

The Window

JANUARY 2016

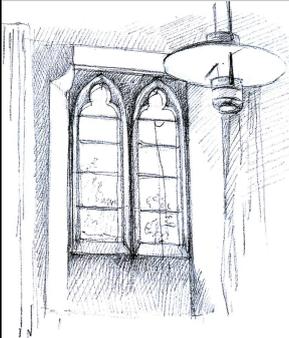
THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY

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And Much
More Besides

'ALL ABOARD FOR THE AGM IN BRUSSELS!'

Whether by road, rail or air, now is the time to plan your journey to Brussels where, on **12th March at 10am** we will gather in the Pro-Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Rue Capitaine Crespel 29, (Kapitein Crespelstraat 29) for our Society's Annual Meeting.

Our AGMs are not stuffy business meetings. Indeed, the formal part only takes about 30 minutes during a day in which people from different nations, national Churches and congregations engage together in worship and creative work on a topic of importance to us all.

The Rt Rev Christopher Hill, President of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), recently described Europe as being 'on a political and social balance of greatest delicacy and some danger'. So this time we shall spend most of our day thinking about what positive contribution our Churches might make towards averting that danger.



Fr Heikki Huttunen, of the Orthodox Church of Finland, is General Secretary of CEC.

He was Director of the World Council of Churches' youth sub-unit from 1985-89 and on the Central Committee from 2006-13, and was a parish priest in Espoo, a new, multicultural community near Helsinki, and familiar with the challenges and opportunities faced by local congregations.

He says, 'The task of CEC is to assist and inspire the churches in their mission and service amidst many changing realities, and to help them to express a Christian viewpoint in ever new and demanding situations.'



The Rt Rev Robert Innes, Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, was Senior Chaplain and Chancellor of the Pro-Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Brussels, where our Annual Meeting is taking place. After graduating in engineering he worked in electricity power stations and in a major international business consultancy before training for ordination. He taught at St John's College, Durham, in the North-East of England, then became Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, Belmont, on the edge of Durham city, and moved to the Pro-Cathedral in Brussels in 2005. It was on the 20th anniversary of the opening of Eurostar

that his appointment was announced, something he considered most appropriate. 'Eurostar links Britain and mainland Europe in a very physical way. My job as bishop will be to build links and bridges. I imagine I might become known as the "Eurostar Bishop", because I expect to be commuting regularly between Brussels and the diocesan office in London!'

Together Fr Huttunen and Bishop Robert will help us to understand some of the things that are going on in

Europe and across the wider world, and how our Churches, which extend across political, racial and cultural boundaries, might play their full part in helping to shape a more peaceful and secure future for everyone.

Why not enjoy a weekend break in Brussels at the same time? Anyone staying on after the meeting is cordially invited to join others for a meal on the Saturday evening and on Sunday morning for worship in the Pro-Cathedral at 10.30am and a snack lunch afterwards.

If you are coming to the meeting please complete and return the form enclosed with The Window so that we can make arrangements and organise the catering.

REFORMATION IN A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

The Rev Dr Hans Georg-Link invites you to a conference of the International Ecumenical Fellowship (IEF) in Erfurt, Germany, 30th September - 3rd October 2016

In August 2015, at its international meeting in Prague, the International Ecumenical Fellowship commemorated the 600th anniversary of the burning of *Jan Hus* in Konstanz and especially his message of 'living the truth'. His prophecy before his death became famous: 'Today you kill a goose (which means *Hus* in Czech language), but later will come a swan, which you will not be able to kill.' The Reform movement in Bohemia was the first widespread Reformation in Europe and was followed a hundred years later by the German Reformation under the leadership of *Martin Luther*. These European alliances will be dealt with at the meeting of the German region of IEF from 30th September to 3rd of October 2016 in Erfurt, where Luther lived before going to Wittenberg: 'From Prague to Wittenberg - Reformation in European perspective.'

We shall gather in the Bildungshaus St Ursula on Friday evening, 30th September, for an introduction to the city of Erfurt in past and present times, given by Propst *Heino Falcke*, which will be followed on the Sunday by a guided tour to the Augustiner monastery where Luther lived for seven years, to

the Cathedral where Luther received his ordination, as well as to the recently re-built Synagogue.

Saturday, October 1st, will be a day of three lectures: first, a biblical one by *Irmgard Weth* on the discovering true treasures in the Old Testament; the second, on Reformers and Reformation in England, by the former Co-moderator of our Anglican-Lutheran Society, the Rt Rev Dr *Rupert Hoare*; and the third, on Martin Luther in Erfurt, by pastor *Renate Höppner* from Magdeburg.

On Sunday, October 2nd, we will celebrate Thanksgiving in the church of the Augustiner monastery, where Luther himself used to celebrate, with an ecumenical Eucharistic service together with Anglican-Lutheran Society President, the Rt Rev *Jürgen Johannesdotter*, and regional Bishop *Christian Stevenow*. In the afternoon we will continue to discover the historic mediaeval city of Erfurt and in the evening we expect to be surprised by a very famous ecumenical guest from the Roman Catholic Church.

Monday, October 3rd, is the German

national day commemorating the reunification of Germany in 1990. We will have our German IEF-elections and we will look ahead to the *Wittenberg Ecumenical Assembly of the IEF from 21st to 28th August 2017* on 'Out of the treasure of the church(es) - Rediscovering the Gospel together.' Our conference will end after lunch.

The price for accommodation and board through the three days will be €195, €50 to be paid when you book your place (see below), and the balance by 31st July: IEF-Deutsche Region, Raiffeisenbank Kürten-Odenthal, IBAN: DE14 3706 9125 2103 7180 18; BIC: GENODEDIRKO.

To book your place please write informally to Rev Dr Hans-Georg Link (Heumarer Strasse 7b, 51145 Cologne, Germany) as soon as possible, and by 31st July at the very latest. The conference languages will be German and English. Everyone in the Anglican-Lutheran Society and the English region of IEF interested in Erfurt, Luther and the Reformation movements is cordially invited to join this annual meeting of the German Region of the International Ecumenical Fellowship.



Visby Cathedral from a street in the old city

Continued from opposite page

2017 Commemoration of the Reformation will be marked in their congregations, communities and Churches.

But that's not all!

The conference programme will also include an educational tour of the island so that we can see its wonderful medieval churches and learn from local people some of the insights that these buildings give into church life back in the sixteenth century. We shall also worship together in a variety of places and a variety of ways and traditions. We shall have a 'Workshop Session' when members of the conference can share their particular interests, and it goes without saying that there will be plenty of good food, conviviality and recreation. After all, it IS an Anglican-Lutheran Society conference!

Feeling left out?

The lucky people who have already registered will receive their final information pack and joining instructions in May. Do you wish you had signed up and were going to come too?

It may not be too late. We are fully subscribed now, but sometimes people find they have to withdraw. So if you would like to get your name on the waiting list just email the conference registrar, Helen Harding, at harding232@gmail.com and she will let you know, on a first come first served basis, if a space becomes available.

But even if you cannot physically be there you can still feel part of the conference because at the end of each day we shall put a bulletin on the website so you know what's been happening.



OUR CONFERENCE IN VISBY IS FULLY BOOKED

It's a record!

Never before has one of our conferences been fully subscribed so quickly! Clearly the timing, August 2016, the venue, Visby on the island of Gotland, Sweden, and the topic, 'Churches: Constant Yet Always Changing', appealed to our members. By the end of last November a total of 60 people had signed up and paid their deposits.

And never before has one of our conferences been filled almost entirely by members of the Society. They come from India, Germany, USA, Wales, France, Canada, England, Finland, Tanzania, Estonia, Norway, Belgium and Sweden. We hope to be able to invite people from local congregations to join us for some of our sessions so that we can spread the word about our Society and the things we do.

Our theme and speakers

As 2017 and the Commemoration of the Reformation approaches the conference will help us focus on the ways in which the Christian Church has always been in a constant state of change. Every generation has to communicate the faith in ways appropriate for its own time and context. Yet the essential Gospel that the Church proclaims remains the same in every age, and is as challenging and demanding both of its adherents and its opponents as it was for the very first Christians in New Testament times.



To help us we have recruited a fine panel of speakers. The Ven **Richard Wottle** is a member of our Society and on the conference planning group.

He is both chairman of Gotland's Ecclesiastical History Society and Visby's Diocesan Dean. He has something of a reputation for his ability to tell stories and for his dry sense of humour, and is the perfect person to introduce us to the Island of Gotland and the Diocese of Visby.

Mrs Sally Barnes is a member of our Society's Executive Committee. She is well-known in the Church of England as a passionate advocate for equal rights. An educationalist by profession, she has campaigned for equality and justice for socially disadvantaged children and young people, was a member of the Movement for the Ordination of Women and in 1994 helped found WATCH (*Women and the Church*). She and her late husband, Donald, also strove to make churches truly inclusive, a work which she continues to this day. She and a colleague will ask 'Just how inclusive should our churches be?'



As reported in the last issue of *The Window*, **Dr Johan Dalman** has been Bishop in the Diocese of Strängnäs since September 2015. He had served there as Dean since 2008. He is a great friend of the Anglican community and a member of our Society. Richard Wottle tells us that Bishop Dalman is Head Chaplain (*överhovpredikant*) to the King of Sweden. There are in all 26 such chaplains called '*hovpredikanter*', but the Bishop is the chief one. He will offer some 'Perspectives on recent liturgical developments in the Church of Sweden'.

Canon Anna Norman-Walker has served in the Church of England Diocese of Exeter for the past 12 years. Following a period in parish ministry, she became the Diocesan Missioner in 2010, during which time she



planted Holy Ground at Exeter Cathedral which is a Fresh Expression of church which seeks to blend the riches of Liturgical and Eucharistic worship with creativity and contemporary topics. In 2014 she was appointed Canon Chancellor at Exeter Cathedral responsible for the outward facing work of the Cathedral. She also leads the Cathedral's Education Department. Her question will be 'How can Cathedrals serve as powerhouses for the parishes?'

Dr Michael Haspel received a Master of Theology from Harvard Divinity School and a Doctor of Theology from the Philipps-University Marburg. He is an ordained Lutheran Minister and currently serves as Director of the Protestant Academy of Thuringia, which fosters dialogue between church and society. He teaches systematic theology as associate Professor at the Friedrich-Schiller-University, Jena. He has been a guest lecturer in the USA, South Africa, Malawi and Estonia. He will invite us to take a journey with him 'From established church to advanced secularization in the heartland of Lutheran reformation'.



