

The Window

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Inside information
about the recent
Mirfield Conference
pages 1,3 & 16-24

News of some
flourishing links
pages 4,8-10 & 12-15

Faith and Health – the
final part of our
mini-series
page 3



Advance notice of
our next Conference
in 2014
page 5

News of
Lutheran-Methodist
Relationships
pages 6 & 13

A suggestion for
some light
but engaging
autumn reading
page 15

West Bank School
page 11

CHURCH HAS ROLE IN ACHIEVING VISION

Monica Schofield, a Chartered Engineer working in Hamburg, is an advisor to researchers, industry and policy makers on issues to do with sustainability, wealth creation and the public interest. Dick Lewis describes the presentation she made at the start of the Society's Conference held last month in Mirfield, UK



"Humanity has a problem. Two weeks ago, on 22nd August, we passed 'Earth Overshoot Day'. We are now consuming more of the earth than it can replenish. If we continue just as we are then in the year 2050 we shall need the resources of 2.3 earths. Clearly, that is not a realistic scenario! So we have a big problem that is going to affect many of us in our own lifetime."

That's how Monica Schofield began the first presentation at the Mirfield Conference in September. "And that's not the only problem we have," she continued, and her audience listened open mouthed as she reminded them of the challenges we are facing already concerning energy, water, food, the environment, poverty, terrorism, war, disease, education, democracy, population, transnational organised crime and so on.

Many people, she told us, including the United Nations are producing lists like these. They are shocking, and for many they simply spell doom and gloom. But they are necessary, she said, because they drive policy makers to do something, to take action to avert the crisis that will otherwise overwhelm humanity.

"Is there any hope?" she asked. There is, and it comes from an unlikely source. In 2010 some 29 multinational companies calling themselves the World Business Council for Sustainable Development published Vision 2050. At the heart of this document lay a very simple question: What is it that we need to do so that the estimated 9 billion people living in this world in 2050 can

live well within the means of the planet?

That is the goal they set – that all people in 2050 should be enabled to live well.

Their document hit the boardrooms of many multinationals and made a deep impression. For example, Philips published a booklet by Dorothy Seebode called 'Sustainable Innovation'. It is available on their website. In it Dr Seebode issued a challenge. "Change starts with each of us daring to question the purpose of our lives and society," she wrote. We have to change our mindset. As communities what values do we want to create? What do we mean by success? How will sustainable development happen in emerging countries where economic growth is necessary to serve people's needs?

Everyone needs to be convinced that, if the Vision 2050 goal is to be achieved, 'change starts with me'. But changing mindsets means changing the ways we measure things. Success is too often measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the market value of all the goods and services produced within a country during a given period. But GDP doesn't measure things that really matter. Monica Schofield quoted Robert Kennedy who in 1968 stated; 'GDP does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate, the integrity of our public officials

Continued on page 3

FAITH AND HEALTH: ANGLICAN - LUTHERAN COLLABORATIONS

The third and last of a mini-series by Paul Holley of the Anglican Health Network



The imposing Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem was commissioned by Kaiser Wilhelm II in honour of his wife following his visit to the city in 1898. It was originally designed as a hospice for German pilgrims to the Holy Land but, following the many upheavals of subsequent decades, became a hospital for Palestinian refugees in 1948. It now exists as a tertiary facility with advanced capacities in cancer and other specialities. The Lutheran World Federation supports this hospital as its flagship institution. It is now a highly valued place of healing amongst the Palestinian peoples, whether Christian or Muslim.

This was the stimulating setting for a conference on faith-based health care, which took place in November 2011 (see picture below). The initiative for this event came from the Church of Norway hospital, Diakonhjemmet Sykehus, and involved the Anglican Health Network and some other ecumenical

and denominational agencies in its planning. The conference drew 35 delegates from a wide range of settings around the world to provide fresh insight into the work of church hospitals and community based primary care programmes. In the process, the partnership between Anglican and Lutheran colleagues developed in Geneva in previous years was further strengthened.

In February 2012, Church of Norway representatives, Dr Kjell Nordstokke and the Rev Johan Arnt Wenaas, joined Anglican theologians, Professor Grace Davie and Dr Luke Bretherton, and a range of health practitioners, for discussions on the theme, 'Faith in health and healing: Integrating the Church with health services'. The meeting took place at the Anglican Communion Office in London and provided substantial background material for the planning of a major conference due in April 2013.

The pace of meetings and conferences is increasing. Why?

Two significant trends are emerging that offer our churches opportunity for a major renewal in their health mission:

1. There is growing dissatisfaction with the technical and scientific reductionism of modern health care. Many people feel they are being treated as faulty biomechanical machines rather than integrated human beings. Person-centred health care, with attention to spiritual, emotional and social needs, is rising up the agenda. Christian health professionals and healing agencies are leading the debate, and the churches can offer a great deal to support change.

2. The nature of health care organisation is evolving. As well as increased involvement of the private sector in service provision, health authorities recognise that modern trends in disease require a much more robust response from communities. Chronic conditions such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes require long-term support within communities. And the ultimate answer to increases in these diseases lies in prevention rather than cure. Parishes hold considerable capacity to develop community based health care and promotion.



The Health Care Conference at the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem last year

Though the United Kingdom and Norway share much in common, their churches have addressed health mission in different ways. Church hospitals in the UK were nationalised to make way for the National Health Service, whereas the Church of Norway maintained its ownership of a handful of hospi-

tals in order to preserve its direct involvement in health care. The Church of Norway has therefore had the opportunity to innovate in response to the trends noted above. For example, the Dia-konhjemmet Sykehus in Oslo has piloted a programme of training for staff under the diakonia concept. In each ward a diaconal nurse has a responsibility to promote a more holistic approach to the care of patients, an approach to which every member of staff is attuned.

Health mission in the UK has taken a different turn. With a wide range of community-based programmes commissioned by local government and health authorities, parishes have developed primary care initiatives. Healthy living centres have been set up on church premises. Mental health projects have emerged from churches concerned

to support the most vulnerable members of their communities. Parish nurses have been appointed to promote health in their congregations and to support those who are sick in their communities.

In our meetings and conferences, Anglicans and Lutherans are learning from one another and are reviewing the outlook for health systems in Europe and beyond. We realise that these trends demand a stronger interest from the Church as a whole.

Having taken the initiative to organise the Jerusalem conference, the Church of Norway will now play a part in the programme of the conference led by the Anglican Health Network in Birmingham next year. The programme has a strong domestic focus in order to look in more detail at church responses to

modern health care trends. But it will also draw presentations from parish based mental health programmes in Germany, Anglican hospital initiatives in the United States and insights from the many and varied health programmes operated amongst Anglican and Lutheran churches in Africa.

We continue to look out for more examples of our Churches' health related work and would welcome information. The picture is far from complete. Our learning and our implementation will be strengthened by our shared work in this area. It has been a great blessing and encouragement to work together.

More details can be found on the conference website: <http://www.anglicanhealth.org/ConferenceHome.aspx>

Continued from front page

It measures neither our wit nor our courage; neither our wisdom nor our learning; neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country; it measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.'

But who is going to convince governments and businesses, researchers, industrialists and individuals everywhere of their need to take Vision 2050 seriously?

Monica said that she had asked herself, where do we get our values from in society? Who speaks for the poor? Who relates the local to the global? Who teaches us to be good neighbours?

She looked hard at her audience of newly authorised ministers and young people in training for ministry. "That's when I thought of you guys," she said. "When I pulled back the façade, the headlines and the image of the Church that those of us who are entrenched in the secular, agnostic world see, there underneath I found an incredible bunch of people able to

grapple with complexity."

She continued, "As people who help shape opinion, who help form value systems in families and local communities and sometimes on a much bigger stage, how can you and I, together with the people of good will and vision that we meet and work with, how can we help people visualise 9 billion people living on this planet, living well, and living within the means of the planet?"

Her message was crystal clear. The Church has something to offer the secular in helping achieve the vision, create the values and start changing mind sets. And it begins with us all. But how do we set about it? How are we to frame the dialogue?

Monica set her audience to work in small groups on some knotty problems to do with environmental issues, on whether multinationals should have a theologian on the board, on the place of sacred spaces in the cities of tomorrow, on whether any of us would feel able to offer

advice on business ethics to senior managers. In no time the small groups were buzzing.

Afterwards one exhausted participant was heard to say, "I had no idea that those sorts of conversations were actually going on in boardrooms. It is a topic that theological studies never touch on. I think it puts theology back with two feet solidly on the ground. It was very interesting to be given this challenge. I am now struggling with questions about how we as theologians and as Christians, and as churchgoers, might begin to undertake the kind of dialogue that Monica is suggesting."

Clearly, Monica Schofield had got the Conference off to a very good start and provided a foundation on which to build ideas on how we might all be called to engage in Christian ministry in tomorrow's world.

