

The Window

MAY 2022

THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY

Issue No. 129

We hope you enjoy this issue of your Newsletter.

A Reports of our 2022 Annual Meeting pages 2-9

News of founder member's death pages 10-11

Martin Luther and Pilgrimage pages 15-17

A Hymn for Ukraine Page 12

And much more



LATE NEWS

As this issue of the newsletter went for printing we learnt of the death of **Wolfram Neumann** in January this year. He and his wife **Anne** have been members of our Society for many years. We send our condolences to **Anne** and to his many friends, and we hope to include a fuller appreciation of his life of Christian service in the next issue.

THE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY AND THE CHURCH OF NORWAY IN TRONDHEIM

Members of our Society are looking forward to their Conference in July to be held in Trondheim, where Anglicans and Lutherans enjoy a very special relationship as the Rev Sheila Rosenthal, Anglican Chaplain there, explains.

For over 40 years there have been Anglicans in Trondheim, one way or another. Today, what started as a group of mums wanting their children to grow up with an English understanding of Christianity has flourished into a practical and rewarding relationship with our Lutheran friends.

As the Anglicans here have no building in which to worship, we are therefore guests of very generous hosts who allow us unfettered use of their magnificent premises – namely, Nidaros Dom, Var Frue Church and occasionally the Archbishop's Palace. If stones were to cry out (Luke 19.40) then the stones that house our worship would sing of centuries of worship in Norwegian and with various other languages mingling in the mortar!

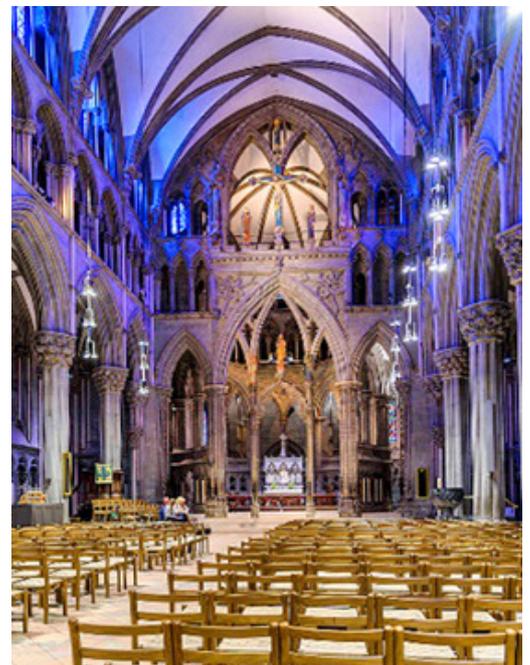
When we meet purely as Anglicans, with no other purpose than to worship God in English, then we use the Anglican liturgy. When we meet with our Norwegian hosts in Christ then we use translations of the two Churches' texts to create a balanced and reverent presentation of faith.

This is literally a 'work of the people'. This weaving of a text for acts of worship is best seen on some of the high days and holy days, especially on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Easter Sunday is a big occasion for both congregations so space determines that we have separate services. We also meet every month when the Anglicans take an evening Eucharist for all comers. This is in English throughout – yet we are joined by the regular 6 o'clock Norwegian congregation with challenging faithfulness! The Norwegians are a steadfast nation which shows in their persistence for worship. In Advent we hold our annual service of nine lessons and carols in the Dom (pictured here) and are graced with

the glorious singing of one of the cathedral's many choirs. This service has become a feature of the Christmas scene in Trondheim and the free tickets go like hotcakes!

Liturgically we follow the lead of our hosts when we co-celebrate. We have readings in both languages and bless in both languages too. Hymns are interesting as the Church of Norway sits whereas the Church of England stands to sing, so a clarifying protocol is re-established every service. Seasonal colours vary between us too at times, with 'Lenten array' being unknown in Nidaros.

It could be argued we punch above our weight here in Trondheim, being a small congregation yet playing a notable part in the life of the Christian community, but our hosts are very gracious in so many ways. It is a pleasure, joy and privilege to be the Body of Christ here in this ancient capital city of kings, the spiritual and the temporal.



THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MARCH 5TH 2022

Welcome

The Rev Bernd Rapp welcomed members to the newly refurbished St Mary's German Lutheran Church in Sandwich Street, London. Then Bishop Michael Ipgrave opened the meeting with prayer.

Election of Co-Moderators

Bishop David Hamid took the chair. Bishop Michael Ipgrave (Anglican) and the Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama (Lutheran) were proposed, seconded and elected unopposed. Bishop David returned the chair to Bishop Michael!

Minutes and Co-Moderators' Report

After the minutes of the Annual Meeting in 2021 had been approved Michael invited Jaakko, who was attending on Zoom, to present the Co-Moderators' Report for 2021.

Jaakko reminded the meeting of last year's Annual Meeting held on Zoom and the virtual conference on "Stumbling Blocks and Springboards" held during May 2021. Both these events were fully reported on the Society's website and in The Window, and had been widely appreciated.

The Executive Committee had met five times mainly on Zoom and, among other things, had made preparations for the conference taking place in Trondheim in July 2022, made contact with theological colleges and faculties, reviewed the tripartite talks between Anglicans, Lutherans, and Methodists, our connections with the World Council of Churches and the possibility of participation in the General Assembly in 2022, and also in the Protestant Kirchentag in 2023.

The work of our National Coordinators in furthering the work and goals of the Society was both acknowledged and appreciated. The website, www.anglican-lutheran-society.org, had been updated, and Facebook sites in the UK, Finland, Germany, the Benelux countries and for our Student Members were being maintained. We are also on Twitter. The Window had appeared four times and thanks were expressed to the Society's secretary, Canon Dick Lewis, its innovative and active editor.

Because of the COVID pandemic, expenditure during the year was well down whilst subscriptions had been steadily maintained. Mr Patrick Litton was thanked for taking good care of the accounts.

Cooperation with the Council of Lutheran Churches (CLC) in the UK had been strengthened, their General Secretary, Anna Krauss, having accepted an invitation to attend the Society's committee meetings as an observer. Good cooperation also continued with the Lutheran Church in Great Britain.

Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter has resigned as Lutheran President due to illness. Thanks were expressed to him. The new Co-Presidents are Bishop David Hamid (Anglican) and Bishop Jana Jeruma-Grinberga (Lutheran).

Treasurer's Report

Patrick Litton, our Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting but had circulated the financial statements and a written report. 'The Society has had a good year,' he stated, 'owing to increased subscriptions and a large donation received for bursaries to fund students. This will be used for the Trondheim Conference in 2022.' Expenses had been kept low largely because the committee was forced to meet on Zoom and more members had agreed to receive The Window by email.

During 2021 the Society had invested some funds with the CCLA, one of the UK's largest charity fund managers, where the return is greater than bank interest. 'Capital growth has significantly increased the value of these investments,' Patrick said. 'Our initial investment of £13,000 is now worth over £15,000 – although I caution that 2022 may see a downturn in the markets.'

The meeting agreed to appoint Mr R H Andrews as our **Independent Examiner of Accounts**

National Coordinators' Reports

Jaakko Rusama reported that in 2021 there were 160 members and supporters, most of them in **Finland**. No subscriptions were collected because of the pandemic. The Society's Finnish branch has worked closely with the Church of England Chaplaincy in Finland, the Anglican Church of St Nicholas. He reminded the meeting that, for decades, the Finnish Lutheran Church has provided financial support to the Society each year.



The Rev Dr Miriam Haar said that The Window is a very important tool for promoting the Society in **Germany**. Due to Covid there had been no events organised by the German branch, but informal exchanges and networking mainly through emails, phone calls or conversations among ALS members in the context of other meetings had taken place. In January 2022 just one new member joined the Society.

During 2021 Miriam had organised a first "Junges Forum Anglikanismus" (Young Forum on Anglicanism - JuFA) in her capacity as "Anglikanismusreferentin" (study secretary for Anglicanism) at the *Konfessionskundliches Institut* (Institute für Ecumenical Studies and Research) in Bensheim. It was attended by about 20 participants from Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The theme was "Unity and Diversity in Anglican Churches". The 2nd JuFA will take place from 10th-12th June 2022 in Bensheim in hybrid format and on the theme of "Liturgy in Anglican Churches".