Our conference will be rounded up by the **Rt Rev Dr Jonas Jonson** who was bishop in the diocese of Strängnäs between 1989 and 2005. He served as Assistant General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation and is well known for his expertise in ecumenical relations. In recent years he has written authoritative biographies on Gustav Aulén and Nathan Söderblom. He will give a brief introduction on the future of our churches and then invite members to share with one another how the

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SWEDISH ECUMENICAL SOCIETY WELCOMES EPISCOPAL VISITORS

The Rev Lennart Sjöström, our Society's National Coordinator in Sweden, explains.

A Nordic ecumenical society was formed in Uppsala, Sweden, in 2008. I had retired and moved back to Sweden after 26 years at the Swedish Church in London.

I felt that I should bring home with me some of the valuable impressions and experiences I had gained. The society formed was given the name ANNO, or **A**cademia **N**icaena **N**ordica **O**ecumenica. It took its inspiration from the Anglican Nikaeen Club in the Church of England.



Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori (seated right) with the Rev Charles Robertson and the Rev Margaret Rose (standing) and the Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama and the Rev Lennart Sjöström (seated centre)

The Nikaeen club was founded in London in 1925. That was the year that marked the sixteenth centenary of the First Ecumenical Council of the Christian Church held in Nicæa in 325. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, thought it a good way to commemorate such an anniversary.

However, I have been told that the actual name, the Nikaeen Club, was suggested by Archbishop Söderblom of Uppsala during his visit to London and Lambeth Palace that year.

Membership of the Nikaeen Club is open to Anglicans in communion with the See of Canterbury who are interested in the ecumenical movement. Additionally the Executive Committee of the Club may now invite members of foreign Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury who are resident in the United Kingdom to become members. That is how I, as Rector of the Swedish Church in London, was accepted as an enthusiastic member. I understand that the amendment regarding 'foreign churches' was one of the side-effects of the Porvoo Agreement in 1996.

The Nikaeen Club, ANNO's source of inspiration, aims to 'further relations with non-Anglican Christian churches, to assist students from such churches and to offer hospitality on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury to representatives of such churches'. In a similar way, ANNO has, for the past seven years, welcomed as guests and speakers many representatives of 'non-Anglican churches'. But very often, at least once every year, we have enjoyed the presence of guest speakers from Anglican Churches and I think it is fair to say that ANNO is particularly pleased to welcome Anglican visitors. An ambition of ANNO is to make it possible for visitors not only to meet official representatives of the Church of Sweden but also ordinary ecumenically orientated church members.

A visit by Episcopalians from the USA took place in Uppsala in November 2015. ANNO gave a warm welcome to the Rt Rev Katherine Jefferts Schori (former Presiding Bishop of ECUSA), and her team members, the Rev Charles Robertson and the Ecumenical Secretary, the Rev Margaret Rose. This special ANNO event coincided

with an official affirmation of continued co-operation between The Episcopal Church and The Church of Sweden. The Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama, the Anglican-Lutheran Society's Lutheran Co-Moderator, and the Rev Mervi Viuhko had crossed the Baltic from Helsinki to attend the ANNO meeting in Uppsala.

I am delighted to report that there is very close co-operation between ANNO and the Anglican-Lutheran Society. Many of our ANNO events are truly Anglican-

Lutheran events and ANNO has undertaken to assist our Society with some administrative tasks in Sweden, the nature of which will be reported to our members at the Annual General Meeting in Brussels next March.

EUROPEAN REFORMATION SONG CONTEST

A song writers' contest organised by the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe attracted around 120 entries from a total of 100 musicians, lyricists and song writers. The winners were Åshild Watne from Oslo, Norway, for the music she composed for the lyrics 'När du vil' ('When you will') by Holger Lissner from Denmark, and the Hungarian poet Zsolt Miklya for his song 'Limesen égő' ('Burning on Limes') set to music composed by the group Hangraforgó (László Faggyas and Bea F Sipos).

Their songs will be published in 2016 and performed in Wittenberg in March 2017.

CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD ARE RESPONDING TO THE REFUGEE CRISIS

The last issue of The Window included a short item on the plight of refugees around the world. A number of our members have contributed information about how their local Churches and congregations are trying to help.



Adele Finney and Robert Granke

CANADA'S ANGLICANS AND LUTHERANS REMINDED THERE ARE REFUGEES WORLDWIDE

The effect of the refugee crisis is being felt in Canada. The director of the Anglican Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) is Adele Finney. 'The refugee situation is not going to get better,' she told members of Council of General Synod (CoGS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Church Council on 13th November. The number of Anglicans and Lutherans in Canada willing to step up and welcome refugees into their communities is admirable, and both Churches have sponsorship agreements that help settle refugees.

The tragic death of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian boy washed up on a Turkish beach last September, whose parents were reported as wanting to join

other family members already in Canada, touched the hearts of many Canadians. Interest in sponsorship exploded. But there is a deep concern that this understandable reaction may draw attention away from the bigger migrant and refugee crisis. 'What we want to say is, "remember refugees worldwide",' Adele Finney told the meeting. 'While Syrian refugees have risen in the international view, there are refugees worldwide.' Her Lutheran counterpart, Robert Granke, the director of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) said that his organisation is involved in Central East Africa, helping South Sudanese nationals fleeing to Uganda, Ethiopia and Kenya to escape violence in their own country. It is also working in Jordan, where many Syrians have fled, and also in Iraq, which has a high number of internally displaced peoples. Adele Finney added that PWRDF has also been aiding refugees in need of long-term care, for example those fleeing violence in Sri Lanka, some of whom have been in refugee camps for 30 years. PWRDF also supports the Well Child Clinic in Cairo, which is on the front line of dealing with the massive influx of Sudanese, South Sudanese and Syrian refugees to Egypt.



In this grave world-wide situation PWRDF and CLWR and other relief organisations have been pooling their resources and political influence. 'We've taken the collaboration thing seriously,' Adele Finney stated, and she and Robert Granke work with a group of 12-15 executive directors of denominationally based relief and development organizations to increase aid to areas where there are large numbers of internally displaced people and refugees. Meanwhile, Canada's government pledged to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees into the country by the end of 2015. That is as many as 900 refugees a day. The Anglican and Lutheran Churches are ready to play their part in helping the new arrivals to settle in.

ENGLISH DIOCESES OFFERING ACCOMMODATION

In England, a number of Church of England dioceses and churches are offering vacant vicarages and other buildings to house refugees. Here are just two examples:

York Minster is to make one vacant property available to accommodate a refugee family. 'York has a long history of offering sanctuary,' says the Very Rev Vivienne Faull, Dean of York, 'and I would welcome the chance to welcome some families.'

And the Diocese of Chelmsford is offering a number of empty properties to the relief effort.

'We can't ask people to do something we're not offering to do ourselves,' said the Rt Rev Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Chelmsford. 'We've been looking at what empty houses we have, and starting a journey we hope others will follow. Many say, "We haven't got room, we haven't got space, we can't do it", but I think we can.'

WALKING WITH REFUGEES THROUGH HUNGARY

Bishop Tamás Fabiny of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary

I would like to recall the poignant memories of the weekend when thousands of refugees set out from Budapest, Hungary, towards Austria and, finally, reached the other side of the border on board buses provided by the Hungarian government. I will never forget that march. I am very well aware that the refugees were hindering the traffic and broke several rules. However, what this persistent march gave proof of was their final desperation and their determination forged by the war, suffering, persecution and defencelessness they had left behind.

I cannot forget that march. It was similar to the processions led by Martin Luther King in the cities of the United States in the 1960s or to the opponents of the apartheid in South-Africa singing 'We are marching in the light of God'.

Looking at the crowds of refugees walking on the motorway I was also reminded of the wandering, let me use the word 'migrant', Jews on their way to a new homeland. This association is closely linked to a prayer written by the Reformed pastor Sylvia Bukowski: 'God of Mercy, who led your people across the desert and shepherded them in the exodus; we cry to you for the millions of refugees who have left their homes in uncertainty and are escorted by poverty, persecution and violence on their way. May you be their guide and guardian, O Lord!'



Refugees on the motorway in Budapest

Photo: Reuters/Bernadett Szabo



Photo: AP/Frank Augstein

In the marching crowd of refugees there was a one-legged man supporting himself on crutches and trying to keep up with the others. Many were carrying children in their arms or on their backs. One of the parents was pushing a toddler in a shopping cart. Yet others were carrying elderly or sick relatives on their shoulders.

I believe that the Bible's account is relevant today as well: Jesus has compassion on the crowd, because they are like sheep without a shepherd. Are we able to have mercy? Do we dare to show empathy? Can we speak words of compassion even if others demand us to demonstrate power?

Let politicians be concerned with politics. As a church we should ask ourselves: are we able to use the voice of humanity and act in a credible manner? When the bodies of 71 suffocated refugees, including women and children, were found in a delivery van on Austrian territory, the Austrian Lutheran Bishop Michael Bünker suggested that, following the identification of the deceased, the victims should be buried in a respectful way according to the rites of their own religion.

In Hungary, a middle-aged Syrian man collapsed and died near the railway station in Bicske. Do we know anything of him? Has anyone tried to trace his identity or track his family down?

Although official reports consistently use the alienating term 'migrants' instead of 'refugees', we should make an effort to imagine how traumatised these people must be with all their experiences of war and life-threatening situations. Can we realize what it must feel like to be scapegoated all the time? Can we fathom what it means to give birth to a baby during such a flight and spend the night at a railway station five days later?

This is something that might have been kept in mind in the days following Christmas time when we are writing and listening to heart-breaking sermons about the Holy Family and their flight to Egypt.

Still, some things are changing. More and more people are daring to express their feelings of solidarity towards refugees. Voices of disapproval and reservation seem to be less frequent and the willingness to help is getting stronger.

Beside the sadness and despair expressed in this text, I would also like to voice my hope and even joy. Although the past few weeks have been full of hardships and painful experiences, we have also seen examples of resourceful love.

Several Lutherans have shared their insights and practical advice on the internet. The spontaneous help offered by many civil activists goes side-by-side with the conscious and relentless efforts of the Diaconal Service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary to organize aid activities. The Hungarian Interchurch Aid, one of the country's largest and internationally recognized charitable organizations, is also present with its decades-long professional experience. Secondary school students are inquiring about ways to contribute, university students are acting as voluntary interpreters, and congregations are collecting donations. Many of our international partners have also stated their willingness to help.



Photo: unattributed

All of us can do something to make the suffering of refugees more visible in our

countries and to give a face to people who might seem threatening and frightening as members of a crowd. We can make their story heard. Most of all, we can help them to recover their dignity.