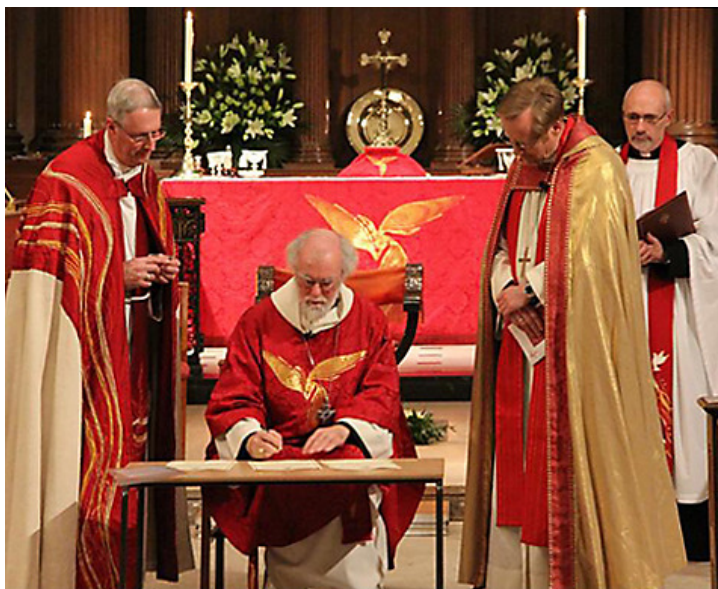
You can read her presentation in full and see most of her illustrative slides on the Society's website, www.anglican-lutheran-society.org

NORWEGIANS AND BRITISH CELEBRATE ST ALPHEGE

Jacob Knudsen, our National Co-ordinator in Norway, explains

Since the year 2000 there has been a link between Southwark Cathedral in England and Bergen Cathedral in Norway. In April this year the Bishops of Southwark and Bergen signed a Statement of Intent to explore the possibilities of developing the link and extending it throughout their dioceses. The Statement reads:

We commit ourselves to a relationship of friendship, co-operation and shared witness between our two dioceses of Bergen and Southwark, within the context of the Porvoo Communion and building on the longstanding link between our two Cathedrals. We intend to encourage exchange visits between our clergy and churches, to find ways of learning from one another in our mission and ministry, and to pray for one another. We believe that there is much in each other's traditions that can enrich us, and we ask for the Spirit's guidance in developing and sustaining our partnership in the Gospel.



Bishop Christopher Chessun and Bishop Halvor Nordhaug watching Archbishop Rowan Williams sign the Statement



The Old Church at Moster

In the year 994, before he became Archbishop and was still Bishop of Winchester, Alphege baptised the Norwegian King Olav Tryggvason at Andover. Shortly afterwards the King set sail for Norway with his clergy and men, and the very next year the first recorded Christian service was held in Moster, on an island south of Bergen.

So, in May 2012, a group from Southwark Cathedral, which was formerly in the Winchester Diocese, came to Bergen and went on a day trip to Moster where a Eucharist was celebrated in the Old Church, built on the land where that first service was held.

Among the possibilities the two Bishops intend exploring will be i) arranging shared pilgrimages for young people, ii) finding out about each other's inter-faith and intercultural challenges, iii) encouraging parish-to-parish links, and iv) reflecting theologically on their shared ecumenical experiences.

The Statement was signed at the time when the Church of England was marking the millennium of the martyrdom of St Alphege, Archbishop of Canterbury.



Jacob Knudsen (centre) and visitors from Southwark outside the Old Church

THE ALS REACHES INTO CENTRAL EUROPE

Initial plans for our 2014 conference unveiled

The next ALS conference will be mould breaking. Traditionally our European gatherings have taken places in the British Isles, Nordic/Baltic countries and Germany, but in 2014 we plan to visit Hungary. This will be our first event to take place in Central Europe and reflects the growing level of contact between our Society and that region over the last few years. The number of people from Eastern Europe participating in our conferences at Turku in 2009 and Mirfield in 2012, for example, indicates a significant growth of interest in Lutheran-Anglican conversations there.

The Ordass Lajos Church Centre



We are planning a programme to be delivered from Friday afternoon to Tuesday morning, 12th-16th September 2014, at and around the Ordass Lajos Lutheran Church Conference Centre on the Northern shore of Lake Balaton.

The venture presently has the working title 'Small is Beautiful: Being a Minority Church', though this is very likely to change before the conference is widely publicised. The underlying rationale for the thematic focus is that as Anglicans and Lutherans we can all too easily think of ourselves as the Estab-

lished Church in England, for example, or the State Churches in the Nordic countries, or the German *Landeskirche*, and imagine that we are majority churches. However, in all these cases, and in most countries (including Hungary), the reality is that we are all living in a minority situation, and that is worth reflecting on.

It's true that being a minority church means strained resources, but perhaps it offers a certain freedom in speaking 'truth unto power' and taking a stand on matters of Gospel or conscience which run counter to prevalent social trends. Those of us who serve in s o - c a l l e d

'majority' churches must pay attention to the experience of our brothers and sisters in these contexts both for its own value and also because many of our own churches are well on the way to being *de facto* in a m i n o r i t y position.



The Ordass Lajos Centre

Work on planning the conference programme is now underway. It is being shared between a small number of our Society's executive committee members and an in-country team lead by Bishop Tamás Fabiny (Lutheran Bishop of Northern Hungary). We are also grateful to the Anglican Chaplain in Budapest, Fr Frank Hegedus, for his involvement. More details will follow in subsequent editions of *The Window* but we do encourage you to get the dates into your diary. It promises to be another stimulating event.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Rev Alex Faludy by email at alexander.faludy@lincoln.oxon.net

A pleasure boat on Lake Balaton



LUTHERAN-METHODIST RELATIONSHIPS

Just as relationships involving partial or full communion have burgeoned between Anglican and Lutheran Churches across the world, so have similar relationships developed between many Lutheran and Methodist churches. Old problems have been overcome and a new sense of the complementarity of the two traditions has developed widely. Dr David Carter, a Methodist lay theologian, explains.

Historically, relationships were often distant and marked by a degree of theological distrust. Wesley himself said of Luther that no one had understood justification better but, equally, that no one had been so wrong about sanctification. To some Lutherans, the Methodist stress on experience seemed to contradict, or at least call in question, the objectivity of grace as communicated through the preaching of the Word and the Sacraments. To some 19th century Methodists, such as the prominent writer on ecclesiology James Rigg (1821-1909), there seemed to be a coldness about Lutheranism, particularly as he believed it to be expressed in the established churches of Germany and Scandinavia.

At first there was very little mutual contact and, indeed, this is still largely the case in England. However, in the nineteenth century some continental European emigrants who had become Methodists whilst in the Americas returned to their original homelands, and this led to the formation of small Methodist communities in many parts of Europe. Meanwhile, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, huge numbers of Lutheran immigrants settled in the States at a time when Methodism was still the largest and most widespread denomination. It was naturally from the States, and from the majority Lutheran areas of Europe, that the impetus for closer relations between the two Churches was to come within the context of the developing ecumenical movement. Even English Methodists, without benefit of easy Lutheran contacts in England, began to take an interest in Lutheranism and to produce such Luther scholars as

Gordon Rupp and Philip Watson. From the thirties, a few young Methodist ministers began to study, on Finch scholarships, in Germany.

The key breakthrough came with the establishment of an international dialogue in 1977 which, by 1984, produced a report, *The Church, Community of Grace*. The dialogue looked at five major topics; Biblical authority, the gospel of grace, the work of the Spirit in the Church, the sacraments of the gospel and the mission of the Church.

The dialogue recorded the fundamental agreement of both communions on salvation by grace through faith. It pointed to the contrasting but complementary emphases of Methodists on preventive grace and of Lutherans on constant grace. It asserted that 'for both traditions, Christians, throughout life, are in need of God's forgiving grace'. In respect of the Methodist stress on Christian Perfection, which had traditionally disturbed many Lutherans, the contrasting emphases of the two traditions were laid side by side. 'Lutherans stress that Christians are justified and sanctified while at the same time remaining sinners before God.' 'Methodists dare set no limits to the grace of God.' The reconciling comment was then made: 'There is common agreement that God's creating and sustaining grace are continuously present in the world and in human life'. The commission might also have cited Wesley's own stress that those whom he believed to have been perfected in love, far from rising above the need of grace, had even more need for

grace to sustain them against any fall from such heights.

In ecclesiology, agreement was recorded on the essential nature of the Church as sustained by the means of grace, with the codicil that, for the Methodists, while Word and sacraments were central, there were also other means of grace. A degree of tension was recorded between the Methodist stress on personal faith and the Lutheran one on faith as confidence in God's promise given in the baptismal act (see note 1).

The Report concluded with a series of recommendations for growing towards fuller communion, the most significant of which was that 'our churches take steps to declare and establish full fellowship of word and sacrament', the first step being the sanctioning of pulpit exchanges and mutual Eucharistic hospitality.

This recommendation has since been vigorously pursued, particularly in North America and continental Europe. In the 1990's pulpit and altar fellowship agreements were signed between the United Methodist Church in Norway and Sweden and the Churches of Norway and Sweden. The Norwegian Agreement, in particular, was to influence later proposals in the USA. In 1994, the European Methodist churches joined the Leuenberg Fellowship, now known as the Community of European Protestant Churches. This fellowship, based on mutual ecclesial recognition and interchangeability of ministry, embraces most European Lutheran churches, including three that also belong to the Porvoo Communion, the churches of Norway, Estonia

and Denmark. It also includes many churches in the Reformed tradition, the most prominent being a member Landeskirche of the EKD in Germany.