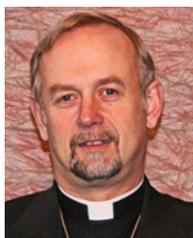
On 7th-8th July 2021 the Meissen Theological Conference took place online on "Episcopacy in Theory and Practice".

Miriam attended and gave a paper on the role of identity and its relevance in the understanding of episcopate, including in its relations with other Churches, from the perspective of the EKD. The proceedings will be published in Spring 2022 as "Towards Interchangeability: Reflections on Episcopacy in Theory and Practice" by Mark Chapman, Frank-Dieter Fischbach, Friederike Nüssel & Mathias Grebe.

At the end of November Miriam attended an online Meissen Partnership Consultation for German (EKD) Regional Churches (*Landeskirchen*), districts (*Kirchenkreise/Kirchenbezirke*) or parishes that have partnerships with dioceses, parishes, ... of the Church of England. There are about 30 of these so-called "Meissen Partnerships" at the moment.

Miriam also reported that the text of the dialogue document between The Episcopal Church (TEC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (ELKB) has been completed. The document "Sharing the Gift of Communion (Augsburg Agreement)" proposes full communion between the TEC and the ELKB. The next step is that the synods of both Churches will discuss it and will decide on its acceptance.

She raised the issue that there is a hesitancy among some German Lutherans about becoming a member of an organisation that is "only Lutheran" and not "evangelisch" in the German sense meaning "Lutheran, Reformed and United" as they are convinced that ecumenical progress in Germany needs to go beyond the Lutheran tradition and can only be made within the context of the confessional traditions of the EKD member Churches. So this is an ongoing discussion, and something the Society must consider.



The Rev Fredrik Ulseth reported that COVID had not affected planning the Conference in Trondheim July 2022. The Church of **Norway's** Committee on Ecumenical and Foreign Relations is fully committed to the Conference, and he believes that the Church of Norway would like to use the Society in working

for better ecumenical understanding. His hope is that the publicity for the conference will increase awareness of the Society and its work. He also reported improved contact with the Church of England in Norway. The new Senior Chaplain, the Rev Canon Joanna Udal, is a dedicated ecumenist, and has become involved in part of the Conference planning process.

The Ven Richard Wottle reported that the Society has seventeen members in **Sweden**, though not all had paid their membership fees! He had planned a meeting in Sigtuna but the pandemic got in the way. There are only two Anglican churches in Sweden, in Stockholm and Gothenburg, both well established and serving mainly British people living there. The fastest growing congregations in Sweden are all Pentecostal and this means that much of the historical heritage of the Church of Sweden is rapidly changing. But the main problem for Christians in Sweden is not of an ecumenical nature, but concerns



the rapidly dwindling number of Christians *per se*. Today only half of the newborns are baptised and Christians will very soon form a minority of the population. 'All this means that we are certainly facing a very interesting future when very basic missionary work will be the top priority for us all!' he wrote.



Tom VanPoole attended the meeting on Zoom. He said that he had little to report from **USA**. As things happen he writes or provides articles for The Window and he hopes that members will be kept up to date by reading them.

Membership

Helen Harding, our Membership Secretary, reported that during 2021 30 new members had joined of whom 21 are students. This means that students form one-third of the UK membership. Our National Co-ordinators have been contacting seminaries and theological training departments in their countries during the year in an attempt to attract more student members. The Society feels that encouraging ecumenical thinking and understanding among theological students is very important, which is why the Society offers them free membership while they are training for ministry. It is very encouraging that we currently have members in 37 countries.

Elections

Mr Patrick Litton (Anglican) was confirmed as **Treasurer** and our **Secretary**, Canon Dick Lewis, was re-elected.

The meeting approved the appointment of the Rt Rev Jana Jeruma-Grinberga (Lutheran) and the Rt Rev David Hamid (Anglican) as **Co-Presidents**.

The **Executive Committee** had been elected at last year's Annual Meeting to serve for three years.