Hungarian Interchurch Aid providing shelters and food for refugees in Budapest
Photo: Daniel Fekete/ Hungarian Interchurch Aid / ACT Alliance / WCC

In my experience, something is stirring within more and more of our Hungarian fellow-citizens. We might indeed be capable of showing our purer sides. We can see Ezekiel's prophecy fulfilled: 'I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh!' (Ezekiel 36.26)

I know that we could talk about Schengen borders, quotas, registration, hot spots and similar subjects for a long time. These are indeed serious issues. Everyone has their own responsibilities. But at the same time, wherever we stand, let us not forget the most important thing of all: exercising mercy.

A REFUGEE IN REYKJAVÍK SHARES HIS STORY

It is easier to focus on individual stories rather than on migrancy and the refugee crisis world-wide. The Rev Árni Svanur Danielsson and the Rev Kristín Þórunn Tómasdóttir of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI) explain.

While asylum seekers in Iceland have been few in numbers compared to other Nordic countries, individuals and families have nevertheless conquered the Atlantic, clinging to the hope of a better life. At Laugarneskirkja, Reza, an Iranian Kurd who arrived in Iceland a little more than a year ago, has made some good friends. He, and other asylum seekers, have been able to share their stories and experience during a "Seekers Prayer Meeting" that follows every weekly service, arranged by the Rev Toshiki Toma, ELCI's pastor for immigrants, and the Rev Kristín Þórunn Tómasdóttir, the pastor at Laugarneskirkja.

'I was eighteen when I left my country and I applied for asylum in Norway,' Reza (right) told the meeting. 'I lived there around seven years and then I came to Iceland. Now Iceland has refused my case and I have to return to Norway. I fear that they will send me back to Iran. I don't have any hope. All I want is a regular life.'

Reza's story is one of many but it helps the people in the Laugarnes church to begin to understand the kind of experience that he and millions like him are enduring. The words of Jesus spring immediately to mind: 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25.40)



DANISH LUTHERANS SET UP CHRISTIAN REFUGEE NETWORK

This information was supplied by the Lutheran Church in Denmark's News Service

Denmark has experienced its largest influx of asylum seekers since the Balkan war. This has presented a challenge to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD). Many of the asylum seekers are Christian but have a cultural and church background that is different from that of the local people. Others have a different religious background but connect with the church because they have developed an interest in the Christian faith and want to know more. Others may have no plans to become Christian but are looking for a social network and to build up personal relations with others through the church.

So the Christian Refugee Network has been set up by the Council on International Relations of the ELCD to assist pastors and local congregations in wel-



coming people seeking refuge from conflict and persecution in their home countries. Many local congregations have discovered that contact with people from other parts of the world has brought renewal and new inspiration to the church. But there is no denying that culture clashes, language barriers, issues concerning how to deal with converts and challenges in

cooperating with partners do all arise and the Christian Refugee Network can offer assistance in such situations.

The Bishops in the ELCD decided two years ago, in January 2014, to create a network of resource pastors who are now available for consultation and to offer support in their own dioceses. These resource pastors meet regularly in a national network where they exchange experiences and discuss general issues arising from their work with asylum seekers and converts. Also, the secretariat in Copenhagen has employed a coordinator to provide administrative and professional support to the network as well as to local churches.

For more information contact Søren Dalsgaard, Coordinator for Asylum, email : sd@interchurch.dk

ITALIAN CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER TO CHANGE POLICY FOR MIGRANTS

During the past two years, Italy has experienced massive migration flows from North Africa as hundreds of thousands of people try to cross the Mediterranean to escape persecution, war and mass killings.

The Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy has started a programme called "Mediterranean Hope." It is based on three pillars: an observatory on Mediterranean migration on the small island of Lampedusa, where many migrants still arrive; a "House of Cultures" to help unaccompanied teenagers integrate with the Italian population; and a relocation desk in Rome to help migrants on their journey.

'The number who still died in the Mediterranean was unbearable for our conscience – 3,000 in the last year, we estimate – and we had to do more in a practical and realistic way,' says Dr Paolo Naso of the Waldensian Church, the coordinator for International Rela-

tions with "Mediterranean Hope". 'We decided to press our government to issue "humanitarian visas" for the vulnerable people, as clearly foreseen in the Schengen rules.' The Schengen Agreement led to the creation of Europe's borderless Schengen Area and calls for the harmonization of visa policies.

'The Italian government decided to trial this as good practice, so we are at work with our partners in Morocco and Lebanon, and within the next year, Ethiopia, too, to help groups of refugees start this procedure that, from the legal point of view, is exclusively in the hands of the Italian consulates. The loss of life is a consequence of a

policy that can and must change – and we are offering a practical model.'

There is a leaflet explaining more about "Mediterranean Hope" at <http://www.ebf.org/failid/File/migration%20crisis/Mediterranean%20Hope%20EN.pdf>



ALICC WORKS ON MATERIAL FOR 2017 COMMEMORATION

The Anglican-Lutheran International Coordinating Committee (ALICC) held its third meeting at the eMseni Christian Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 24th to 30th November 2015, hosted by The Lutheran World Federation, with local support from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

Something the Committee has been developing is a number of resources designed to enable Lutherans and Anglicans to commemorate together the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in 2017. The material will illustrate the constant need for all churches to live in the present whilst at the same time remaining open to revitalization by the Holy Spirit.

There will be a six-week daily devotional resource with reflections gathered around the themes of God's mission, grace, salvation, human beings, creation and diaconal ministry. There will also be material for a Eucharistic liturgy and for prayer. These, the Committee hopes, will be helpful for both Anglicans and Lutherans to use either in joint groups, or as individuals.

A template has been drawn up showing the differing patterns of Anglican and Lutheran relationships around the world and the contexts in which they are lived out. The Committee hopes this will inspire Anglicans and Lutherans to explore imaginative ways of achieving closer cooperation and of initiating

new relationships between our Churches and congregations.

The Committee continued to explore the theological theme of 'communion in mission', considering recent developments within The Lutheran World

Communion in Southern Africa, a former General Secretary of The Lutheran World Federation, and the Anglican Dean of The Highveld, representing the Bishop of The Highveld. Members were told about some local initiatives and were encouraged that intentions to cooperate in projects around social responsibility arose out of this meeting.



*Back row: Bishop Michael Pryse, Canada (Co-Chair), Canon John Lindsay, Scotland, Canon John Gibaut (Anglican Co-Secretary), Bishop Tim Harris, Australia (Acting Co-Chair), Rev Anne Burghardt (Lutheran Co-Secretary)
Front row: Prof Nicholas Tai, Hong Kong, Rev Darcy Dlamini, Swaziland, Rev Joyceline Fred Njama, Tanzania, Ven Helene Tärneberg Steed, Sweden, Rev Sonia Skupch, Argentina, Rev Augusta Leung, Hong Kong*

Federation and the Anglican Communion. They noted with interest the report *Receiving One Another* produced by the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission in Canada, and will monitor developments in the concept of establishing a 'communion of communions'.

There was a fruitful meeting with some of the local Lutheran Bishops, the General Secretary of the Lutheran

The members of ALICC visited Soweto and some of the places associated with the struggle against Apartheid, and also visited the Kliptown Youth Centre, an inspirational institution which supports children and young people through afterschool programmes, computer training, breakfast and lunch for school children, as well as various

sporting activities.

On the Sunday they were welcomed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kempton Park, and enriched by the multilingual worship service and delightful hospitality.

The next meeting of ALICC will be in May 2016, hosted by the Anglican Communion.

INTRODUCING LUTHER TO ANGLICANS

Bishop Michael Bourke, a member of our Society (see page 20), has created a short course introducing Anglicans to 'Luther and Lutheranism'. It consists of four sessions. The first looks at the man himself, his life and the people and movements that influenced his thinking. The second examines the growth of the reform movement using Germany as its focus, the confessional divisions

that appeared, and the distinctive contribution Lutheranism offers. Next comes 'Luther, the Bible and Ethics' looking at Luther's views on family life, work, and Church/State relationships. Finally, 'The Lutheran and Anglican Reforms' shows how, whilst reformed theology strongly influenced the English Reformation, significant Lutheran influences can be found, not least in

Liturgy, where Cranmer, in compiling the Book of Common Prayer, drew on many Lutheran models.

The course comes with full notes and PowerPoint. It will be demonstrated at the Society's AGM in Brussels will then be available by email from the Secretary, dick@ccwatford.u-net.com, free of charge.

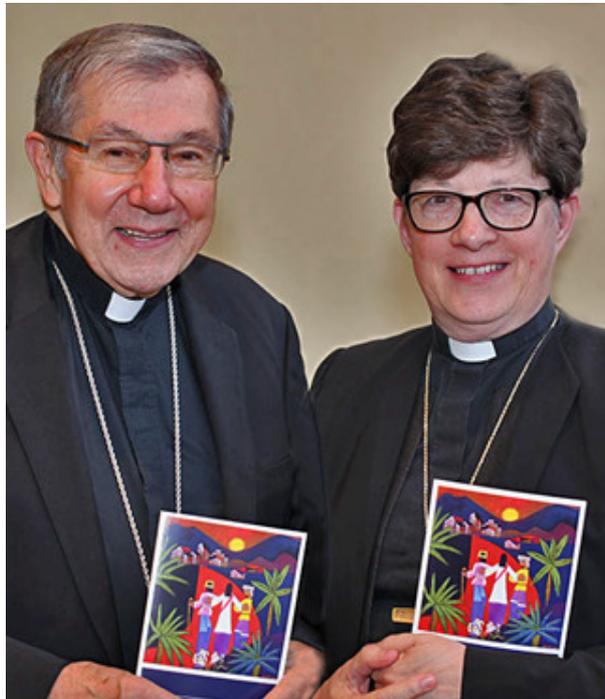
ROMAN CATHOLICS AND LUTHERANS IN HEALING PROCESS

Our Editor, Dick Lewis, sees real signs of progress in ecumenical conversations that are being closely watched by Churches of other traditions

Almost 500 years ago Martin Luther nailed up his 95 Theses severely criticising some of the practices of the Church of his day. In that simple act many people think the fuse was lit that ignited what came to be known as 'The Reformation'. It was a movement that saw much of Western Europe torn apart by religious wars, including the Thirty Years' War in Germany that resulted in a significant reduction of Germany's population between 1618 and 1648.

At its heart was disagreement among theologians over the doctrine of justification, how sinful people are made right with God. The result was mutual condemnations, excommunications, executions and five centuries of formal separation between Roman Catholics and Lutherans and other reformed Churches. This separation has been an open wound, a running sore in urgent need of soothing and healing. But in recent years there have been a number of encouraging signs that the healing process may be under way. One result of the Second Vatican Council was that the Roman Catholic Church became more open to dialogue with other Christian denominations, and with other religions. In 1965 Lutherans and Roman Catholics met at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg to explore the possibility of setting up an international dialogue. What grew from that meeting is widely regarded as one of the most productive and far-reaching of all the ecumenical endeavours.

