberg.de/vr/>.

As a special highlight, visitors can virtually enter the castle church not only in its current appearance but also in the state it was in 1517 and view Luther's original theses door. In addition, a great deal of multimedia background information can be accessed.



The elaborate computer animation of the late Gothic castle church was created based on extensive scientific research by the Dresden-based company specializing in the visualization of historical buildings, although the once extensive furnishings were only depicted in outline due to many gaps in the tradition. It is a great experience to virtually follow in Luther's footsteps into the Wittenberg Castle Church of 1517 and thus experience Reformation history more vividly.

We said "Adieu" to Renke Brahms, Director of the Evangelical Wittenberg Foundation and member of the Board of Trustees of the ICCG.



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Pastor Brahms retired at the end of September 2021. With a very beautiful service and reception in the sunshine on the steps of the Schlossplatz, he retired from his position and was released from active service. We wish him God's richest blessings for this new phase of his life.

For many months we had to do without the celebration of the Lord's Supper. But this year it became possible again to celebrate and enjoy this special table fellowship in worship. With the changing times, our communion "practice" has also changed. In the Schlosskirche, we celebrate communion with everyone going forward to the chancel by way of the center aisle and hygienically receiving the host which is placed in the open hand. On a tray on a white napkin are many individual cups filled with juice or wine. In our parish, everyone is invited, including children. With the cup in hand, we go before the altar. Here at this moment, one feels especially close to Christ. Strengthened and blessed, we then return to our seats. The congregation has become accustomed to this new form. Despite the distance, one feels the connection to the other parishioners as in the "classic" form.



Members of the congregation brought harvest gifts from their gardens to this year's harvest service and, together with sexton Mr. Jörg Preller, decorated the altar area. It was a special honor for me to celebrate this service with guests and parishioners and to experience how lovingly the church was decorated.

"The kingdom of God is not in words, but in power" (1 Corinthians 4:20).

With this word from the Herrenhut verses on Reformation Day, I would like to encourage and greet you warmly. Also, on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees of the International Castle Church Congregation, we hope that you will remain connected to us and stay safe!

*Yours sincerely,
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