

## Soul and Substance



(c) Karin Berkemann

## A Fresh Look at Modern Church Architecture

### The Project

Under the title “Soul and Substance”, experts and interested participants came together on 4–5 June 2026 for the “Church Architecture Theme Days”. Lectures, excursions and student exhibitions explored the transformation of and participation in church spaces. The event was organised by the Cultural Office of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), in cooperation with the City of Dessau-Roßlau, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, the German Forum for Churches and Cultural Heritage at Anhalt University of Applied Sciences and the Evangelical Church of Anhalt.

### The Background

On 4 June 2026, Prof. Dr. Karin Berkemann, Prof. Claudia Marx, Dr. Ulrike Wendland and Marcus Nitschke gave presentations, followed by a panel discussion in the Bauhaus auditorium with Dr Barbara Steiner, Director and CEO of the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Dr Stephan Schaede, Vice-President of the EKD, and other guests, moderated by Andreas Hillger. On 5 June 2026, an excursion visited sites of the Evangelical Church of Anhalt’s “Lichtungen” art project with Dr Holger Brülls, church architect Konstanze Förster-Wetzel and Pastor Albrecht Lindemann. The event was organised by Klaus-Martin Bresgott.

The conference was accompanied by two exhibitions:

students from TU Dresden presented models of their ideas for transforming medieval churches on the island of Rügen. Students from Anhalt University of Applied Sciences showed the stringboards they had developed during the semester. On display boards, they visualised networks of relationships showing how the path from architectural-historical research to sound decisions about existing buildings can unfold.

### The Outcome

The theme days brought the nationwide debate on church architecture to one of the places in Anhalt where the future of churches as cultural heritage is currently being negotiated. Two specific buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Bauhaus building in Dessau also came into focus: the Church of the Resurrection, dating from 1930, and the Laurentiushalle of 1971. Both already embody a model for the future – bringing worship and culture together under one elegantly designed roof. The two student presentations also remained on display after the event. Guided tours and informal conversations provided opportunities to continue discussions and share ideas.

### Contact

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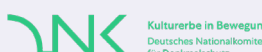
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