

## Women on the move—churches in the ongoing reformation

For the LWF, the commemoration of 500 years of reformation is an opportunity to revisit and reflect on the past and to empower the present.

The process of revisiting and reconnecting with our heritage and traditions is one way of bringing to life concepts that are foundational to our identity. Moreover, it is also a rediscovery of the diversity of protagonists who reformed our tradition. This is what the ongoing reformation is all about.

When as women we explore our common heritage, we need to ask such critical questions as, Where were the women during these 500 years? What did women do during the Reformation that inspires initiatives today? Why have women's initiatives frequently been reduced to one chapter, or even relegated to an annex to the so-called official history?

Unveiling and making visible what and how women have contributed to the spreading of new reformation ideas and lifestyles is one part of the ongoing reformation of the church.

We will compile women's biographies, stories and experiences of individuals or groups of women. We want to tell HER-story instead of HIS-story. We want to focus on women who, together with Luther, were the Reformation's protagonists, such as the well-known Katarina von Bora and other Reformers' spouses, such as Katharina Krapp who was married to Philipp Melancthon.

For instance, Argula von Grumbach in Germany and Olympia Fulvia Morata in Italy were aware of the Reformation ideals and engaged in the new movement. By bringing these names to light and retelling their stories we seek to empower women in their vocations and ministries in the mission of the church today.

Another way of making women's experiences and stories visible and accessible during the Reformation commemorations is to promote theological reflection on fundamental themes related to our identity and taking women's experiences as the starting point.

Reflections and discussions are opened up with a simple pedagogical question that we have learned from the methodology employed by Luther in his Small Catechism: What does this mean for us?

With other women we ask, what does this mean for us as women to

- ▶ Ground our identity in the understanding of ministry and such concepts as the priesthood of all believers, baptism and the sacraments?
- ▶ Know who we are through the priesthood of all believers?
- ▶ Know who we are through the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist?

How do women understand themselves as ministers and as the church in light of Luther's convictions regarding the priesthood and the sacraments?

Publishing these reflections and facilitating platforms for cross-cultural interchange are ways of making women's theology visible. Building a women theologians' network is crucial to providing a platform for sharing and exchanging experiences in the whole communion. When women gather, many creative initiatives will grow. The women's network facilitates the sharing of stories and theology as a gift to the whole communion and ensures that the theological knowledge produced by women can be socialized democratically at several levels.

The project *Women on the Move* is divided in two main paths: Her-stories and Women doing theology.