Many joint statements have been released, but among the most significant have been one on Justification by Faith in 1983 and a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) released on 31st October, 1999, by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation. This Declaration has been hailed by many as a landmark theological agreement. The essence of the JDDJ is that Lutherans and Catholics have now reached a consensus on the basic ideas around the doctrine of justification – the issue that lay at the heart of the entire schism. They have been able to acknowledge that both Churches have been saying essentially the same things about how Christ brings about our salvation, but saying them in different ways.



ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton (right) and Bishop Denis J. Madden, auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, hold copies of "Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist", a unique ecumenical document that makes visible a pathway to Christian unity between Catholics and Lutherans. Photo ELCA

In the wake of the JDDJ the next round of discussions, "The Hope for Eternal Life", will lead up to a shared Lutheran/Roman Catholic commemoration of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther posting his Theses. It is a mark of how far things have moved that a "shared commemoration" is possible. Such a thing would have been virtually unthinkable 50 years ago.

Just how JDDJ will be lived out in practice remains to be seen, but recently, on 30th October 2015, American Roman Catholics and Lutherans took a very significant stride forward.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops jointly issued a document entitled *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist*. In it they invite the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World

Federation to 'create a process and timetable to address outstanding issues' between them. They also suggest that there should be more opportunities for Lutherans and Catholics to receive Holy Communion together and that 'the possibility of occasional admission of members of our churches to Eucharistic communion with the other side (*communicatio in sacris*) could be offered more clearly and regulated more compassionately.'

It is already the case that in certain circumstances baptized non-Roman Catholics are occasionally given communion by Catholic priests, but in reality the practice is currently very rare. But again, just a generation or so ago, who would have thought that Lutherans and Roman Catholics would be talking about receiving communion together?

These Roman Catholic/Lutheran conversations have been watched very carefully by other Churches. Indeed, back in 2006 JDDJ was adopted by the World Methodist Council 'as a theological statement consistent with their tradition and understanding of justification.'

I understand that, at the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) meeting planned for Lusaka, Zambia, later this year the Anglican Communion will consider adopting a similar position.

Continued on next page

POPE FRANCIS APPEARS TO REACH OUT TO LUTHERANS OVER COMMUNION

When he visited the German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rome on 15th November, 2015, Pope Francis himself provoked a debate over Communion. In answer to a question asking whether a Lutheran married to a Roman Catholic could receive Communion together the Pope said that, while he could not issue a general rule on shared Communion, couples of different Christians should in certain circumstances be free to act according to their own consciences.



Pope Francis presents the Rev Jens-Martin Kruse with a gold chalice at the end of his visit to the German Lutheran Church in Rome.

His questioner was Mrs Anke de Bernardinis. She is a Lutheran married to a Roman Catholic and the present prohibition on Lutherans receiving communion in the Catholic Church causes them sadness.

‘We have lived together for many years, sharing joys and sorrows,’ she told him. ‘It hurts us very much being divided in the faith and not being able to participate together in the Lord’s Supper. What can we do?’

Pope Francis spoke about the faith Catholics and Lutherans share and the ecumenical goal of full unity. He urged all Christian Churches to move closer together and to forgive past differences.

Turning to Jesus’ words to his disciples, “Do this in memory of me,” he continued, ‘I ask myself if sharing the Lord’s supper is the end of the path or is it the *viaticum* [a Latin term for food for the journey] for walking together?’ So, returning Mrs de Bernardinis’ question he said, ‘Catholics and Lutherans share the same baptism. “One faith, one baptism, one Lord,” St Paul tells us. From there, grab hold of the consequences. I will never dare to give permission because it is not in my competence. One baptism, one Lord, one faith. Speak with the Lord and go forward.’ It seemed to the people in the congregation that evening that the Pope appeared to be saying that Mrs de Bernardinis and her

husband should pray, study and then act according to their consciences.

The Pastor of Rome’s *Christuskirche*, a parish of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Rev Jens-Martin Kruse, had invited Pope Francis to the service. ‘Dialogue requires that people get to know one another,’ he said.

Continued from previous page

There are other straws in the wind suggesting that relationships between the Roman Catholic Church and other denominations are deepening. One example is that, speaking at the opening of the National Conference of the Italian Church in Florence on 10th November, 2015, Pope Francis described Pelagianism as a heresy to be avoided. Pelagians are opposed to reform, he said, but ‘the Church is *semper reformanda* (always reforming),’ adding that reform is not necessarily about changing structures, but is about being ‘rooted in Christ, allowing the Spirit to lead us.’

The fact that he was speaking on Martin Luther’s birthday has led many Lutherans to believe that the Pope was deliberately alluding to the early Lutheran rallying cry, ‘*Ecclesia semper reformanda est*’ meaning ‘the church must always be reformed.’

Another example is the fact that both Lutherans and Roman Catholics are labelling the events planned for 2017 as a ‘commemoration’ of the start of the Reformation, not a ‘celebration’, a choice of words that reflects the suffering caused by the schism. All over the world plans are already well in hand, and the commemoration will be marked in many different ways.

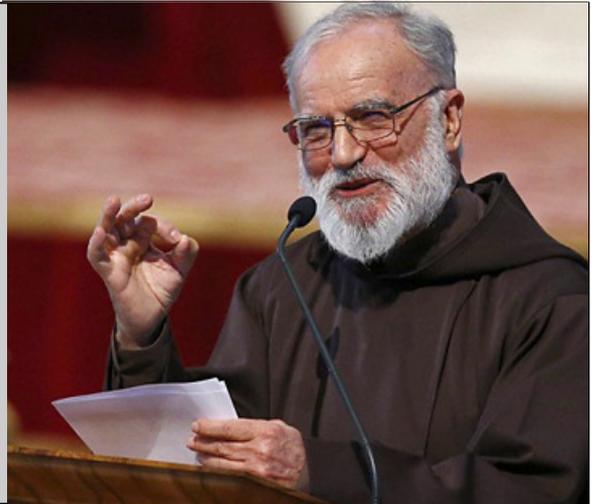
In Visby next August, during our Society’s conference, members will have an opportunity to describe some of the things that will be happening in the places where they live and work so that we can support one another in prayer and, perhaps, in practical ways as well.



Pope Francis speaking in Florence Photo: Reuters

ALL CHRISTIANITY SHOULD BENEFIT FROM ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REFORMATION

Speaking at Westminster Abbey during the inauguration of the Church of England's Tenth General Synod, Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, who has served as Preacher to the Papal Household since 1980, praised the 'theological and spiritual enrichment' of the Reformation and said that moral issues such as sexuality should not 'divide us more than Jesus unites us'.



Few prophetic oracles in the Old Testament can be dated so precisely as that of Haggai. We can place it between August and December in the year 520 BC. The exiles, after the deportation to Babylon, have come back to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. They set to work, but soon grow discouraged, each preferring to work on their own house instead. Into this situation comes the prophet, Haggai, sent by God with the message we have heard from Haggai chapter 1. 1-8.

The Word of God, once it is proclaimed, remains forever alive; it transcends situations and centuries, each time casting new light. The situation deplored by the prophet is renewed in history each time we are so absorbed in the problems and interests of our own parish, diocese, or community – and even of our particular Christian denomination – that we lose sight of the one house of God, which is the Church.

The prophecy of Haggai begins with a reproof, but ends, as we heard, with an exhortation and a grandiose promise: “Go up into the hills, fetch timber and rebuild the House, and I shall take pleasure in it and manifest my glory there,” says the Lord.’

One circumstance makes this point particularly relevant. The Christian world is preparing to celebrate the fifth centenary of the Protestant Reformation. It is vital for the whole Church that this opportunity is not wasted by people remaining prisoners of the past, trying to establish each other's rights and wrongs. Rather, let us take a qualitative leap forward, like what happens when the sluice gates of a river or a

canal enable ships to continue to navigate at a higher water level.

The situation has dramatically changed since then. We need to start again with the person of Jesus, humbly helping our contemporaries to experience a personal encounter with Him. ‘All things were created through him and for him.’ Christ is the light of the world, the one who gives meaning and hope to every human life – and the majority of people around us live and die as if He had never existed! How can we be unconcerned, and each remain ‘in the comfort of our own panelled houses’? We should never allow a moral issue like that of sexuality divide us more than love for Jesus Christ unites us. We need to go back to the time of the Apostles: they faced a pre-Christian world, and we are facing a largely post-Christian world.

When Paul wants to summarise the essence of the Christian message in one sentence, he does not say, ‘I proclaim this or that doctrine to you.’ He says, ‘We preach Christ crucified,’ (1 Corinthians 1.23) and ‘We preach . . . Jesus Christ as Lord’ (2 Corinthians 4.5). This is the real *articulus stantis et cadentis Ecclesiae*, the article by which the Church stands or falls. This does not mean ignoring the great theological and spiritual enrichment that came from the Reformation or desiring to go back to the time before it. It means instead allowing all of Christianity to benefit from its achievements, once they are freed from certain distortions due to the heated atmosphere of the time and of later controversies.

Justification by faith, for example, ought to be preached by the whole Church –

and with more vigour than ever. Not in opposition to good works – that issue is already settled – but rather in opposition to the claim of people today that they can save themselves thanks to their science, technology or their man-made spirituality, without the need for a redeemer coming from outside humanity. Self-justification! I am convinced that if they were alive today this is the way Martin Luther and Thomas Cranmer would preach justification through faith!

Unity is not a simple matter. One has to start with the big Churches, those that are well structured, putting together that which unites them, which is vastly more important than what divides them; not imposing uniformity but aiming at what Pope Francis calls ‘reconciled diversities’. Nothing is more important than to fulfil Christ's heart-felt desire for unity expressed in today's gospel. In many parts of the world people are killed and churches burned not because they are Catholic or Anglican or Pentecostal but because they are Christian. In their eyes we are already one! Let us be one also in our eyes and in the eyes of God.

