



LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL **SEMINARY** IN TSHWANE

ILC SEMINARIES CONFERENCE HELD IN PRETORIA

The International Lutheran Council's (2026) World Seminaries Conference took place in Pretoria from June 22-25. The theme for the conference was: "Being Human, Being Christian: Theological Anthropology in Church and Seminary."

A total of 32 theological schools in 30 nations were represented at the conference, with more than 60 participants in total attending. The host seminary for this year's event was our Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, and leaders of the ILC's three member church bodies in South Africa—the Confessional Lutheran Synod in South Africa (CLCSA), the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA), and the Lutheran Synod in South Africa (LCSA) all participated in the event.



It was a privilege for our seminary to be involved in hosting this wonderful event. At the event, LTS adjunct lecturer Rev. Dr. Chris Weber (photo below) gave a paper on “Lutheran Anthropology and Sin in Societal Structures”. Rev. Dr. Tobias Schütze, parttime lecturer at LTS, served as chaplain.



The conference also saw the announcement of the new ILC Seminaries Committee. Serving for the next three years are:

- Rev. Dr. Jun Hyun Kim (Asia)
- Dr. Cynthia Lumley (Europe)
- Rev. Dr. Sergio Schelske (Latin America)
- Rev. Kirk Radford (North America)
- Rev. Dr. Heinz Hiestermann (Africa)

Members of the committee were installed during the conference’s closing service. More information about the semiaries conference can be found on this link:



<https://ilcouncil.org/2026/07/09/the-ilcs-2026-world-seminaries-conference-in-brief/>

Photos are taken from the ILC website.

Report Prof. Dr Werner Klän,

2nd Quater, 2026

From April 10 to June 1, 2026, I was on assignment at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tshwane, Pretoria, RSA (LTS). At the invitation of the rector, Rev. Dr. Heinz Hiestermann, and in consultation with Mission Director Rev. Edmund Hohls, I taught a course in the second quarter of the 2026 academic year on the theology of the Lutheran Confessional Writings (focus: the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord).

After teaching two- or three-week intensive courses (2008 through 2019 and 2022) on behalf of the Lutheran Church Mission in Germany and the assignment in the second quarter of the first semester, a longer teaching unit spanning an entire quarter proved to be extremely beneficial. Based on last year's experience, the required workload—especially the reading load for the students—is better distributed this way than in shorter units.

The course, which is part of the LTS curriculum in the second year of study, was attended this year by six students: three from South Africa, two from Tanzania, and one from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who is currently residing in a refugee camp in Namibia. The course was conducted over six (three times two) hours per week. Two class test were written, and two more extensive written assignments were required. The final paper was written in June.

For the course, I drew up a work plan and developed the questions for the class tests, the homework assignments, and the final exam. The students' participation was encouraging; three of them showed particular interest and commitment. According to information from the registrar at LTS, Rev. Mintesinot Birru Hanfato, the results qualified all participants to take the final exam.

My collegial interactions with the rector, the registrar, the other faculty members, and the staff were exceptionally friendly and pleasant. I preached twice during the daily seminary devotions at LTS.

At the invitation of Rev. Mintesinot Birru Hanfato, I preached on Cantate Sunday, May 3rd, 2026, at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diepkloof, Johannesburg; and at the request of Pastor Martin Paul, I led the service on Ascension Day, May 14, 2026, at the Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Congregation in Pretoria.

At the request of the rector, I also prepared a group of students for a debate on the text **Lumen Gentium**, paragraph 8 of the Second Vatican Council (1963–1965), as part of a short introductory course in ecumenical theology. It took place at the invitation of St. John Vianney Seminary (179 Main Street, Waterkloof, Pretoria) by the Academic Dean, Rev. Sbongiseni Joseph Msomi, on Friday, May 15, 2026, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. LTS was represented by the rector, Dr. Heinz Hiestermann, and myself; Rev. Mintesinot Birru Anfato, Rev. Fernando Huf, and Bishop Emeritus Dr. Dieter Reinstorf attended as guests.

Two LTS students, Happy Maganga from Malawi and Thomas Schnackenberg from the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA), presented a critique of the text of Lumen Gentium 8 and brief introductory remarks on Lutheran ecclesiology; several LTS students contributed to the general discussion.

In my closing remarks, I emphasized the importance of ecumenical exchange, not least in light of the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030, and suggested continuing the discussion, possibly at LTS.



At the request of the bishop of FELSISA, Pastor Helmut Paul of Durban, South Africa, I prepared a workshop on Christian witness (“Witness”) for the FELSISA Pastors’ Conference. The workshop took place from Tuesday, May 19, through Wednesday, May 20. All FELSISA pastors participated, with the exception of two who were unable to attend due to illness. Following my opening presentation, insights from Chad Lakies’ book **How the Light Shines Through: Resilient Witness in Dark Times** (St. Louis, MO: CPH, 2024) were discussed in two sets of four working groups, and a largely successful attempt was made to apply these insights to the South African context. It was once again an enriching time for me to serve at the seminary—which is supported, among others, by the Lutheran Church Mission—and in one of the SELK’s sister churches in southern Africa.

Lübeck, Germany, 2026-07-07

Prof. em. Dr. Werner Klän D.Litt.

Right: Prof. Dr. Klän at the FELSISA Pastors’ Conference

Photo: Pastor Rüdiger Gevers



Left: Prof. Dr. Klän at the theological debate at St. John Vianney Seminary.

Update: Building project

In January, everyone at LTS was excited when construction of the new building finally started after a two-year struggle to get permission from the city council. Unfortunately, after only a few days, construction had to stop again due to building line issues, which have not yet been resolved.

In the photo below, you can see the current state of the construction site. We thank our board member, Mr. Kurt Paul, who, despite all setbacks, is still trying to get permission to continue the building project. Please keep this project in your prayers, as we desperately need more space.



Mission: “The LTS is a mission agency seeking to graduate multipliers for the Lutheran Church in Africa.”

Vision: “To provide quality confessional Lutheran formation.”