At this stage, all the agreements made had been between state or 'majority' Lutheran churches and small Methodist churches. In 2009, the United Methodist Church of USA, the third largest communion in that country, entered into a full communion agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), an agreement that was the fruit of a succession of very careful dialogues, reaching right back to 1977.



The Rev Warner H. Brown, Jr. (United Methodist Church), and the Rev Mark W. Holmerud (ELCA) celebrate together the Full Communion relationship between the ELCA and the United Methodist Church, 2009

As with the international dialogue and the earlier European accords, a carefully crafted and nuanced agreement, balancing the contrasting emphases on *simul iustus et peccator* and *sanctification*, was agreed. Both churches recorded their origins as renewal movements, working for reform within the Church. Both agreed that though the ministry of word and sacrament and episcopate were fundamental to the life of the Church, no one form or structure of either was required by the New Testament. Both recorded their adoption of a personal episcopacy whilst not seeing it as an order of ministry separate from that of the one min-

istry of word and sacrament. The Methodists, however, affirmed their possession of the diaconate as a second order of ministry.

The full communion agreement is seen as marking the beginning of 'a new life together'. There is provision for the establishment of a joint commission to monitor developments and facilitate consultation and common decision making on 'fundamental matters that the churches may face in future'.

Some feel that this and the earlier European agreements lack sufficiently robust structures of mutual accountability. This has been a key

British Anglican criticism of the 'Leuenberg' structures, albeit that they have led to further refinement in common theological understanding. The American accord is just one of six full communion agreements into which the ELCA has entered and it asserts the freedom of

both partner churches to make such further full communion accords as may seem fit to them (see note 2).

All this raises the question of *transitivity*, which has been discussed in recent Anglican-Lutheran dialogue. The Methodist adhesion in 2006 to the Joint Declaration on Justification and the full communion accords between Anglican and Lutheran churches and between Lutherans and Methodists point alike to the need for more quadrilateral conversations. These should involve Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Methodists (the three latter have all been in contin-

uous dialogue with the former since 1967) in order to resolve the ecclesiological implications of a complex of developing relationships.

Note 1 : Concerning the Means of Grace: For Lutherans these are The Gospel (written and proclaimed), Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Wesley honoured these as the 'instituted' means, but also acknowledged others with scriptural warrant (e.g. bible reading, prayer) and yet others (termed 'prudential') lacking scriptural warrant per se, but proven by experience, such as the Methodist class meetings and 'conferencing'.

Note 2 : The ELCA's Full Communion agreements include three with churches in the Reformed tradition, and also with the Episcopal Church and with the Moravians.

See a response to David Carter's article by Bishop Walter Jagucki on page 13

MAY WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

Just before the Mirfield Conference began our Membership Secretary, Helen Harding, emailed everyone whose address she had. Her message was that, in order to help members feel a little bit involved, a bulletin would be published on the website at the end of each day giving a flavour of what had happened.

However, whilst a number of these messages got through, many were returned as 'undeliverable' which means that either the email address has been changed or Helen has got it wrong.

So, if you didn't receive her email, will you please simply email Helen at harding232@btinternet.com so that we can keep in touch.

FROM “LIVING FAITH” TO “TILL TRO” TWO POVOO LINKED DIOCESES SHARE A VISION FOR MISSION

Canon Tony Dickinson, European Links Co-ordinator for the Diocese of Oxford, UK, describes how the link between his diocese and the Diocese of Växjö in Sweden is developing.

When Bishop John Pritchard moved from the Northeast of England to the Oxford Diocese of the Church of England in 2007 he began a series of conversations all around his new diocese designed to help set a diocesan focus for the next five years. The result of these conversations was “Living Faith for the Future”, a vision for the Diocese of Oxford which offers a strategic framework for our life over the five years 2009/14.

In essence, it is about sustaining spirituality and holistic mission. “Living Faith” was conceived neither as a rejection of the past nor as a heavy handed ‘strategy’. The controlling image is artistic in nature, offering a palette of colours which each parish, deanery and diocesan board can use in their own way to create their particular response to God’s mission.

“Living Faith” focuses on four core values, which are:

- ♦ **Contemplative:** being attentive to God.
- ♦ **Creative:** imaginatively releasing and harnessing all the gifts of all God’s people.
- ♦ **Continuous:** rooted in scripture, faithful to the traditions we have received and seeking to give them fresh expression.
- ♦ **Accountable:** both to God and to each other as we build for tomorrow as well as today.



These values are expressed in five strategic priorities:

- ♦ Sustaining the sacred centre
- ♦ Making disciples
- ♦ Making a difference in the world
- ♦ Creating vibrant Christian communities
- ♦ Shaping confident, collaborative leadership

When our new Bishop arrived Oxford Diocese was already enjoying a vibrant link with Diocese of Växjö in Sweden. It had been inaugurated formally in 2004, after several years of growing friendship and dialogue, when a Covenant agreement between the two dioceses was signed in Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford

In the picture below you can see the author, Canon Tony Dickinson (left), Jan-Olaf Johansson, then Dean of the Växjö Diocese (a post roughly equivalent to a Catholic Vicar-General), the then Bishop of Oxford, Richard Harries (seated), Bishop (now Archbishop) Anders Wejryd, and the Rev Dr Christopher Meakin, who was Oxford diocesan international and ecumenical officer and also cathedral chaplain in Växjö.



Photo: Frank Blackwell

Since that covenant was signed there have been a number of exchange visits, and relationships between Växjö and Oxford parishes are beginning to be established and to grow. On page 12 of this issues you can read an account of one link that has grown out of a shared interest in music.

A little while ago a Swedish group visited High Wycombe, where Debbie Orriss, a Church Army Officer (standing, in black), showed them round the town centre. Then, once they had a feel for the place, the Rev Jackie Lock of All Saints, High Wycombe, pictured below, explained to our visitors some of the challenges and opportunities to be found in the life of the church in the town centre.



However, recently our diocesan link has deepened in a most interesting way. In the course of a series of meetings between the senior staff of our two dioceses during 2008 and 2009 the church leaders from Växjö became aware of how the initial phase of Oxford's "Living Faith" initiative was being introduced. They were intrigued and attracted by the approach of "Living Faith" and, following meetings and consultations between representatives of the two dioceses, Växjö diocese has taken up and adapted the 'Living Faith'

concept and is in the process of developing material and promoting the idea in its parishes.

The title they have chosen is 'Till tro!', which can be translated as 'Towards Faith', though there is an additional nuance in that, as one word, 'Tilltro' means 'confidence'.

As with "Living Faith", the focus of "Till tro" is on supporting the parishes with resources for their work at the local level, and recognising that it is in the parishes that the concept is going to take wing. The approach also encourages parishes to recognise and work on their 'black holes'.

Oxford has been very happy to share its experience with colleagues in Växjö. There is a clear recognition that Swedish Christians need to translate and adapt the concept and the material for their own circumstances. But on the other hand, parts of the project are being developed jointly, as we share common concerns. For example, Växjö has been looking with great interest at the work that is being done in Oxford diocese in the area of men's spirituality, and other areas of common concern include the environment, and responses to immigration.



The staff at St Sigfrid's *folkhögskola* (Folk High School - see **note** at foot of page) are playing a significant role in developing materials for use in the Swedish context and in enabling parishes to take on board the concepts and core values. Contributors to the diocese's quarterly newsletter "Missivet" (much of which is available in English translation on the Oxford diocesan web-pages devoted to the link) regularly reflect on the experience that is being gained. The Diocese of Växjö is also drawing on European Union funding to invest in a personal development project in four parishes, using "Till tro!" as the basis. As in Oxford, the process is developing in dialogue with parishes over an extended period. A review group has been set up, and there are regular exchanges of experience with representatives from Oxford. In both dioceses there is extended use of the internet to spread the idea to parishes, with dedicated pages on each diocesan website.

There are, of course, a number of significant differences. The logo for "Living Faith" represents an artist's palette of colours.



The "Till tro" logo, on the other hand, comprises a tree with the stem and leaves in different colours, where every colour represents one of the focus areas. The Swedish approach perhaps reflects a sense of organic growth rather than artistic creation.

The core values and strategic priorities, too, are subtly different. In Växjö the priorities are:

'Take care of what is holy' (the cross-like stem and branches).

'Discipleship today' (the top right-hand leaf).

'Make a difference in the world' (the top left-hand leaf).

'Confident leadership' (the lower left-hand leaf).

'Building living fellowships' (the the lower right-hand leaf).



These reflect a largely shared set of core values. Oxford's **contemplative, creative, continuous** and **accountable** are all there, along with the strategic priorities as set out in their diagram on the left.

But, interestingly, the Swedes (sometimes unfairly stereotyped by others as gloomy!) add one more value. This is **'Joy in the work'**. This has to do with "working for God for the extension of the faith, and caring relationships with fellow workers and others we meet in our work".

Note : In the Nordic countries *Folk High Schools* exist to provide a liberal arts education and formation in responsible citizenship for young adults. Their courses generally last for a year or less and may serve as a preparation for, or alternative to, university education. Those which are

funded by Church of Sweden dioceses also provide a basic orientation for people who are taking up paid employment in the Church as musicians, children's workers, and so on.