The Anglican Church has a special role in all of this. It has often defined itself as a *via media* (a middle way) between Roman Catholicism and Reformed Christianity. From being a *via media* in a static sense, it must now become more and more a *via media* in a dynamic sense, exercising an active function as a bridge between the Churches. The presence among you of a priest of the Catholic Church, in circumstances of such special significance, is a sign that something of the kind is already happening. *Continued on next page*

CROSSING BORDERS AND BUILDING BRIDGES OF FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Joachim Bremer, a member of our Society enjoying his retirement in Eschborn, Germany, describes one way he has found that brings people closer together

Is this to be another article about refugees? No, it isn't! I am not writing about political issues. I want to tell you about singing in a choir, and in particular the choir of the German Church in Manchester and the congregations in the North of England. I know very well that singing in a choir can only be successful when I am in unison and in harmony with the other singers. I have to cross the border that exists between 'me' and 'us'. I must consciously become part of a wider common purpose. Each performance, including singing in a church service, involves everyone, and when everyone can be relied on to play their part we all find it a very rewarding experience. Of course, I am saying nothing new.

You probably know this and think that I am 'carrying Bach-Cantatas to Leipzig!' But when I talk about the choir of the German Churches around Manchester, 'crossing of borders' becomes very apparent. We singers all come from different countries, churches, languages and traditions. We get together for a weekend, rehearsing (mostly) in German and preparing to sing during a Sunday Service.

Just recently we met at the Warrington Peace Centre, built in memory of Tim Parry and Jonathan Ball who were killed in the 1993 IRA bombing of Warrington. The centre's main aim has been to support the peace process between the peoples of Great Britain and Ireland, providing a venue where people can meet to find ways of 'crossing borders' which have come to be regarded as immovable. So it was a nice and fitting place for our rehearsal and fellowship since we, as a congregation abroad, find ourselves to be 'living bridges' between our own native countries and the UK. That particular weekend we sang at the service in the Martin-Luther Church at Stretford, Manchester.

Singing in choirs provides just one simple example of how people can 'cross borders' or 'build bridges'. I came across another

example this summer. I spent two weeks in the Altmark in Saxony-Anhalt, located west of the River Elbe between the cities of Hamburg and Magdeburg, in what used to be the German Democratic Republic, standing in for the local pastor who was on holiday. His parish consists of many small villages with even smaller Christian congregations, and it is much the same throughout the whole of the region. In these villages those who have maintained their membership of the Christian Church are becoming separated from other people who have turned to a secular life.

Should Christian congregations be restricted to 'Members Only', I wondered? Or might there be some bridge-building or crossing of borders? Having browsed the internet I came across a congregation near Zeitz, in the Burgenlandkreis district of Saxony-Anhalt, inviting people to join their Gospel Choir. 'Everyone interested in Gospel Singing is invited to join, there are no charges and church membership isn't a precondition.' I realise that in other places this kind of approach would be taken for granted, but in this locality here in Germany it is a 'bridge-building' and 'border-crossing' invitation. Don't you agree?



The Choir, with its leader, Brigitte Schwarting-Jones, right. Joachim is standing third from left, back row. Photo: Mike Boden © Warrington Guardian

Continued from previous page

Let us conclude by returning to the text of Haggai. After the people of Israel, in obedience to the prophet's invitation, had returned with renewed fervour to the task of rebuilding the temple, God sent His prophet again, this time with a message full of hope and consolation: 'But take courage now, Zerubbabel – it is the Lord who speaks - take courage, Joshua, son of

Jehozadak, high priest; courage, all you people of the country – it is the Lord who speaks. To work! I am with you, the Lord of hosts declares; and my Spirit is present among you. Do not be afraid!' (Haggai 2. 4-5). Zerubbabel was the political leader at the time, and Joshua the religious leader. I believe that the Lord wanted me to be among you today, above all to tell you that he is addressing this same message to you,

at the inauguration of your Synod and also in view of the meeting planned for next January between the leaders of the entire Anglican communion: "Take courage, Your Majesty, Sovereign of this nation, courage, Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, courage Sentamu, Archbishop of York, courage, you bishops, clergy and laity of the Church of England! To work, because I am with you, says the Lord!"

RENEWING ECUMENICAL ENTHUSIASM

Our Editor, Dick Lewis, used to sing in a choir whose Musical Director was constantly urging his singers to 'renew the enthusiasm!' It was his way of ensuring that the singing did not begin to sag! Much the same kind of encouragement is needed for people engaging in ecumenical activity.

One of the most difficult things in ecumenical relationships is keeping the momentum going once the initial rush of enthusiasm has passed. This is true of local initiatives, such as when two congregations from different traditions come together to share buildings and pastoral or mission objectives, or when a Local Ecumenical Partnership is created. It is equally true of bigger national and international initiatives.

A good illustration of this is the full communion agreement between the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). It is 15 years since they came together, but keeping the vision and making sure the ties between them remain strong requires members of both Churches to engage prayerfully and openly with each other.

'Full communion is a choice that we make every day,' Archdeacon Michael Thompson, General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Canada, says. 'It is

extraordinary circumstances, reported in the last issues of *The Window*, has caused some rumblings amongst members of ACC. This has prompted Archbishop Fred Hiltz to remind the Anglicans that full communion is about 'two autonomous churches that feel called by God to be in a relationship with one another.'

Although the two Churches have been in full communion since 2001, it was not until 2013 that their two national bodies met together and held a joint assembly. They are planning to meet again in 2019, possibly in Vancouver. How that gathering will be managed is a matter under discussion. Both Churches will have business of their own to transact as well as matters of mutual interest.

'We think we should make opportunities, at the same time as celebrating our relationship, to really get into some of the issues and challenges,' said Lt Col the Rev Marc Torchinsky of the Anglican Military Ordinariate of Canada, noting in particular the controversy over authorized lay ministry. 'Let's not neglect the hard issues.'

Yet, in addition to dealing with controversial matters, most church members value time spent in shared worship, and creating opportunities for people from their

two different traditions to get to know one another.

The Rev Paul Gehrs, Lutheran National Bishop Susan Johnson's adviser on justice and leadership, stresses 'the value of table group discussion. It maximizes the diversity of Anglican and Lutheran

people coming from different geography and experiences.'

What is true for national Churches is also true for local initiatives – and for our own Society. Our principle aims are to bring Anglicans and Lutherans together in different places and in different contexts, to get to know each other, to worship together and to pray and work for the unity of the Church, especially between members of our two traditions.

We hope that our Conference in Visby will be one such occasion when we will not neglect hard issues but will also spend time in table fellowship, strengthening the ties that already exist between us, and helping to maintain our ecumenical momentum.

SITUATION IN TANZANIA IS GRAVE

The Rev Samwel Karao Mollel, one of our members in Tanzania, is one of 26 Pastors and 250 Evangelists in Arusha East District caring for 121 congregations in 28 parishes. He asks for your prayers for his people who are almost all herdsmen and who are facing terrible drought conditions.



Like people in Europe, Tanzanians are faced with the challenge of welcoming, accommodating and feeding hundreds of thousands of refugees. They come from neighbouring Burundi where there is chronic instability following the presidential elections.



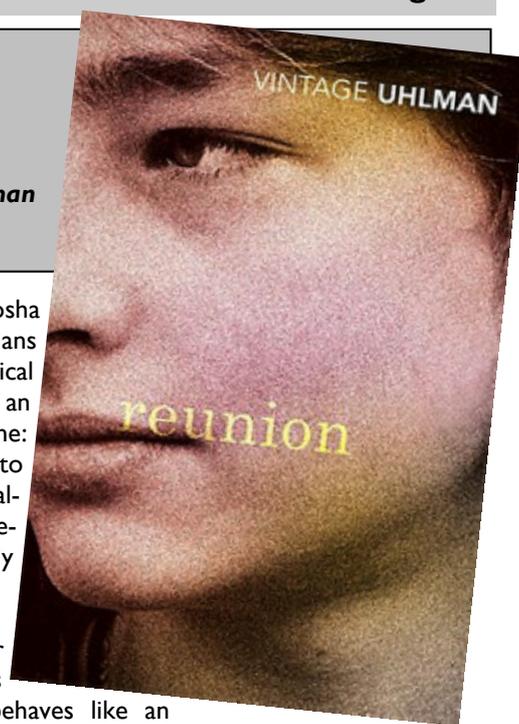
Cole Guenter, a Lutheran from Saskatchewan, the Rev Norm Wesley from the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, and Sr Elizabeth Rolfe-Thomas, chaplain to the Council of General Synod of the ACC, discuss Anglican-Lutheran relations. Photo: André Forget

something that requires our daily attentiveness, because it is so easy to slip into the habit of thinking that one or the other of us is the norm and the other is the departure.'

The decision by ELCIC to allow lay people to preside over the Eucharist in

AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR MY PARENTS?

Our Anglican President, Dr John Arnold, reviews 'Reunion' by Fred Uhlman
(Vintage, 80pp+xii, 1971, ISBN: 978-1-86046-365-5)



Germany's best gift to prose literature is the *Novelle*, the long short story with its unity of time, place and subject matter, simple plot, few characters and concentration on *Stimmung*, which is an untranslatable word combining mood, atmosphere and an intangible sense of foreboding and of melancholy, of evening mist over a lake in autumn. Storm, Stifter and Keller in the nineteenth century were all, quite literally, peripheral, situated as they were in Schleswig, in Austria and in Switzerland respectively. Uhlman, too, grew up in the extreme south-west of the country in Stuttgart. In 1933 he was forced to flee to England where he achieved fame, not as a writer but as a painter.

He sets his tale in provincial Wuerttemberg in the early 1930s, when the semi-autobiographical hero is sixteen years old. This is a story of teen-age friendship from a time when relationships of great intensity and purity were still plausible. Released from the need to speak of sex or even psychology, the author, like Jane Austen, is free to concentrate on the fine nuances of the relationship itself, of class, social status and snobbery, sense and sensibility in a small-town setting. Events at national and international level are sensed rather than experienced, but when they do impinge on the Swabian idyll the effect is devastating.

Hans Schwarz is the son of a Jewish doctor, who is also a First World War hero. The family are classic *Assimilants* with practically nothing Jewish about their lives and loyalties; they describe themselves as 'foremost Swabian, then German and then Jews'; and Dr Schwarz says to the Zionists, whose vision he rejects, "It seems to me that the Jews, by not completely integrating themselves, still act as catalysts, enriching and fertilizing the German culture as they have done for centuries." Eventually the little phrase, 'of Jewish descent', is to acquire baleful significance, when Hitler comes to power far away.

Into Hans' life comes the handsome, glamorous and aristocratic Konradin von Hohenfels. (Note that this scion of one of the most illustrious families in all Germany takes his place as a matter of course in the local *Gymnasium* or grammar school.) The agonies of teen-age attraction and longing for acceptance are depicted with the greatest delicacy, tenderness and restraint. The boys enjoy one summer of happiness together, as the clouds gather.