There being no other business the Annual General Meeting closed with a blessing, and we turned to the topic for the day:

Anglican-Lutheran Society 2022 Annual Meeting
SATURDAY 5 MARCH | 10AM-4.30PM
CLIMATE EMERGENCY
 Connecting faith and community
 £20 Tickets (includes lunch)
 An opportunity to come together to learn, act, engage and create as we examine our individual and common roles in addressing climate change.
 Tickets from St Mary's German Church (in person & online) 10 Sandwich Street, London EC3 5BJ
 angluthsociety@outlook.com www.anglican-lutheran-society.org

CLIMATE EMERGENCY: CONNECTING FAITH AND COMMUNITY

Canon Giles Goddard gave the first presentation. He is Vicar of St John's, Waterloo in London.

He previously worked in social Housing and at the John Lewis Partnership.

He chairs 'Faith for the Climate' supporting inter-faith work on climate change.

You can find his full presentation on the Society's website. This is a summary.



Faith and the Climate

Giles began with some Biblical background, focusing on Genesis 2.4-8 and Job 12.7-10. 'We are all stardust,' he said, 'taken from the dust of the earth. If the earth doesn't flourish then we don't flourish ... For me, God is the life-force; he gives us life and breathes life into us and into the whole cosmos.' Isaiah 24.3-7 could be speaking to us right now about the way in which we have abused the world in our commitment to consumption, he continued.

He referred to a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that states that urgent action is needed because the consequences of climate change are already amongst us. The world is in crisis,



Quoting Luke 4.16-19, and Jesus' concern for the oppressed, Giles reminded the meeting that the people who are suffering most are the poor who have contributed least to climate change. 'They are the poor and the oppressed and it is up to us in the rich West to do whatever we can to reverse the effects of climate change as soon as we possibly can.'

Giles then described how, since 2009, he had been involved in climate issues and how, in 2014, he had tabled a motion to the General Synod of the Church of England as a result of which the Environment Working Group was set up which reports directly to the Archbishops' Council. It had raised awareness in all kinds of ways, and led to the Church of England disinvesting from tar and coal. The Church of England has now set a target of being carbon neutral by 2030. 'That was a surprise to the working group because they had put forward a date of 2045,' Giles commented, 'but Synod said that was not good enough.'

Faith for the Climate

Giles is chairman of "Faith for the Climate" which he set up in 2014 and which works across the world with an organi-

sation called "Green Faith International". In October 2021 a day of action saw faith-based protests in 160 countries. 'Our vision for Faith for the Climate is this: We envisage a world where people across all faiths work together to tackle climate change,' he said. 'People of all faiths put our differences to one side and work for climate change ... We want to model good interfaith working.' At COP-26 in Glasgow all kinds of faith-based bodies were able to pray and work together for climate action.

Climate Justice

Climate justice means those who are more responsible for causing climate change doing more to tackle it. It means taking responsibility for our actions. 'Loss and Damage,' Giles explained, 'is about recompensing poorer countries that simply do not have the resources to adapt or adjust or push back the effects of climate change now ... We are told that governments are now taking it more seriously partly because of the actions of faith groups in the UK.'

Lament

There is a place for lament, Giles accepted, and climate grief is a real thing, and things could get much worse. 'But if we stop at lament then we give up. So it is also important to hold onto hope.'

Hope

Giles is encouraged by the Green Faith International events last year, and by what happened at COP-26, where many people were talking and trying to make a difference. But his basis for hope 'is because we are backed up by the word of God.'



He read Jesus's parable of the sower (Mark 4.1-9). 'The thing that gives me comfort is the last bit,' he told the meeting: "Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." It seems to me that if we do the right actions and they fall in the right spot they can make disproportionate amounts of difference ... Some will fall on bad soil, but the one that doesn't will make a difference.'



➡ **What can we do?**

Giles ended his presentation by suggesting ways in which local congregations might get constructively involved in working for climate justice. These included joining Eco-Church, supporting Christian Aid's work on climate justice and loss and damage, and using the resources offered by Hope for the Future, Tearfund, Faith for the Climate and

Christian Climate Action (details on the website). 'They are all inspired by Jesus and guided by the Holy Spirit.'