LUTHERAN SCHOOLS PROVIDE HOLISTIC EDUCATION IN AN INTERFAITH CONTEXT

Thomas Ekelund brings exciting news from the West Bank in an article written for Lutheran World Information

Michael Abu Ghazaleh is one proud principal. "The School of Hope provides top-quality education to all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or ability to pay tuition fees," he says of the Evangelical Lutheran School of Hope in Ramallah, one of the top five in the West Bank. The majority of the students at the school are Muslims, an indication that Christian schools are an important part of the educational system in the occupied Palestinian territories.

But the school is not all about studies and results. Georgette is 17 years old and a year away from graduation. "I love this school, it's my second home," she says smiling. Georgette is a member of the school's Al-Raja Folkloric Dance Troupe, of which about 15 students performed two dances when a delegation from The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) visited the school on the 29 September.



The dance style in Arabic is Dabke, meaning "stomp," and as you can see this is probably the most accurate way to describe the flying dance. Almost 50 high school students come together after class to practice the traditional dance and their passionate performance reveals their love for the dance. Seventeen-year-old Ahmad says the group's name Al-Raja, which means 'hope' in Arabic, is more than a name. "We are a strong people, and giving up hope is giving up living," says Ahmad, who wants to go to Germany to study. "But I will always come back to live here," he adds.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope is one of the six congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). It was founded in the mid-1950s as Palestinian refugees fled to the Ramallah area after the 1948 war. The School of Hope began in 1965 as a kindergarten with ten students and two teachers, and graduated its first class of

three students in 1979. The school has since been serving the greater Ramallah area and continues to grow. It is currently serving more than 450 students, of whom 20% are Christians and 80% are Muslims.

Constant expansion has led the European Union (EU) to fund construction of a 4,000 square meter building that will accommodate around 500 students, who are now located in the old campus. The new school campus is expected to be ready in 2013 when it will be handed over to the church. The construction of the new campus comes as a result of the EU's continuous support to the Palestinian education sector, not only by increasing the physical capacity of school buildings but also by developing the quality of education in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Christians are a minority in Ramallah, but the Christian community is responsible for almost 30 percent of the educational system in the West Bank. The school "is a model in the community of cooperation and tolerance among its diverse students," Principal Ghazaleh says. The school offers extra curricula activities including an English club, sports teams, scout troops, an information and computer technology unit, and the renowned dance group that performs both locally and abroad.

"As Palestinian Christians we have always considered ourselves to be an integral part of the fabric of our society, and that means we have a role to play in education and in social issues in our country," said Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan of the ELCJHL, who is also LWF President [and Lutheran President of our Society-Ed].

Bishop Younan said the mission of the ELCJHL schools was to prepare young Palestinian women and men to build their state. "We teach our students to respect human rights - especially women's rights - to respect freedom of religion and to dialogue with other religions. We emphasize peace education in our schools, and the right for each and every person to live in dignity." The Bishop previously served as pastor of the Ramallah congregation.

COME LET US JOIN OUR CHEERFUL SONGS...

The Rev Dr Hugh White looks back on a parish link where shared singing has played a vital part

One way in which the Porvoo link between the Dioceses of Oxford and Växjö has developed (see page 8) has been through the connection between Sofiakyrkan in Jönköping and Deddington Parish Church. In some sense it's an accidental rather than an obvious relationship. Jönköping is a large city and Deddington a smallish village with all the differences that implies. The ecclesiastical socio-economic planners would not have gone for this one, but maybe the Holy Spirit has?

The twinning emerged out of a series of meetings on mission which brought people from the linked dioceses together. My half-Swedish wife was one of the Oxford people and one of the Swedes sang with a choir in the Sofiakyrkan benefice, so when in Jönköping the idea of a choir trip to Oxford diocese was suggested, Deddington was quickly on the radar.

That trip happened in 2008, with members of one of Sofiakyrkan's

Eucharist in Deddington conducted according to the English language rite of the Swedish Church. Swedish priests presided and preached at this service.

Deddingtonians and

Swedes greatly enjoyed the visit; some of the Swedes stayed with members of the Deddington congregation and friendships we made have lasted ever since.

During 2009 I was on sabbatical in Växjö diocese for a time and met up again with some of those who had been on the 2008 choir visit. I also met the *kyrkoherde* (clergyman or parson) of Sofiakyrkan, Hans Boeryd, for the first time and we



The Oxford Group in Sweden

Swedes to sing in the Maurice Frost Festival held in 2010. The Festival commemorated the 50th anniversary of the completion by Frost, a former Vicar of Deddington, of his *Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Also taking part was a choir from Deddington's link parish in Mafikeng in South Africa. An English/Swedish/Setswana Eucharist followed by an international conga from Church to village green were highlights! [A 'conga' is a dance originating in Cuba. People form a line and then go steadily forward, each three steps followed by a kick – Ed]

In 2011 a choir drawn from parishes in the Deddington and Woodstock Deaneries in Oxford Diocese went to Växjö diocese and sang Anglican Evensong in Växjö Cathedral and Sofiakyrkan. Swedish and English choirs joined forces for some of the music sung at the Högmässa at the Sofiakyrkan. I preached at this service, my wife having translated my English text into Swedish, thereby risking the possibility that no-one in the Church (myself included) would understand the sermon!

That year also saw an exchange involving Deddington's curate and



The Combined Choirs

choirs joining members of the Dalvik choir to sing concerts in Deddington and Witney in Oxfordshire. The Swedish Choir also led a

agreed that pursuing the 'unlikely' relationship between Deddington and Sofiakyrkan would be worthwhile. Deddington invited the

one of the assistant priests at Sofiakyrkan. The second leg of this exchange occurred in conjunction with the visit of Sofiakyrkan's Youth Choir who performed a much appreciated 'Santa Lucia' ceremony in Deddington and at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford.

So sharing music and worship have been central in what we have done together and it is very moving to celebrate the liturgy with Christians from another culture in a foreign language, where the foreignness and difference are overcome in shared worship as the unity Christ desires for his disciples is vividly enacted.

Where next? Continuing prayer for one another and more of the above, I hope. Perhaps we could share Sunday worship over the internet. Deddington has been broadcasting services this way for a couple of years now and would be happy to proceed but the Swedish Church at large is still debating the rights and wrongs of this method. We'll see.

The Deddington participants have previously enjoyed a pilgrimage walk around Jönköping (2011) and look forward to acting as hosts in 2012 when, at the end stage of an ecumenical progress being inaugurated from Oxford to our village in honour of Cardinal Newman, we hope that Swedish friends will feel able to join the other participants on the walk.

Whatever happens, it is vital to remember that, if the links between Svenska Kyrkan and the Church of England are to extend and to grow, it will be important that connections are made between congregations as well as between the bishops and professional ecumenists. As Hans Boeryd, my friend and colleague at Sofiakyrkan writes, 'the contacts between parishes and individuals are at least as important as those put in place at diocesan level.' Who could disagree?

NEED FOR DIALOGUE AND LOCAL CO-OPERATION

Bishop Walter Jagucki, Interim Bishop in the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, offers a personal reflection on David Carter's article on Lutheran-Methodist relationships (see page 6)

I am thankful to David Carter for his article which makes many important points regarding the relationships between the Methodist and Lutheran Church. It is a short but comprehensive overview of global inter-church relations between our two traditions. My observations are personal and not a study paper.

Since 2009 I have been an observer, on behalf of The Lutheran World Federation, on the newly formed Anglican-Methodist International Commission on Unity in Mission (AMICUM). The Commission's last meeting will be in February 2013 and the report will be submitted to the Anglican and Methodist Churches. I have learned a lot about the Methodist Church around the world by listening to the debates and meeting with my Methodist sisters and brothers.

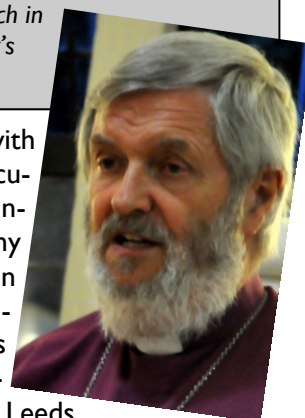
My learning about Methodism continued in July this year during three days of the Methodist Conference in Plymouth. Here I represented the Council of Lutheran Churches in Great Britain and deepened my knowledge about the life of The Methodist Church in Great Britain. It was interesting to compare their Church's joys and pains with those of my own Church. We have similar problems with finance, recruitment of clergy, general issues of running congregations, and so on. The most interesting debates were about social and political questions of the day. Ecumenism was on the agenda, and issues like bilateral dialogues in the United Kingdom with other denominations, questions of Local Ecumenical Projects, sharing of buildings, and so on.

Working with Yorkshire Ecumenical Council, and my cooperation with Methodist chaplains at the University of Leeds, have allowed me to forge friendships between my congregation and local Methodist churches.

However, going back to the 1940s and 1950s in my native Poland, the relationship between our two Churches was rather strained and cool. After World War II Methodist missionaries from the USA arrived in the Mazury area of Poland, where the Lutheran presence was relatively strong, and openly proselytised. Today both Churches in Poland are members of the Ecumenical Council and share altar and pulpit hospitality.