First, when the children of the neighbours die in a fire, Hans has to face, with his background of religious indifference, the timeless question of the suffering of the innocent, just as he becomes aware of his own apparent insignificance in the cosmos.

Typically, Uhlman only raises the question. He does not go deeply in to it, as Dostoyevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov*.

But, like Alyosha Karamazov, Hans turns a theoretical question into an existential one: 'What was one to do with this valueless yet somehow uniquely valuable life?'

Next, when Dr Schwartz meets

Konradin he behaves like an idiot in a short, Shakespearian scene of farce, provoking agonies of vicarious shame in his son. But when Hans at last comes to Schloss Hohenfels, passing by the forbidding and sinister heraldic griffons on the gates, he catches a glimpse of what might be Hitler's portrait in the Countess' bedroom. The time comes when Konradin is forced to explain, in a painful confrontation, why he has humiliated Hans at the Opera. Konradin tells Hans that he has had to fight for every hour with his friend, and asks, "Am I responsible for my parents?"

Thirdly, a new teacher with Aryan views arrives and Hans is taunted in class. 'Already the long cruel process of uprooting had begun.' He is sent away to safety in America; and his father, after seeing off a bully, kills himself and his wife. In a last, highly ambiguous letter Konradin speaks both of the magnetic attraction of Hitler and also of Hans' contribution to his new-found Christian faith.

Astonishingly, these events are simply recounted, without emotion and practically without adverbs or even adjectives. The tale is epic, not lyric, yet in miniature. Uhlman writes with a painter's eye for the significant detail, and with the precision of someone who has learned a second language in adulthood. Every word is exactly what it must, and could only, be. Every sentence is characterised by delicacy, concision and finesse.

This is not a great Jewish novel, like those of the North American masters; it lacks their vigour and vulgarity, their racial and religious self-consciousness, but it is 'of Jewish descent' and it is also that great rarity, a German *Novelle* in the best literary English.

The denouement is 'a masterpiece within a masterpiece', at once shocking, unexpected, tragic, cathartic and redemptive. The Gordian knot, into which all the strands have been twisted, is cut in a single sentence and at a single stroke. Perfection! Readers should resist the temptation to turn to the last page.

GERMANS MEET SOCIETY MEMBERS WHILE EXPLORING CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Ernst Schmidt is a member of our Society living in Öhringen, Germany. Like Helen Harding, who wrote in the last edition of The Window, he found that a journey abroad can be greatly enhanced by meeting other members

The weekly church newspaper for the **Lutheran Church in Württemberg/Stuttgart** (*Evangelisches Gemeindeblatt für Württemberg*) organises study tours for its readers. As a former English teacher and, since 1990 when I was a sabbatical student in Westcott House Cambridge (where I got to know Gesine and Dr Rupert Hoare), I have led readers' tours to various regions in the UK and in Ireland.



In our tour in May, 2015, I wanted the emphasis to be on getting to know the Anglican Church. To begin with, I tried to trace the historical roots of the Church in England. So we started our coach tour at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. From there we were able to hike on **Hadrian's Wall**, see **Hexham Abbey**, enjoy a day-excursion to **Lindisfarne/Holy Island** and, on our way to **York**, hold our daily devotion in **Escomb Saxon Church** (pictured here) and visit **Whitby**.

But we also wanted to learn a bit about the present day life of the Church. So we attended a Sunday Service in **York Minster** which included the processing Clergy and Choir, the sprinkling of Holy Water and kneeling for Holy Communion, which was nearly too much for some pious Swabian Protestants who at home are used to a rather "sober"

preaching service and liturgy, strongly influenced by the Swiss Reformed tradition.

Coventry Cathedral confronted us with the terrible German-English history, but it also introduced us to the origin of the "Cross of Nails", a powerful symbol of reconciliation that is also known in several places in Southern Germany.

In **Cambridge** the highlights were a visit and lecture in Westcott House and of course the Evensong in King's College Chapel. In **London** the professional tour guide was highly surprised when we ended our coach tour of the city right in front of the entrance to Lambeth Palace. We were even allowed to park the coach there! This, she confessed, was something she had never experienced before!

Our last port of call was **Canterbury**, especially the Cathedral. A visit to **Sissinghurst Gardens** was the only non-Church place we had included into our programme. An earthquake, with its epicentre in Kent, measuring 4.2 on the Richter Scale, woke us up on our last day before we went by ferry back to the firm ground of Continental Europe.



Reviewing the tour, the participants (eighteen mainly elderly people with an interest in the Church) seemed quite happy with the places visited and the information they had gathered. But something they all commented on, very positively, was the fact that we introduced them to so many of our **Anglican-Lutheran Society friends**.

The Rt Rev Dr **Rupert Hoare** (pictured left) and his wife **Gesine** came to meet our group in our hotel in York. As he showed us the original documents of his appointment as Bishop, Rupert introduced us to what is for us a very tricky topic – English Church-State relationships! Because of a traffic jam we, unfortunately, missed Rupert's brother-in-law, who is a Churchwarden of Coventry Cathedral.



The quadrangle at Westcott House in Cambridge



The Rev **Margaret** and the Rev **Dr Adrian Armstrong** came all the way from Somerset to Canterbury to spend two evenings and a full day with us. The Rev Dr **Leslie Nathaniel** (pictured here), the Archbishop's International Ecumenical Secretary, received us in Lambeth Palace and gave us a lecture in fluent German. Indian born Leslie is married to a German and had worked before in our Württemberg Church, where he also came to Religious Classes in schools of the three Rural Deaneries I then served as "Schuldekan".

At Westcott House the Rev **Victoria Raymer** introduced us to the topic "Training of Clergy in the C of E" and the Dean of King's College Chapel, the Rev **Stephen Cherry** (a one time student of Rupert Hoare!), saw to it that we were given seats next to the Choir during Evensong.

Helen Armstrong, daughter of Margaret and Adrian, had twice spent two months with us to study German. She could practise her German when she joined us for the two days in Newcastle. She managed successfully to get a prescription drug, very much needed by one of our participants who had forgotten to take it along. Some years ago Helen had also shown us Escomb Saxon Church, which hardly any "ordinary" tourist visits.

Meeting ecumenically minded Anglican Church people - and not only seeing interesting historic sites and buildings - made our tour so special. It also gave our group a chance to practise their English. Experiencing foreign Churches makes us more aware of aspects of our own Church which we normally do not notice. I am therefore very grateful to all who took time to be with us and share with us. As members of the Anglican-Lutheran Society we have this unique chance to draw on local friends, when visiting other countries. Let's use this chance!



WWDP - POSSIBLY THE OLDEST ECUMENICAL INITIATIVE

Maggie Pickford is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Nottingham. She represents the Council of Lutheran Churches on the WWDP National Committee for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and is in her third year as its Chairperson

The beginning

The Women's World Day of Prayer started in the nineteenth century when a group of women from different countries met and decided to pray for each other. They had a vision of Christian unity and in 1926 these groups came together to become the Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP).

Scotland joined the movement in 1930, England in 1932, Wales in 1933 and Ireland in 1934. Scotland and Eire remain as separate committees but the others merged to become WWDP for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. WWDP gives women the opportunity to pray, worship and work together across denominational boundaries. There is a fuller account of its origins and development that can be found at www.worlddayofprayer.net/history.php

What happens in March?

WWDP committees are asked to put their country's name forward to the International Committee if they wish

to be chosen as a writing country and to submit titles. The countries and titles are then chosen for the following four years. They are given a theme and then the committee from the chosen countries write the service for their allocated year. WWDP services are held on the first Friday in March. But though they are written by Christian women these services are open to all – men, women and children.

What is the role of the National Committee?

The materials from the writing country are distributed by the International office in New York eighteen months before their service is due to be held.

Our national committees edit the service so that it is only one hour long and contains hymns and songs relevant to the theme. We also produce a Bible study and background information about the country. Children's materials and a children's service is also created. A magazine, titled *Together in Prayer*, is published containing

further background materials, information about the charities that receive WWDP grants, prayer resources and information about other materials that are free and others that can be purchased. A music CD and a CD-Rom with pictures of the country are also produced.

Future services

The service for Friday 6th March 2016 has been written by the Christian women of Cuba. Their theme is 'Receive Children, Receive Me'. The 2017 service has been written by the Christian women of the Philippines, and the theme is 'Have I been Unfair to You?'





A TRULY VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

Clara Gross is a theology student in her third year in Leipzig, Germany, and a member of the Evangelical Church in Central Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland-EKM), a 'United' Landeskirche of Lutheran and Reformed traditions. Here she describes some of the experiences she is enjoying on placement in a North-East England Anglican parish.

One year ago I decided to gain experiences abroad. It felt like it could be helpful to be stretched ecumenically as well as culturally. Through a friend who had connections in England, I approached the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle and was placed at St. John's, Wallsend, working closely with the parish priest, Alex Faludy (former Committee Member of the Anglican-Lutheran Society) for the autumn-winter 2015/16.

Never having visited England before, a lot came as new and surprising for me. I learned that Black tea doesn't mean Earl Grey or Darjeeling but tea without milk and sugar, how to prepare the vestments and Altar linen for a Communion Service and how to serve during the liturgy. There has even been the opportunity to preach my first sermon. I have been given a wealth of different experiences both in the parish and in the Deanery and Diocese.

Joining in saying Morning and Evening Prayer in church every day is a big difference to my church in Germany. Celebration of the Eucharist is much more regular here too. Earlier I mentioned that I got the chance to serve there and to learn how liturgy is done here. It has been challenging trying to memorize all the different words for the communion vessels (ciborium, chalice, paten...) and the right moments to kneel or bow - but I got used to it!

A highlight was attending the consecration of the new diocesan Bishop, the Rt Rev Christine Hardman, in York Minster in November 2015.

This event was wonderful. I have never been to a Bishop's consecration before, not even in Germany. As she is the first female Bishop in Newcastle Diocese I felt I was witnessing a truly historical moment. The debate about women's ordination in England prompted me to explore my own Church's history about it, so I also learned something about my Church.

The time here has also meant a spell in prison - though only as a visitor! A chaplaincy volunteer who is a Reader (a lay minister) in a neighbouring parish invited me to observe her working with the prisoners. I never expected a prison to be such a normal place and the prisoners to be so kind and friendly. Maybe I was naive before about what prison would be. However the two groups of men we worked with were disarmingly honest. I have not normally found people to be so honest in talking about their feelings about their past. This day, and those people, gave me my most impressive experience here.

