

Faith. Power. Us. – Religion in Times of Populism

Summer Academy of the Berlin Mission – Ecumenical Summer Academy

Date: June 14 – 17, 2026
Location: Ecumenical Center / Berlin Mission
Address: Georgenkirchstraße 69/70, 10249 Berlin, Germany

Dear Sir or Madam,
Dear friends of the Berlin Mission,

We are very much looking forward to our Berlin Mission Society's Summer Academy and kindly invite you to form part of this event. We want to discuss something that concerns and unites us: Faith. Power. Us – Religion in times of populism. Therefore we invited representatives from our partners to join us in discussing today's challenges, how we can promote peaceful, democratic coexistence.

The Summer Academy will feature keynote speeches, workshops, shared readings from the Bible and sacred texts, discussion time, and an excursion to Anhalt. The Evangelical Regional Church of Anhalt is one of the Berlin Mission Society's two sponsoring churches. Specifically, we will examine on-site how the church is responding to right-wing populism.

You can find the detailed program below. The conference language will be English, with German translation provided. The participation fee is €120.

We look forward to receiving your registration. The registration deadline is May 15, 2026. You will find the registration form on page 4. Please send it to L.Hauke@bmw.ekbo.de.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

With warm regards and in ecumenical fellowship,



Dr. Ulrich Schöntube, Director of Berlin Mission

Program:

Sunday, June 14

- 18:00 **Interreligious & international prayer for peace**
With: *Rabbi Andreas Nachama, Imam Kadir Sancı, Bishop Christian Stäblein*
Music: Albrecht Gündel vom Hofe and Assaf Levitin
Location: Chapel of Reconciliation, Bernauer Straße 4, 10115 Berlin
Reception follows

Monday, June 15 – Christian Identity and Our Social Mission Today

- 09:00 **Check-In**
09:30 **Welcome and Morning Devotion**
10:00 **Keynote Lecture:** Christian Identity and Our Social Mission Today
Prof. Dr. Torsten Meireis, Humboldt University Berlin
10:30 **Panel Discussion:** Christian Identity and Society
Carrie Call (USA), Prof. Dr. Torsten Meireis (Germany), Bishop Zwanini A. Shabalala (Eswatini)
Moderator: Karsten Wolkenhauer
12:00 **Midday Prayer**
13:00 **Lunch**
14:00 **Workshops (Choose One):**
1. Faith and Social Mission – *Pinar Cetin (Germany)*
2. Challenged identities: Christian in Muslim Society / Muslim in Christian Society
– *Saher Youssef (Egypt) and Kübra Dalkilic (Germany)*
3. Identity, Politics, and Religion in the USA – *Jes Kast (USA)*
4. “I Was a Stranger and You Did Not Invite Me In” – *Josephine Furian and Elizabeth Ngari (Germany)*
5. Gospel and Prosperity: How the Good News Shapes Our Identity – *Gerhardus Bock (South Africa)*
6. The Big Tent Approach – *Carrie Call (USA)*
16:00 **Coffee break**
16:30 **Interfaith Panel:** Religion under Pressure: Identity and Belief in Times of Populism -
Prof. Dr. Andreas Nachama, Lydia Nofal, Prof. Dr. Armina Omerika, (Germany)
18:30 **Closing of the day**