I share David Carter's conclusion that there is "the need for more quadrilateral conversations. These should involve Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Methodists..." We live in times of shrinking congregations in the West. Historical Churches ought to come closer together. We need dialogues and local cooperation.

What I am observing among Lutherans who are in transit here in the UK is that whereas just twenty years ago they would seek out a Lutheran congregation, this is not so today. Secularism and looser denominational links take their toll. We in church leadership do have a duty to inform people about each other's Churches and the relationships between them.



YOUTH WORKER'S TRIP TO NORWAY

The Rev Simon White is a parish priest and Diocesan Youth Officer (North) in the Diocese of Newcastle (UK). In March this year he went on a visit to Newcastle's sister diocese of Møre in the Church of Norway. Here he reflects on his experiences and the differing expectations of what Youth Work on opposite sides of the North Sea should involve.

A visit to our Porvoo linked Diocese of Møre was a fantastic opportunity to discover how a Lutheran diocese does youth work. The invitation was for me, a Diocesan Youth Officer, and two of our Youth workers from Northumberland to attend a youth conference and to share some of our experiences, especially those that arise from the rural context in central and north Northumberland. It promised to be a valuable trip but unfortunately only a small number signed up for the conference so the visit looked as if it might be in jeopardy. However, the opportunity to share good practice and discover together new ways of reaching our young people was too important to miss: the visit still happened but with a greatly revised programme.

I'd previously thought that the church in Norway and the Church of England, both being state churches, would be very similar. However on arrival it was very obvious that in many ways, both culturally and historically, the churches are poles apart. Our first evening visit was to a confirmation class, where I was asked to speak to the parish's young people. Having in my head a picture of a typical Church of England parish confirmation class I expected to be sat on a sofa with four or five young people - not a church hall full to bursting with 15 year olds, over 75 of them in all! What was going on?

The next day I was asked to speak again at a confirmation class, and this time there were over 100 candidates, all the same age and all very enthusiastic. It was a truly

incredible sight! I was told that over 90% of 15 year olds are confirmed in Norway every year. It is part of the culture, they said....wow! What are we in England doing wrong?

The next day we were invited to a number of small country parishes with their own youth workers. They had facilities that my youth workers would die for. My immediate question was, How do these parishes manage to do all this and still pay their 'parish share' (that's the financial contribution English parishes make towards the payment of their clergy and towards the running costs of the Diocese)? It was about partnership with the government, I was told. Youth work is done together, collaboratively, and in fact the government pays for it....wow again! Deacons (church workers not *ordained* Deacons as in the Church of England) were employed to do both secular and church youth work, paid for by the state - two birds with one stone. We visited a youth café and nightclub all funded by state money! It seemed like a church youth worker's utopia!



Speaking to a Confirmation Group

The church in Norway seems to be at the heart of the culture and historical identity of the country. It appears to be the spiritual and social guardian of its people, but if you scratch the surface the pressures of social action regulated by the state and the strict parameters within which the church can operate raise a whole load of problems for those working within the church.

'After confirmation where do all your young people go?' I asked one of the Catechists. The answer was simple. 'I have 150 confirmands this year, and when I finish with them I'm on to the next 150. How can I possibly have time to help these young people grow in faith? I only have two hands and eight hours in a day!'

Another question to a deacon was, 'When do you have time to help



Inside the youth café and nightclub

young people in your youth programmes grow in faith?' The answer was, 'There are strict government guidelines and targets for our youth work which allow little if any space for spiritual growth or formation.'

Interestingly, when we attended a youth service (which was fabulous) we realised that, once the confirmands were removed from the picture (and to be confirmed candidates have to attend a minimum number of services, and there is a register....Oh I like that idea!), the numbers were not dissimilar to the number who attend our youth activities here in rural Northumberland. So maybe it's not all bad for me at home.

set itself against the church, faith schools, and Christian initiatives. But in spite of that, we struggle on.

The Norwegian church, on the other hand, enjoys state funding and integrated church programmes with particular focus on social needs, but this gives the church a distinct lack of freedom in its own self-governing because it is beholden to its paymaster. In fact Christian workers are now NOT allowed in the state schools.

So can the gospel survive with such constraints? Can the young people really grow in faith? Well, the early state church managed it so maybe we need to trust in God a little more!



Youth Workers Gary Tate and Nikki Carmichael with Simon (right). As you can see, it was very cold

No, it's not bad - it's just different. The problems faced in Norway are very different from our own. On the face of it, the Church of England struggles along on its own, with no state funding but a freedom to do as it pleases. We don't have many youth workers but the ones we do have are almost exclusively employed to help grow young people's faith, in both schools and community. Yet the Christian faith in Britain seems to suffer frequent prejudice, government legislation often appearing to

obedience to Christ he would reveal new and creative ways of sharing the Good News, whatever the constraints.

Am I still jealous of the facilities the Diocese of Møre has? Yes!

Do I envy them the problems they face? No!

All in all it was a great experience and our love and prayers go to all those we met and shared with. God is working his purpose out!

HOOKED ON BOOKS

Jo Jan Vandenheede suggests a way of entertaining yourself during the coming months

Do you like religion? Do you like history - Tudor history, without Jonathan Rhys Meyers's sexual escapades? How about a thoroughly enjoyable and intelligently set-up whodunit, but with a Reformation twist? Then perhaps this series by C.J.Sansom set in Tudor London starring Matthew Shardlake, a hunchback manic depressive lawyer, and his gruff sidekick and frugal housekeeper, might be just the entertainment you are looking for during the long autumn and winter evenings.

Of all the novels I have read over the summer (ancient Egypt, ancient Rome, ancient Byzantium...) these books have been the ones that got me hooked. Written by a Birmingham alumnus, lawyer-turned-novelist, living in Sussex, the novels are not only exciting to read for sleuth-wannabes but also for history-buffs and religious enthusiasts who like a change from the dusty tomes in the university library.

Set against the booming London of the time, a whole array of 'famous' people pass by, from Henry VIII and his wives, to Cromwell, Cranmer and anyone in between, including some clever referencing to the Continental Reformation, Luther, the burnings of Anabaptists, the dissolution of the monasteries *et cetera*...

Sit back and let yourself be carried off to a thrilling time, solve a crime or two and simply enjoy a good read! There are five Shardlake books: 'Dissolution', 'Dark Fire', 'Sovereign', 'Revelation' and 'Heartstone', all published by Pan Books, London. Get them online or from your local bookshop.

BE PREPARED FOR CHANGE

During his 35 years of ministry Bishop Tamás Fabiny of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Hungary has lived through periods of enormous change. At our Mirfield Conference he drew on some of his own experience as he pointed out to his audience of theological students and people new to authorised ministry some of the opportunities and pitfalls they might encounter in Tomorrow's World.



"I am thankful to God that I could serve at a time when the Church was stigmatized and in the eyes of most people pastoral vocation seemed to be an anachronistic profession without any prospects."

Bishop Fabiny was referring to the dozen or so years during which he served as a Pastor in the Hungarian Church under a totalitarian atheistic dictatorship dominated by the Soviet Union. He explained how, under the process of secularisation after 1948 when the Communists seized power, the Church lost its schools, religious orders were dissolved, many people were imprisoned. At that time many ministers, including Bishop Lajos Ordass, were imprisoned or 'relocated', or forced to relinquish their ministry and become blue-collar workers.

To become a minister in those circumstances meant taking a risk, he said. But in spite of that his own father, a lawyer, responded to God's call and, ready to face suffering if necessary, was prepared to exercise his ministry hidden away in some small village, constantly aware that at any moment the doorbell might ring and the police arrive to take him away. "In open dictatorship the conflict between good and bad revealed itself in black and white so Christian people were willing to embrace suffering," Bishop Fabiny reflected. But paradoxically, following the attempted revolution in 1956, when the dictatorship softened, "the boundaries became dim and many people, including church leaders, made unprincipled compromises". It was all too easy to find a *modus vivendi* – a way of life that turned a blind eye to the excesses of social-

ism in exchange for getting a better job, getting your children into university, getting permission to travel abroad and so on.

"You can imagine what a distorting influence this had on the personality of pastors," the Bishop commented. "For many people 'how to be a minister' meant adapting to the external framework, often going against your own conscience, avoiding certain taboos (in 1956 these included the presence of the Soviet Union and the One-Party system), in exchange for being allowed to minister within the walls of the church in a form of 'vestry-Christianity'." That remains a temptation for ministers today, wherever they are in the world and whatever their social and political context.

Small wonder, then, that when 1989 arrived, and there was regime change in Hungary and throughout Eastern Europe, the churches were unprepared. If you want to find a Biblical metaphor, Bishop Fabiny suggested, you might consider the situation in the sixth century before Christ. The political and social circumstances were thought by many to be solid and unshakeable. But suddenly the Jewish population that had been taken into captivity in the time of Nebuchadnezzar could return home. The parallels are interesting: "It was not the Jewish people who gained their freedom; simply, the constellation of world powers changed, the historical reality changed. Of course, we cannot deny that God can steer his people in very secular ways. With some confidence we can also suppose that confessional behaviour also contributed to some extent

both to the fall of Babylon and to the change that took place in the satellite nations after the Soviet occupation."