All these moments of church life here are very interesting and new for me. I am constantly comparing these things with my church back in Germany. Our country has a federal constitution and the church system reflects this. Across the regional churches in Germany there are a lot of different traditions. As mentioned above my regional church is 'United' however the last few years, because of studying in Leipzig, I have lived in another region and so worshipped in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Saxony. So I already learned that there are multiple ways to celebrate a service, that there are variations of singing or speaking the liturgy. What you like about service and celebration in church is to a large extent subjective and a question of comfort rather than of right and wrong.

Even so in the last couple of months I have become newly aware of how much liturgy is like home for me and how much service and liturgy has to do with

your language. Also that it is not just about habit and language. I read a volume: *Anglican-Lutheran Agreements* (LWF/ACO 2002) and learned that ordination in the Church of England has a different importance than in my church, especially as regards the episcopate. That was surprising for me. It is great to read about all the agreements as well and to see that for example it is not a problem at all to share communion.

I think there are aspects of each other's lives that I am sure all our churches, Lutheran-Reformed on the one hand and Anglican on the other, can usefully gift to one another. The post service refreshments, for example, which are typical in the Church of England, should be adopted by my church! People come together during that time there and are not quickly leaving so that no one can even try to talk to them. Also the relevance and frequency of Eucharist is something I really appreciate. On the other hand, while here I have missed the way that our ministers seem spatially very close to the people when celebrating the service. The perceived gap between clergy and servers on the one hand and "normal" people on the other is not very large in the EKM and I think that is something Anglicans could benefit from. Perhaps high church Anglicans could also benefit from, like us, being more relaxed when it comes to things being liturgically 'correct'?

However, wherever our church is in the world, we have to be careful to break down the image of church being an exclusive place just for insiders. Being here has given me the amazing chance to get to know so many different parts of church life both more 'secular' and more 'spiritual'. Even if the C of E is not my church it has helped me on my way to decide whether to offer myself for pastorate or not when I finish my studies. This placement is an enormous opportunity for me and I am very glad to be here.

TANZANIA GETS ITS FIRST FEMALE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

Readers may remember Canon Hilda Kabia. She was denied a visa to attend our Society's conference at Mirfield, UK, in 2012 but visited the UK later that year as guest of several of our members. Now Canon Hilda has broken new ground, as Sandra McCann, communications director of Msalato College reports.

In a historic move for the Anglican Church of Tanzania, the Rev Canon Hilda Kabia was installed as the first female principal of a theological college in the country. The new Principal of Msalato Theological College of St John's University of Tanzania was already a member of staff, having taught there for the past nine years and having served as Dean of Students.

'While I was aware of the historical significance of Canon Kabia's appointment, she was selected because of her qualifications and long experience in working at educational institutions in our diocese,' said the Bishop of Central Tanganyika, the Rt Rev Dickson Chilongani. Canon Kabia says that her vision for Msalato Theological College is to 'form pastors and lay leaders, both men and women, for a holistic ministry relevant to their context.' But lack of financial resources will be a primary challenge, she added.

The constant searching after financial aid for student fees and faculty salaries detracts from the college's main task, delivering a quality education to future servants of the church. So, in addition to finding funding, Canon Kabia plans to focus on student outreach ministries, finding long-term tutorial support, securing new teaching aids and office equipment, and making structural improvements including green energy and water sources. 'All these things can be done if the staff work as a team and if we listen to God to be sure that these are also his priorities,' she declared.

This is not the first "first" for Canon Kabia in the Diocese of Central Tanganyika. She is the first female chairperson for the House of Clergy and the first female General Secretary to the Synod. In 2001 the Diocese of Central Tanganyika, under the late Bishop Mdimi Mhogolo, was the first in Tanzania to ordain women. At her ordination in 2003 she was one of only eight ordained Anglican women in Tanzania. Now there are more than 40 female priests in the diocese. This new academic year, a third of the incoming Diploma in Ministry students at Msalato are women. 'Although challenges remain in a traditionally patriarchal society, the diocese is already experiencing the positive effect that ordained women have made as role models,' Canon Kabia says.

Hilda Kabia has a Diploma in Ministry from St Philip's Theological College in Kongwa, a BA in Theology from the University of Gloucestershire, UK, and an MA in Islamic Studies from St Paul's United Theological College in Limuru, Kenya. She has served as secretary of the Mothers' Union in Tanzania and as a theology tutor at Bishop Madinda Christian Formation Training Centre. Please remember her in your prayers as she settles into her new role.



Canon Hilda Kabia (centre) with Msalato staff and faculty members
Photo: Msalato Theological College

CANADIAN AND USA CHURCHES UNITE

The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925 when the Methodist Church, the Congregational Union, 70% of the Presbyterians and a number of local churches came together. In the USA, 32 years later, the Evangelical and Reformed Church merged with the Congregational Christian Churches to form the United Church of Christ.

Now, on 17th October, 2015, after two years of conversations, a full communion agreement which straddles the 49th Parallel was enacted between these two United Churches. Their agreement is marked by five key features: the common confession that 'God is in Christ'; the mutual recognition of each other's members and baptisms; the common celebration of the Lord's Supper/Holy Communion; the mutual recognition of each other's ordained ministries; and a common commitment to the mission of each church.

Their report, 'A Journey to Full Communion' encourages both Churches 'not only to go deeper to live out this full communion agreement, but also to go wider.'

Meanwhile, as reported elsewhere, Canadian Anglicans and Lutherans are also aiming to extend their agreement more widely and are in conversation with their full communion partners in the USA, the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. When Churches get together and support each other in prayer and practical ways they should become more effective in mission and in responding when issues and crises arise.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARTIN LUTHER

A party of 11 people from Hereford Diocese in the UK joined 18 more people in Nuremberg (their partner EKD Church) on a pilgrimage. Bishop Michael Bourke describes what happened.



On Thursday 29th October 2015 we met at St Pancras Station in London to set off on a week's Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of Martin Luther. Led by Alistair Magowan, the Bishop of Ludlow, we travelled by train to Nuremberg, where we stayed with families over the weekend.

The purpose of our journey was to learn more about the life and work of Martin Luther, in preparation for commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. For it was on the 31st October, 1517, (now observed by Lutherans as 'Reformation Day') that Luther published his famous 95 Theses against Indulgences in Wittenberg.



An early Nuremberg printing press

Printing Then, and Refugees Now

After relaxing with our hosts and looking round Nuremberg on the Friday, our programme began on Saturday (Reformation Day). We spent the morning at an exhibition on the role of printing in the rapid spread of Luther's ideas, and Nuremberg's special place in this technological revolution.

In the evening we joined in a special service in the beautiful church of Schwabach, which included one of Bach's Cantatas. Schwabach is a manufacturing town of 40,000, and after the service we were invited to a reception by the Lutheran Bishop of Nuremberg and the former Mayor. In a lively discussion we learned how this small town was to receive 1000 Syrian refugees by the end of the year.

Sunday morning worship in our hosts' parishes was followed by a shared lunch and a conducted tour on "The Reformation in Nuremberg". Especially interesting to us Anglicans was the combination of radical change in the Reformers' understanding of the Gospel with conservatism in the outward forms of church life: the Lutherans retained the mediaeval stone altars, crucifixes and statues, and even the shrine of the local saint.

A journey back in time

Our pilgrimage began in earnest on the Monday, as we set off with our 18 Nuremberg friends in a coach driven by Hans-Willi Büttner, former Pastor of Langwasser and a great friend of Hereford Diocese and the parish of Ludlow, with Stephanie Reuther, the Pastor who worked for three years in Leominster, who was our guide - a happy band of pilgrims as you can see!



Travelling north we stopped at the great castle of Coburg with its statue of Prince Albert (of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha), and a collection of contemporary paintings by Cranach of the ex-monk Luther and his bride, the ex-nun Katherina (Katie) von Bora. Luther stayed at Coburg in 1530, while negotiations for a religious settlement were taking place at the Imperial Parliament in Augsburg.

Crossing into the former East Germany (GDR) we drove through the wonderful Thuringian Forest to the town of Eisenach, where Luther went to school. The day concluded with an amazing "Luther Feast", a mediaeval banquet with mead drunk from a horn, and a dessert called "Fegefeuer" (Purgatory) consisting of fruit burning in sugar on a long plank.

The Dawn of the Modern World

The Luther House in Eisenach, where we spent the Tuesday morning, must rank as one of the world's few theological museums. It shows in clever detail how Luther and his colleagues translated the Bible into German, and how he re-arranged the order of the New Testament books to reflect his view of their relative importance. Luther relied on Jewish scholars to help with the Hebrew text, but the museum also shows honestly and openly how Luther later turned against the Jews, and how his anti-semitic writings were later used by the Nazis.

The displays also demonstrate Luther's contribution to the change from the mediaeval to the modern world. His Bible translation encouraged literacy and individual thinking, gave people a sense of direct access to God, and helped to unify the

German language. His doctrine of justification by faith alone liberated people from anxiety about salvation and purgatory. Instead of calculating how much merit they could earn through good works, penances and indulgences, people could receive salvation as a free gift. A new spirit of thankfulness motivated them to enjoy life, help their neighbours, and serve God in their daily lives. Lutherans today often use Luther's teaching on faith and works to criticise our secular society where people's value, once again, is thought to depend on "works" - on their performance and competitive success, rather than on their humanity.

After Luther's appearance at the Diet (Parliament) at Worms in 1521 ("Here I stand: I can do no other") he was hidden for six months at the abandoned castle of the Wartburg overlooking Eisenach, under the protection of the Duke of Saxony. We spent a stunningly beautiful afternoon in this romantic mediaeval fortress, and learned that, when Luther said he defeated the devil by throwing his inkpot at him, it was a metaphor for his translation of the New Testament. However, this did not prevent thousands of 19th century pilgrims from taking the statement literally, and scraping off what they thought were ink-stains from the wall of Luther's room to take home as a souvenir.



The Wartburg - a safe stronghold



Wittenberg - Sampling the indulgences

Wittenberg – Luther's Town

And so to Wittenberg on the River Elbe, where Luther was Professor of Theology, and where his chief collaborators Phillip Melanchthon and Lucas Cranach also lived. From the day when Luther nailed his theses the town, its church and its university became the centre of his Reformation.

We spent the Wednesday morning looking round the former Augustinian friary where Luther lived, first as a monk and then as a family man with Katie, their six children and a number of student lodgers. Its creaking floorboards and 16th century furniture now house an extensive museum of his life and work, with many original documents and examples of his handwriting. There was a real sense of Luther as a famous university professor and church leader engaging in a Europe-wide correspondence.

