

Foreword by Johannes Malherbe

Today—31 October 2017—it is exactly 500 years since Martin Luther’s document with 95 theses was published in Wittenberg in Germany. It was an invitation to an academic disputation focusing on the selling of indulgences in the Catholic Church which was the dominant religious and political power in Europe at the time. The strong reaction from Catholic authorities indicates that this was experienced as a direct challenge to the Church and specifically also to the Pope. After a series of public disputations in which Luther refused to recant, he was excommunicated from the Church in 2021. By that time Luther was recognised as the leader of the Reformation movement in Germany. Though the movement had started even before his birth, and eventually spread to many other parts of Europe, this specific event of 31 October 1517 is usually seen as the spark of the Reformation that radically affected church and society in Europe and ultimately in most parts of the world. At the heart of this movement was a call back to the Bible and to salvation through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

On Thursday 21 September SATS hosted an online seminar entitled Reformation 500—SATS reflections. Six SATS academic presented papers dealing with aspects of the Reformation. These presentations appear as academic articles in the present edition of *Conspectus*.