Another interesting parallel is that the returning Jews found their country in ruins. Ezra and Nehemiah had to begin their work by clearing debris and rebuilding the Temple. It was the same for the Christians in Hungary after 1989. The churches were in ruins, and the long tiring work of rebuilding had to begin. There was no question of going back to how things were before. What was needed was some strategic thinking. That, too, is something that ministers today have to do in the face of enormous upheaval and change.

But to begin with, Bishop Fabiny told us, the Hungarian people DID try to recapture the old. There was an extensive programme of church building, opening of diaconal institutions and reopening of former church schools. People flocked back to the Church. "In the years after the change of regime the understanding of 'how to be a minister' changed tremendously," he said. "We baptised and confirmed many more people than ever before, and often they were grown-ups. We launched religious education in schools, we could appear on the mass media, and they counted on our services in hospitals, in the army, in prisons and in public life."

Pastors who had formerly been social outcasts, largely hidden from public view, suddenly found themselves in the spotlight, put on a pedestal, courted by the new authorities who regarded them as allies. The cost in terms of ministerial integrity was high. "The emerging minister-manager attitude resulted in a lot of distortion. In the rush many ministers' marriages broke up, pastors became addicted to alcohol or to the internet, they showed symptoms of burn-out, and some even committed suicide. The church leadership tried to help in individual cases, but there were no overarching and organised programmes," we were told.

It was not until 2008 that the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Hungary's new strategy was published. Called 'The Church of Living Stones', it seeks to shift the emphasis away from a culture of reconstruction and institutions to an emphasis on spiritual renewal and growth for Christian people. It encourages partnership between pastors and congregations, each recognising their duty to support the other in their vocation. It recognises the fact that voluntary work and building community is something that lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It asserts that the Church should promote positive attitudes and approaches to sustainability in our world. It advocates a new and more professional approach to church organisation.

Bishop Fabiny said that too many pastors live miserable lives, often because they fail to understand that they need to be what St Paul described as 'all things to all men'. They are to pastor people whose personalities and ideas differ from their own. Some ministers, he said, are full of ideas which appeal to their own types but scandalize others. Others make the mistake of identifying their congregation with their family. They operate in a way that emphasises our mutual com-

panionship as God's children, and "in their sermons they discourage any thought of doubt, complaint or rebellion against God". Some set themselves up as guarantors of law and moral principle and "overburden believers by placing forgiveness into unreachable heights". Others discover they have gifts to stir up crowds. They are charismatic. Their congregations admire them and they become "founders of sects leaving the church". The Bishop concluded, "Even if this is a bit of an exaggeration, almost every pastor can recognise him/herself as in danger of falling into one or more of these types."

Presenting us with a list of pitfalls awaiting the unwary minister, Bishop Fabiny warned, "Sexual sins, financial issues and alcohol are often counted among the ecclesial sins, but unfortunately the list is much longer. Abuse of power in the family and congregation, computer addiction, problems with correct teaching, dishonesty, negligence and laziness are all too common."

There is also a real need to safeguard and preserve the unity and soundness of clergy families because often there is a conflict of interest between family and church. In his role as bishop Tamás Fabiny has to deal with too many crumbling clergy families.

He ended by quoting a film by the Italian director Nanni Moretti entitled '*Habemus Papam*'. The conclave elects a new Pope, but before he can appear on the balcony he changes his mind. 'I am not capable of this,' he says. Rather than bow to Vatican pressure he runs away and finds himself watching a Chekhov play. As a young man his ambition had been to go into the theatre, and he knows the play by heart. It dawns on him that in the world of theatre people can play parts, but it is abundantly clear to him that he is unable to do that in his profession.

"As Anglican or Lutheran pastors we also have to face questions of powerlessness, competence, expectations and conventions," concluded Bishop Fabiny. "We also make a decision for the whole of our life. We would like to meet the trust of the community in such a way that our words and our life remain authentic. We dread living out our profession as a role...wearing masks and costumes that are contrary to our temperament...We have to recognise that we do not have to be Vicars of Christ on earth. We are not infallible. We do not have to play a role...because the God who sends us, and the church members waiting for us, want us to be just simple pastors...If they can recognise that in us they can say with heartfelt joy: *Habemus pastorem!*"



"I am not capable of this!" Fortunately we do not have to be Vicars of Christ on earth!



SOUND ADVICE FOR EDUCATORS

Dr Christina Baxter is rather unusual in the Church of England in having been a lay Principal of a Church of England Theological College. At the Mirfield Conference she drew on her extensive experience of helping to prepare people for ordained and lay ministry in the Church. Helen Harding offers this summary of her presentation which can be read in full on the website.

As a trainer Dr Baxter believes that “we need to form people who listen to God, who think and learn and act appropriately. We need to help them to learn how to look around them, how to understand what’s going on. Then we need to help them experience how to pray and to think and to reflect in the light of the theology that they’ve learned, so that they may create strategies and structures which will be appropriate for their context”.

The hidden curriculum

Anyone involved in education must recognise that the hidden curriculum is far more powerful than the overt curriculum, she said. People are learning all the time, not just through the formal timetable in the lectures and the planned education sessions of a training establishment. “They’re also learning in the in-between times, and they’re learning some very, very powerful messages in those times,” she said. Classes or lectures are very significant, but these are not the most powerful places where people learn. These are more likely to be at home and among their peer groups – over coffee when they speak of things from the heart. The real challenge teachers face is to try to teach people, or help them to learn, things which contravene what they’ve learned in the hidden curriculum.

Learning as transformative

Education by its very nature is transformative. Sometimes transformation comes suddenly; sometimes only very slowly. People can sometimes be very resistant to being

transformed, while at other times welcoming it. The prospect of education can make people nervous. What kinds of changes might face them on the way? Might they be changes they may not want to make or which are too costly? For Dr Baxter this all fits with the notion in Romans chapter 12. Repentance is about the change of mind, about being transformed. So, when planning both the hidden curriculum and overt curriculum, some of the questions that need to be asked are: What are the transformations we should be helping people towards? What other things may help those transformations to happen? What are the blockages that need to be removed? What are the experiences that will enable people to engage in that whole process of transformation?

Learning as a life-long process

Dr Baxter described the difficulty of preparing people for a life in mission and ministry because, she said, “I simply don’t know where they will go and what they will be faced with.” So, she continued, “All we can do is prepare them for *this* stage of the journey and help them to be the kind of people who will go on learning, who will go on resourcing themselves as they travel through the future decades and find themselves facing all kinds of circumstances which we have not anticipated and could not possibly have seen.” Anyone training for ministry needs to be helped to commit themselves to this life-long process of learning. And this, of course, fits very well with the Christian understanding of Christians being disciples, life-long learners of God, people who are continually open to what God may yet choose to reveal to them.

Learning as self-directed

One aim in adult ministerial training is that the students will become self-directing learners. The staff respon-

sible for training them will offer their own expertise and knowledge and their professional assessment of what would be helpful at any particular stage, but people coming into training have all kinds of backgrounds and different aims in view, so the way in which they learn from the material provided and the contexts offered will be different because of their own sense of where they might be needing to go. To continue to be life-long, self-directed learners they will need to recognise what they need, where and how to go to learn it, and how to interact with it and be transformed by it.

Learning as shared experience

Dr Baxter admitted that what she had said about self-direction can sound rather individualistic. But she and the staff at St John’s College in Nottingham are clear that learning is communal as well as individual. “Most of the time when we have close contact with students we’re not giving a talk or lecture”, she said. “We’re helping people to learn - sometimes through presentations or preparation, and a good deal of the time through talking with one another.” This is essential because, at the end of any formal period of training, people will need to go on learning by talking and sharing resources with one another. Learning is always a two-way thing. “We are training people ... who know a great deal more about the world than I will ever know ... and I will be learning from those I’m being paid to teach,” she said. And students will find that “some of their most important learning has been learning from one another, not necessarily from people like me”!

Learning as integrative

Education needs to be broad sweep as well as detailed. This is vitally important for Christians in their world of work and at home as well as in the

public ministry of the Church, because all the time they will be engaging with people who live in different contexts, who have other experiences, and who have very little understanding of the Christian faith. Those involved in mission and ministry need to be able to help people make connections between the different worlds they inhabit, by listening to other people talking about their areas of expertise and offering back what might be relevant from the Christian tradition.

Learning for Mission

Many people today now recognise that the Christian Church in England and the West is as much in a situation of mission as the Christian Church in some other parts of the world. This is as it should be. Dr Baxter emphasised her belief that “mission is part of the DNA of the Christian faith and that we need to teach and help students to understand that that is what they are engaged in”. By mission she doesn’t just mean evangelism, though that is an important part of it. Rather, that ministers are going to be involved in mission whether they are in an idyllic little rural village or in a multi-cultural inner city where many people are of other faiths or of no faith. In all of Britain and the West “mission is really essential”, she said.

Learning hermeneutics

An important technical part of theology is the process of hermeneutics – the art of interpretation. It is vital that people training for ministry and mission understand the Christian tradition, the Scriptures and texts from Christian history. They must appreciate something of how they were understood whenever they were originally written, how they may be read and understood today, and the part they play in the whole story. They also need to learn how to read their many different individual contexts, and to understand them in the light of the Christian tradition so that they can communicate well with other people. None of this, Dr Baxter said, can be learned in a moment, but it is an important part of any training that is offered.