This was followed by a conducted tour of the Parish Church, with its famous painting by Cranach which forms a triptych behind the altar, and shows the Lutheran priorities: baptism, preaching the Word, Communion and Confession (which Luther regarded as the third sacrament). There is a typical mix of biblical scenes and contemporary figures – for example, Luther and other prominent Wittenberg citizens take the places of the disciples in the scene of the Last Supper, and Judas has red hair.

Germany re-united

On the journey back to Nuremberg on the Thursday we stopped at Mödlareuth, a small village on the former border between the Western powers and the Soviet army. The village and its people were split in two, first by a fence, then barbed wire, and finally a concrete wall.



Memorial to a divided village



Luther among the disciples - the Wittenberg altar

Some families were thus divided until 1989. Today the village contains a museum of those hard times. We watched a powerful film showing the wall, the divided people, and the eventual happy re-union.

The weather was kind throughout our week, and the trees were beautiful with autumnal colours. We prayed and sang in English and German, and shared meals together. We all learned a great deal, both about Luther and about life in modern Germany.

We thank our hosts and the Nuremberg friends who came with us and explained everything to us; and especially Stephanie Reuther (our guide), Christine Schürmann (who chairs the Nuremberg Link Committee) and Hans-Willi Büttner (our friendly and safe bus driver).

OFFERING INSIGHTS TO CHURCH AND WORLD

Last October, on 'Reformation Day', the Rev Jo Jan Vandenheede, one of our Society's executive committee members, reminded his congregation in Liverpool, UK, that they are called to remain humble while offering a 'Lutheran slant' to both Church and World



There is a website called Old Lutheran belonging to an American gift shop selling all kinds of Lutheran 'merchandise' like books, jewellery, t-shirts and so on. Their slogan is "**Old Lutheran – the Center of Lutheran Pride! (But not too proud)**"



For me this slogan sums up what celebrating Reformation Day is really about. It should never be a celebration against, or in opposition to, other Christians. It should be with them, for their benefit, we might even say. For when one part of the Body rejoices, it should be for the good of the whole Body.

So what can the Lutheran tradition contribute to the Church universal, the whole Body of Christ? Or, in other words, why are we Lutherans here and why are we celebrating?

Lutherans - or Christians of the Lutheran tradition might be a better way of putting it - have their own perspective on the Jesus narrative, the story of God and His people, to add to the grander Christian reading of this story. Lutherans have their own take on the Covenant of God to contribute to the wider attempt of Christians to learn and live out this Covenant.

If Reformation Day is about anything it should surely focus on how we as Lutheran Christians can energise and stimulate our fellow Christians in our sister-churches in their own being in

God's Covenant. How to re-discover, time and time again, the joy and commitment the Covenant offers, rather than taking it for granted. How to share the Good News which the Covenant speaks about, and how to re-appreciate over and over again the love and forgiveness and freedom God hands down in this Covenant.

This Covenant is, after all, an undeserved free gift from God, and the concept of 'free gift' lies at the very core of Luther's and Lutheran theology. Grace, grace and more grace should be the basic answer with which Lutherans try to explain the Covenant from their point of view. The Covenant comes to us from above, not in a submissive and tyrannical way, but lovingly, like a parent caring for their children. This gift is free, and is for every one of us!

Luther's Small Catechism emphasizes this by the use of personal pronouns singular: 'I believe God has made me...I believe Jesus Christ has redeemed me...I believe the Holy Spirit has called me...' However, while this covenant relationship is personal it is not exclusive; it is individual but not individualistic! This personal relationship with our Creator happens within Creation, within the Church, within humanity; in relation to other Christians, other religions, other people. God knows each of us as children. God knows us personally and individually. But we are still part of a larger family, a larger whole.

This does not mean that as God's children we can do whatever we like or please. It does not mean that we have been given a licence to live sinful and wasteful lives. God doesn't remember our sins, God doesn't hold our sins against us, God doesn't turn around to say 'Remember that time when I forgave you?!' But that does not mean that this God-given forgiveness and freedom can be abused. Being free,

being part of a greater whole as individuals entails responsibility.

Lutheran Christians have a responsibility towards Creation and towards the Body of Christ in particular. This is not always easy. If we are completely honest with ourselves we have to admit that we are all capable of horrendous things but, by God's grace, we are also capable of extreme compassion and kindness. This seeming contradiction, this tension, Lutherans describe as being both 'saint and sinner' at the same time. It is another way in which we try to contribute to the understanding of living in the Covenant.



However, being both 'saint and sinner' isn't an excuse for complacency, for taking the free gifts of grace and faith for granted. True, salvation comes from above. True, we cannot buy or work or bargain or swindle our way into heaven. But it is exactly because we're set free, free indeed, that we are indeed able to serve our neighbour as ourselves.

Free to serve. God has taken care of our life eternal, so that we can gratefully act as God's co-workers in the here and now. Good works may not justify us, but good works should ideally flow from justification! This justification by faith means that if we no longer have to

worry how we'll get 'up there', so to speak, we are set free to spend time and energy worrying about and taking care of Creation around us with all that that includes.

We are all called to this care, each in our own vocation. And no vocation is more important or higher than the next. We all may have different jobs to do, different calls to answer, and that is perfectly right and proper, but before God there's no difference in love and forgiveness, for we are all one in Christ. Obviously there is variety between people, but for God that doesn't matter, in fact God has no qualms with it at all. After all, the Creator knows His own Creation.

But at the same time this variety does not exclude unity, and for Lutheran Christians this unity does not mean complete uniformity. That is not the ultimate goal because humanity is varied and so human traditions vary as well. And from a Lutheran standpoint that is just as true for Church traditions. (Augsburg Confession, article 7)

What matters is the Good News. What matters is the restored relationship between a God, who actually cares and actually loves, and his Creation in all its splendour and complications and tensions.

Reformation Day should remind Christians of the Lutheran tradition that they have a vocation to point to this Gospel message within the wider Church, the Body of Christ, proudly... but not too proud!

MEETING AT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HEARS OF PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS

On 1st December, 2015, religious leaders, victims of faith-based persecution, and members of the European Institutions gathered at the European Parliament for a conference entitled 'The Persecution of Christians in the World: A call for action.' The event was organised by European Parliament Vice-President Antonio Tajani and focused on worldwide persecution of Christians.

In his opening remarks, the President of the Conference of European Churches, the Rt Rev Christopher Hill, referred to two personal encounters with the persecution and harassment of Christians. He spoke of a marginalised Christian village in Malaysia suffering from near-total lack of basic infrastructure, and also of a region in Nigeria nearly totally void of Christians due to violent persecution at the hands of Boko Haram. 'The persecution of Christians is neither simple nor uniform,' he said. 'Especially where ISIS and its ideology reigns, Christians are definitely persecuted, churches destroyed, and the ancient churches of the birthplace of Christianity are on their way to almost extinction.'

Dr John Newton, from Aid to the Church in Need, remarked that nearly 700,000 of Syria's Christians (that is more than half) have fled during the recent conflict. He also noted that

there are only 300,000 Christians left in Iraq following a decade of conflict and strife.

Case studies on the situation in Balkans, Pakistan, Sinai, Iraq, and Eritrea were presented by experts in the field.

The packed audience was very moved by the story of Helen Berhane (right), an Eritrean Christian arrested and imprisoned for two-and-a-half years in a shipping container for refusing to



sign a document denouncing her Christian faith. Following efforts by Amnesty International, she was released and now lives in Europe. You can read her story for yourself in her book 'Song of the Nightingale' published by Authentic Publishing, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-1850788645

The President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, concluded the conference with an assurance that 'the Parliament will make its contribution wherever it can to protect Christians.' (CEC Newsletter, 2nd December 2015)

DIOCESE IN EUROPE RESPONSE TO MIGRANT CRISIS

Meeting medical needs is being given priority, reports the Anglican Communion News Service

The Diocese in Europe, part of the Church of England, has launched an emergency appeal through the Anglican mission agency 'Us' (formerly the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) to help fund its work with the hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea.

Priority is being given to healthcare because many refugees, including the elderly and children, are arriving in need of urgent medical care. Greece's overstretched public resources, and a lack of medicines in the country, mean many refugees are going untreated. Janette O'Neill, chief executive of 'Us', says, 'We want to play our part in helping equip refugees with the essentials that will signal to them that

their journey has turned a corner, and safety and respite from war are in sight.'

The World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe have urged churches throughout Europe to 'deepen their efforts in receiving, supporting, and protecting refugees who arrive in the region.'

Ecumenical cooperation is vital because the sheer numbers of refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea into Europe via Italy and Greece (more than 300,000 last August alone) means that offering any significant help is way beyond the resources of any one Church.

The Window

supports members of the Anglican-Lutheran Society in better understanding our different traditions and social contexts so that we can more faithfully proclaim God's love and justice together in the world

www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.uk

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A VALUABLE RESOURCE ON ANGLICANISM

Our editor, Dick Lewis, recommends Bishop Colin Buchanan's
Historical Dictionary of Anglicanism
(Second Edition), published Rowman & Littlefield, Oct 2015, pp 760,
ISBN/9781442250154, eBook 9781442250161, £100.00 £70.00

Background

In 1534 the Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy transferring power over the Church in England from the Pope in Rome to the King. That more or less signalled the birth of the 'Anglican' tradition. As the British Empire spread it took the English form of the Church into many places, and the missionary movements extended it still further. So today there are some 550 dioceses located around the world in the Americas, Africa, the Middle and Far East (and there is even a Church of England Diocese in Europe exercising pastoral care over all Anglicans in the various countries, including Morocco and Turkey). With a membership estimated at around 80 million members, the Anglican Communion is the third largest Christian communion in the world.

The Book

In this, the second edition of his *Historical Dictionary of Anglicanism*, Bishop Colin Buchanan covers the history of Anglicanism through a chronology, an introductory essay, appendixes, and an extensive bibliography. It has been endorsed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and has the backing of the Anglican Communion Office and, with over 700 cross-referenced entries on important personalities, concepts and institutions, rituals and liturgy, events and national communities, it is an excellent access point for students, researchers, and anyone wanting to know more about Anglicanism. In my opinion, every Theological faculty, Anglican and Lutheran, should have at least one copy.

The Author

Bishop Colin was one of my tutors when I was training for ordination. He served for many years on the Church of England's Liturgical Commission, and was a member of its General Synod. He was made Bishop in 1990, first of Aston, Birmingham, and later, until his retirement in 2004, of Woolwich in Southwark Diocese.

Special Offer

You can buy a copy at the reduced price of £66.50 (including postage to UK addresses) or £70 (including postage to addresses in mainland Europe) by contacting Bishop Colin Buchanan directly at 21 The Drive, Alwoodley, Leeds LS17 7QB, UK, or by phoning 0044(0)113 2677721.

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