Tuesday, June 16 – Overcoming Polarization

- 9:30 **Bible Sharing / Scriptural Reasoning**
10:30 **Keynote Lecture and Response:** Churches Against Populism – *Dr. Anne Gidion and Iman Reiman (Germany)*
12:30 **Midday Prayer and Lunch**
13:30 **Workshops (Choose One):**
1. Major arguments in Bible & Quran – *Ender Cetin and Prof. Dr. Andreas Nachama (Germany)*
2. A bumpy road. Good and less good experiences with the truth and reconciliation process in South Africa
– *Gerhardus Bock (South Africa)*
3. From Enemies in War to Partners: The Churches' Contribution to Overcoming Polarization Between Germans and Poles
– *Grzegorz Giemza (Poland)*
4. Active reconciliation. The peace work of Parents Circle and Women Wage Peace in Israel-Palestine
– *Vered Berman and Jana Kaiser (Germany)*
5. Religions: The Underestimated Potential for Social Conflict Transformation – *Tanja Berg (Germany)*
6. Dealing with right-wing populism – *Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Martin Vogel (Germany)*
15:00 **Coffee break**
15:30 **Workshops (choose One):**
1. Big arguments in Bible & Quran – *Ender Cetin and Prof. Dr. Andreas Nachama (Germany)*
2. A bumpy road. Good and less good experiences with the truth and reconciliation process in South Africa
– *Gerhardus Bock (South Africa)*
3. From Enemies in War to Partners: The Churches' Contribution to Overcoming Polarization Between Germans and Poles
– *Grzegorz Giemza (Poland)*
4. Active reconciliation. The peace work of Parents Circle and Women Wage Peace in Israel-Palestine
– *Vered Berman and Jana Kaiser (Germany)*
5. Religions: The Underestimated Potential for Social Conflict Transformation – *Tanja Berg (Germany)*
6. Dealing with right-wing populism – *Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Martin Vogel (Germany)*
17:00 **Prayer and Closing of the Day**

Wednesday, June 17 – Excursion to Dessau and Wörlitz Park

- 08:00 **Meeting at the Berlin Mission**
- 08:15 **Departure** by coach for the excursion to the Protestant Church Anhalt Dessau
- 10:30 **Arrival** in Dessau
- 10:45 **Welcome and devotion** by *Matthias Kopischke* (Deputy to Church President Wolkenhauer).
- 11:00 **Keynote Lecture:** “Addressing the challenges of a polarized society: The Example of the Protestant Churches in Saxony-Anhalt” – *Albrecht Steinhäuser* (Representative of the Protestant Churches of Anhalt and Central Germany to the State Parliament and State Government)
- 11:30 **Discussion groups with local stakeholders:**
Group 1: Superintendent Matthias Porzelle and Pastor Ina Killyen (Raguhn)
Group 2: Pastor Martin Olejnicki (Köthen) and Pastor Johannes Lewek (Bernburg)
Group 3: Representatives of Diakonie Mitteldeutschland (Campaigns “Heart Instead of Hate” and “Places of Dialogue”)
- 13:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 **Departure** by coach to Wörlitz Park
- 14:45 **Guided tour** of the park
- 16:15 **Coffee in the Park**
- 17:00 **Return journey**
- 19:00 **Arrival at Berlin Mission**

Registration for the 2026 Summer Academy of the Berliner Missionswerk “Faith. Power. Us – Religion in Times of Populism”

Location Ecumenical Center / Berlin Mission, Georgenkirchstraße 69/70, 10249 Berlin

Dates: June 14 – 17, 2026

Registration deadline: May 15, 2026, via email to: L.hauke@bmw.ekbo.de

Participation fee: €120.00 (includes vegetarian meals: lunch and coffee breaks)

Conference language: English (with simultaneous German translation)

1. Personal Information (Please fill out in block letters.)

First name: _____

Last name: _____

Title: Ms. Mr. Diverse None

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

2. Information about the institution / church

Name of church / congregation / organization: _____

Role/position: _____ (e.g., pastor, student, etc.)

3. I will participate on the following dates:

June 4, 2026 Evening prayer for peace

June 15, 2026

June 16, 2026

June 17, 2026 Excursion to Anhalt

4. Additional Information

Language: I need a translation into German.

No Yes

Meals: Do you have any special dietary needs (e.g., vegan, gluten-free, allergies)?

No Yes (please specify: _____)

Accessibility: Do you require accessible entry or assistance?

No Yes (please specify: _____)

Information: How did you learn about the Summer Academy?

Website Newsletter Recommendation Social media Other: _____

5. Data Protection

I agree that my data may be stored and used for the organization of the event. (Note: Your data will be deleted after the event unless consent is given for further use.)

Place, Date _____

Signature: _____