Spiritual formation

This is an area of development which, according to Dr Baxter, should never be left to chance. She says, “If people are going to be life-long disciples and they’re going to be life-long ministers then relationship with God is absolutely crucial and we can’t in any sense take that for granted – we must ensure that people understand how it grows, that they’re given the facilities to help that growth to happen, and that they’re given the tools to ensure that the growth continues throughout their life.” At St John’s they do this by setting the whole of a student’s training in the context of a life of prayer. They meet regularly together in smaller and larger groups for prayer and worship because, as she says, “the day by day discipleship of corporate prayer is absolutely crucial”. Individual worship, prayer, study and reflection are also vital parts in understanding and listening to God. Dr Baxter reminded us that “the Christian life cannot be lived alone, it has to be lived corporately ... with other Christians”.

Personal formation

Dr Baxter continued to develop this idea. As well as individual spiritual formation and corporate formation it is important to form people individually and personally. Education is transformative and if people are going to lead in mission and ministry then they need to understand themselves and where they’ve come from, and they need to be free enough to engage with other people. This can be one of the really big things in people’s training and preparation. For many it can be quite liberating to understand how God sees them, rather than how they see themselves or how the Church, or their family, or the world might see them. Dr Baxter recalled one woman who had come to the college for vocational exploration, but who had decided that she couldn’t serve God because of something that had happened in her past. Some years later she was able to embark on formal training, and that “had all become possible because ... she had realised that effectively she was living a lie; she was

allowing things that other people had said about her and done to her in the past to hold her captive”. She had taken time to resolve this issue and to be liberated from it.

Forming people communally

“We’re not good at helping people to learn the skills of how to live in community,” Dr Baxter said. “Society has all kinds of problems about the fractures of community – economic and personal. It affects us in thousands of ways, and one of the precious things that the Gospel proclaims is reconciliation, and we need to help people to learn to live that out in community so that they themselves can be the creators and the fosterers of community.”

Learning how to dialogue

Dr Baxter concluded, “It is important that people learn to read the global so that they can deal with the local”. She suggested that many people in training for ministry need to learn how to dialogue with others - those from a secular context, or from another faith, or from another denomination - to learn how to understand and respect others, to work with others. This is all about attitude which is something which formation is addressing all of the time. Dr Baxter passionately believes that those involved in mission and ministry must be ready to preach the Gospel even in the midst of ordinary conversations. As those training for ministry or already authorised as ministers, she said, we need to be confident about sharing the Gospel with others, not in a way which forces it on them in our dialogues, but in a way which offers it to them and which is willing to listen to what is being offered back to us.



The hidden curriculum at work



Bishop Lind describes himself as a dedicated contextual theologian. “I am going to try to weave into the story of Bonhoeffer’s life some of his thinking because I think that what we say is very much related to what we do in our everyday life. His life story is very, very dramatic, and is crucial to an understanding of what he said. It is easily misunderstood when you don’t see the context in which it was said or written.”

He graphically recounted the events of Monday 9th of April, 1945, the day Dietrich Bonhoeffer was exe-



Memorial at Flossenbürg (photo Hawk Eyes)

LESSONS IN LETTERS FROM PRISON

The Rt Rev Martin Lind, former Bishop of Linköping in Sweden, was just 19 years old when he first encountered Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s ‘Letters and Papers from Prison’.

The book got under his skin and he developed a respect for Bonhoeffer that has deepened throughout the course of his life. At our Conference in Mirfield he shared some insights relevant to people starting off in Christian ministry today.

cuted in Flossenbürg Concentration Camp. But how did he come to be there? Bishop Lind traced his life story beginning with his birth on 4th February, 1906 in Breslau, Poland. His father, Karl, and his mother, Paula von Hase, and their families had a great influence on young Dietrich, and not least his paternal grandmother, Julie Tafel. She had many grandchildren, but she loved him the most and came to regard Dietrich as the person who would rescue Germany from Hitler.

Conversation around the Bonhoeffer’s dinner table was always lively, revolving around poetry, drama, music and, of course, politics. But one subject was never discussed – religion. Karl, a psychologist, was never very interested in those things, and his brothers agreed that theology was for yesterday, not for today.

In 1918, when Dietrich was twelve years old, his brother Walter was called up to the First World War as a soldier. It’s hard for us to understand just what an honour this was thought to be for the family. They all went to the railway station in Berlin and waved him off. Two weeks later he was dead, and Walter’s death was one of the key formative influences in the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. After that everything was very different. Mother Paula went into deep mourning. Dinners were eaten in silence.

Bishop Lind told us that when he was 14 years old Dietrich was asked what he would be when he grew up. He replied, ‘I would like

to be a theologian – and I will write against death.’ Everyone laughed, including his parents and his sisters and brothers. “But,” said the Bishop, “I say, and though it is controversial I know that some of my research fellows will agree, that everything that he wrote was about death. He dedicated his whole life not to a struggle against death, because that would be too much, but in a reflection on how you relate to death.”



Bonhoeffer became an implacable opponent of Adolf Hitler’s National Socialism which in so many ways denied the value of human life. His opposition led to his

imprisonment, and you can read the rest of the story as Bishop Lind recounted it in the account of the Mirfield Conference on the Society’s website. He outlined many of the key moments in Bonhoeffer’s life, and looked at how they influenced his thinking and his theological understanding. Then he drew out eight key theological points he wanted to share with his audience.

Longing is Painful

In his ‘Letters and Papers from Prison’ Bonhoeffer suggests that perhaps the most painful thing a person can experience is a longing for something or someone that is unattainable. He wrote this when he was in prison and newly engaged to be married to Maria von

Wedemeyer, an 18 year old woman with whom he had fallen in love. There in prison he was longing for her. He wrote her notes that remained hidden for years but which were eventually published as 'Letters from Cell 92'.

When you long for something or someone, Bonhoeffer said, it is tempting to make some other thing or some other person a substitute for the object of your longing. For example, if the person you long for dies, and you will never in this life be reunited, you can never have a substitute. You can enter into a new relationship, of course. But no-one can become a substitute for the one you have lost because that belittles the person you are casting in the role of substitute. And the worst temptation of all is when a Christian person says that faith in God is a substitute for a man or a woman, because this belittles God. God can never be a substitute for someone you are longing for. On the other hand, God wants you to long for something and someone; he wants us all to live a life of longing.

People are Real and not Abstractions

It is not possible, Bonhoeffer says, to think of a person as an abstraction. Men and women are flesh and blood. You cannot and must not deny the real person. Not even God can be an abstraction or mere thought. That would be to deny the living God. In Jesus God became man, and therefore everything human is blessed. It is tempting for Christians to deny the reality of persons, says Bonhoeffer, by looking down on them or despising them. It is equally wrong and damaging to glorify a person, to put them on a pedestal. Bishop Lind used as an illustration a characteristic of the teenager. "One minute they say 'I am the centre of the universe, I am the greatest, the most beautiful ...' and the next minute they plunge into the depths and say,

'I am nothing; I am a failure, nobody loves me, I am not worth loving ...' Sadly, this kind of dance between the highs and the lows can be with us all our whole lives." Bonhoeffer was clear that God does not love either the idealised person or the diminished person – he loves the real person. God loves us as we are. Jesus Christ is not primarily a teacher. He is primarily a real man. He is, in truth, THE real man. He doesn't love a theoretical 'good' person – just the real person, warts and all.

Solitude is Necessary



The person who cannot be alone cannot manage community. We must all practice the art of being comfortable with ourselves. 'Those who are afraid of solitude should avoid community,' Bonhoeffer says. I was born alone, I take my cross alone, I take my responsibility alone, I pray alone (I pray in community, it is true, but in a sense my prayer is always mine), I strive with myself and with life alone, and I die alone. Solitude is not the same as loneliness, nor the feeling of being abandoned. It is necessary to accept and to affirm solitude.

Silence is Necessary

Silence is a sign of solitude. They belong together. Bonhoeffer asserts this in his book 'Life Together'. Silence is necessary for everyone, not just for priests or monks

or nuns. It has to be practised because silence is waiting for God, and for what God wants to say to us. There is a difference between silence and muteness. Silence is a conscious step. I go into silence and I live with myself, and I have to practice silence. Silence is a gift from God. 'No-one speaks better or more reliably than the person who often is silent', wrote Bonhoeffer, quoting Thomas à Kempis. So passionate was his belief that while he was working in Finkenwalde in Germany from 1935 to 1937, as Director of the Confessing Church Seminar for Pastors, he introduced an order of morning prayer which included no less than 30 minutes silence. He was heavily criticised for this, said Bishop Lind, but the idea of the silence was to help people come to terms with being at home with themselves, and to help them explore and to accept their inner self.

There is only One World

In Bonhoeffer's times theologians often spoke in terms of 'two world thinking'. The spiritual and the worldly worlds were distinguished, they said, even by Martin Luther. But Bonhoeffer said there is only ONE world, and that is the world of God. 'Whoever wants to be a Christian outside this world denies Christ who was born into this world.' What is needed is a fundamental acceptance that this world where I am living is the world of God, loved by God, reconciled by God through Jesus Christ. He came here. He lived here as a human being. And when Bonhoeffer writes from prison about 'religionless Christianity' people find it hard to understand. But, said Bishop Lind, "I think it IS understandable if you see the situation in which it was written. People claimed special 'rooms' for religion. Religion was something that you lived and practised in special places. It was a private matter. Then you left that 'room' and went into the world, into your profession, for

example.” For Bonhoeffer this kind of ‘two room living’ is impossible. Christianity is in this sense not a religion that can be boxed. How can Christ be the Lord of the whole world if he is restricted to a little box?

There is Cheap Grace and Expensive Grace

Bishop Lind told us that in the book ‘Discipleship’ we find a very controversial idea. Writing from prison, Bonhoeffer himself said that this idea might be misunderstood, but he stands by it. The Bishop declared that it is an idea that can only be understood if you remember that Bonhoeffer was writing during the struggle against Nazism, against the theory that denied the value of every human being. Every Sunday Christian pastors were proclaiming that God loves you and gives you his grace, but their message had no application in real life. It was preached on Sunday and then on Monday the preachers and those who heard them were accepting the torture that went on in Gestapo HQ, or the oppression of homosexuals, or handicapped people, or the Jews or Jehovah’s Witnesses. Cheap grace is a justification of the sin, not of the sinner. It is grace that is handed out in the market for the lowest possible price. “I remember Martin Luther who said that the Devil takes the truth and mixes it with a lie so that you cannot defend yourself,” said Bishop Lind. “That is the case here. There is some truth in saying

that grace is given freely by God. But this grace has consequences... Grace is given freely by God, but it is not so that you can do what you like. Expensive grace is given to a man who badly needs it, and it is given to us with consequences, so that as children of God we can fight for human values.”

Before God and with God we Live Without God

This is another of Bonhoeffer’s very controversial ideas and is found in one of his letters. “I think Bonhoeffer meant it exactly as it is written,” said Bishop Lind. “Two sentences later in the same letter he quotes Jesus’ cry from the cross recorded in Mark and Matthew: ‘Why have you forsaken me?’ The Gospels record no answer to that question. Jesus cries out in despair, and I think Christ goes down to the very lowest position in our human life, and maybe if we are honest with ourselves we may all find such moments in our lives when we feel that everybody has forsaken us. Maybe we should not deny that, and recognise it as a lowest possible point where we can be before God and where we can be with God but where we can have the experience that everybody, including God, has forsaken us.”

The Bishop added this comment: “This implies that we have to take responsibility for our own lives. We can’t simply say God will help me, God will do it. I’m created by

God in his image with responsibility for my life. I am responsible for my acts, and for my life. This could be elaborated more but I think it’s enough for you to understand that I would say yes to Bonhoeffer’s very tough idea.”

I would like to be a Real Man

Bishop Lind concluded his presentation by referring to a letter Bonhoeffer wrote on 21st July 1944, the day after the most significant plot against Hitler had failed. In it he recalls being in New York (1930-31), sitting having a cup of coffee with a friend (possibly Jean Lasalle, a French Reformed Pastor) and being asked, ‘What is your dream for the future? What would you like finally to become?’ When Dietrich did not answer immediately his friend said, ‘I want to become a saint!’ Dietrich replied, ‘I believe you will become a saint. But now I know what I would like to say.’ Bishop Lind paused. “I think this reveals something rather deep about Bonhoeffer’s own identity,” he said. “What he wrote was, ‘I don’t want to be anything special. I don’t want to be a special church leader. I don’t want to be a very good pastor who everyone speaks about. I don’t want to be anything particular. I would like to be a human being – a real man.’ And in the same book of letters he writes, ‘Jesus does not call men to a new religion, but to life.’”

MIRFIELD CONFERENCE WAS INSPIRING

A full account of the Society’s September conference appears on the website and includes links to the daily YouTube bulletins. Here, Jo Jan Vandenheede, a student of theology from Belgium, offers his personal reflection.

“It took years to plan and it was all over in a flash.” I am quoting Dick Lewis, one of the ‘flying reporters’ at the Mirfield Conference and he is, of course, absolutely right; come and gone already, but what a flash and a bang it has been!

After having gathered our pack at King’s Cross, and a most enjoyable train journey through the English

countryside, our fellowship of nations arrived at Mirfield, having multiplied along the way. On the short drive to our digs, I noticed that the College of the Resurrection, our headquarters for the week, was not as isolated as I had pictured. The town was very close by. However, as I would soon discover, there exists a demarcation line between the monastery and its surrounding neighbours - not a gaping abyss, mind,

but a polite distance, both visible and audible (the Community observes the Great Silence from 9pm till 9am). Though we did not fully partake in the communal life of the brothers, apart from the occasional Evensong, they had appointed their 'delegates' to welcome us, guide us, join us in prayer and discussion and, perhaps, keep a little eye on us!

This close proximity of the secular to the sacred set the tone for the presentations over the following days and it raised important questions of perception and communication. How do we, as ordained or lay ministers, bring the Gospel to places we never thought we would go to, and in language we never



Small groups hard at work

thought we would use? Who are we that we would be so bold as to even try and venture outside the theological comfort zone? What does it all mean?

Some of the questions that confronted us were more practical in nature, others were more theological, and yet more were anthropological. The fact that the Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Theological Conference (ANBTC) was holding its own parallel, yet interwoven, sessions with us helped merge a variety of questions and possible answers. I gladly made use of the option for members of the ALS and ANBTC to 'cross over' between the two sets of presentations.

All the speakers brought their own twist to the story, their own partic-

ular and peculiar vision. Looking at the line-up of papers, I had tried to anticipate what the content of each might be, according to their titles. I was very happy and humbled that my prejudices were bulldozed over. A different viewpoint need not be a disappointment!

Sessions were interspersed with small group discussions in a very timely way. These often involved rearranging the garden furniture. There were plenty of breaks during which to chat to other participants and organisers, welcome opportunities to get to know people and hear their stories, their inside gossip, or their likes or dislikes of the proceedings.

As we were gathered from the four corners of the earth it certainly made for interesting encounters. Luckily the Great Silence did not apply to the refectory's impromptu bar, for if it had the local pub would no doubt have seen a doubling of its weekly revenue!

Our field trip to the lovely Bolton Abbey was a great success. The coach rides to and fro gave us a view of the northern English industrial cities, Leeds and Bradford, which turned out much greener and cleaner than I had imagined; yet another stereotype bit the dust! And, let's face it, the gorgeous

weather contributed greatly to the atmosphere and energy of what most certainly had become our conference.

To recharge our spiritual

energy the brothers had graciously opened up the lower chapel, where I noticed that Low and High Church Lutherans and Anglicans worshipped together alongside Roman Catholics and Orthodox.

Simple Morning Prayers gently started off the day, with the exception of a rousing 'A Mighty Fortress' which made me want to hoist the Luther Rose Flag and salute! As for the several Eucharistic celebrations, I must admit that I have never received Communion that often in the space of one week. It was very un-Low Countries' Lutheran of me, but it felt absolutely right!

None of it would have happened without the tireless efforts and organisational skills of Bishop Rupert Hoare and Pastor Roy Long, Fr Alex Faludy and Bishop Walter Jagucki, the ALS's very own Golden Boys.

A further two thumbs up, I reckon, are due to Dick Lewis and Helen Harding for filming and editing the entertaining and informative daily bulletins (allowing me my fifteen seconds of fame on YouTube).

I definitely took the enthusiasm of this conference home with me, and I have learned a lot and am inspired to undertake further research. I cannot wait for the Society's next 'little do', the Annual General Meeting in London in March 2013, and its next 'big do', the Conference in Hungary, September 2014.



A Eucharist in the Lower Chapel

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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

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CREATION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS: ADAM IN WORSHIP AND IN THE WORLD

It is an all too commonly held view that most of the issues we face today were not those that faced the early Christian community and so there is no point in looking to the Bible for relevant guidance.

In the three Bible Studies she led at the Mirfield Conference Dr Margaret Barker suggested that this may not necessarily be the case.

Dr Barker began her study with the Dead Sea Scrolls as indicative of what Jesus and his contemporaries might have believed about the Creation and the place of human beings within it. Throughout her three sessions she first offered us a view of how the Old Testament may have been understood in First Century Judaism. Then she demonstrated from the New Testament how this understanding passed into the early Christian writings. And what she said, and the way she said it, continually called into question the ways in which most of us teach the Biblical material in our sermons and study groups. She gave us a whole new understanding of what Jesus, St Paul and the early Christians believed about creation, the first and second Adams, the concept of covenant and the calling of Christian ministers.



It is impossible to record all that she shared with us, but those of us who sat at her feet think it desirable that you know of her work and enjoy the benefits of it for yourself. You can catch the briefest of

glimpses into her approach by visiting the Society's website, watching the conference daily bulletins and reading the conference report.

More importantly, much of what she shared can be found in her book 'Creation: A Biblical Vision for the Environment' published by T & T Clark in 2010 (ISBN 978-0-567-01547-1 paperback).

All who attended the conference recommend it as a wonderful introduction to first century Jewish thinking and Temple theology.