'Hope is about saving our forests, protecting our environment, averting climate disaster and saving ourselves,' Giles concluded. 'I want to encourage you to hope, to pray and to work for a better future.'



LEITH HILL TO LAMBETH AND BEYOND

Canon Helen Burnett is Vicar of St Peter and St Paul, Chaldon, in the Diocese of Southwark, UK. A graduate in English Literature she taught in London schools before going forward for ordination in 2016. She is a member of Extinction Rebellion and Christian Climate Action. Her full presentation is available on the website. This is a summary.

Canon Burnett began by explaining that she is an activist. Her journey could be described as being 'through grief into action via hope'. Campaigning for the ordination of women in the Church of England started it off. That had taught her that 'hard slog and determination was needed, often quite boring, to bring about change. It takes time and it takes effort. But when it comes to climate we have the effort and determination but we do not have the time,' she said. 'Luckily for the Church of England there were women hanging around to be ordained, but the climate isn't going to hang around waiting to be saved.' That is why groups like Extinction Rebellion and Christian Climate Action have said that non-violent direct action has to be part of our tool-kit. It is the urgency that has brought that about.

Extinction Rebellion

'There are tactics that Extinction Rebellion use that people object to,' Helen acknowledged, 'and there are tactics they use that I object to. It's rather like being part of a church – you like some bits but dislike other bits, and it's the same with Extinction Rebellion.'

She first became involved in peaceful protest when it was proposed to set up a test site for fracking on Leith Hill near where she lived in Surrey, England, and which is a site of special scientific interest. 'We went there because we thought we might find some people who shared our feelings about how we looked at the world.'

'I love banners,' Helen exclaimed. 'If I am worried and don't know what to do I make a banner!' While Giles Goddard was inside the Chamber at Church House Westminster talking about the Church of England target for net zero, she was outside with the Christian Climate Action logo you can



see here, and another banner saying '2045 is TOO LATE!' She tries to integrate liturgy with protest. 'We actually held a service outside and a number of Synod members came and joined us,' she explained. 'We had music, but we also had some children's coffins because we wanted to raise awareness that this is not a future problem; children are dying now in parts of the world as a result of decisions made by august bodies like the Church of England.'



The first time she was arrested was in October 2019 during an Extinction Rebellion sit down on Lambeth Bridge in London. 'It was the end of a very long and complicated day. I had seen people arrested in the past, but this was the moment for me. I was not the only clergy person arrested that day.'



⇒ Helen was asked how her bishop reacted when she was arrested. She replied that he was wonderful! She had warned him in advance that it might happen and he had promised to support her.

Helen went on to explain that it was while visiting her son in America in 2018, on a trip to the Humboldt State Park in California that it came to her that because of climate change her children's lives might be very different from what she would have wished for them. 'It was a heart-breaking moment, and I wept a lot and then got myself together having realised that it is the future of people younger than me that is at stake.'



By now two publications were influencing her: "Deep Adaptations" by Joan Bendell and Pope Francis' "Laudato Si". Then in 2018 came the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report which suggested that there was a window of opportunity of just 12 years to do something about the climate breakdown that we face. 'And now we have just 8 years!' Helen commented wryly. 'That struck a chord with a lot of people.'

It was then that Helen came across a group called 'Rising Up', the forerunners of Extinction Rebellion. She paused in her presentation to read "The Solemn Intention". 'On the hour, every hour while we were protesting at Marble Arch in London this was said:

Let's take a moment, this moment, to consider why we are here. Let's remember our love for this beautiful planet that feeds, nourishes and sustains us. Let's remember our love for the whole of humanity in all corners of the world. Let's recollect our sincere desire to protect all this for ourselves, for all living beings and for generations to come. As we act today may we find the courage to bring a sense of peace, love and appreciation to everyone we encounter, to every word we speak and to every action we make. We are here for all of us. So may it be.

'I don't think that the sentiment expressed in those words is something that the media want to come across when they report what Extinction Rebellion does,' Helen said. 'But it is at the heart of all my encounters with all the activists in Extinction Rebellion, even in the hearts of people who are doing things that I disagree with.'



Support appeared in unexpected ways. In 2019's Easter Rebellion in London she went to a service in Westminster Abbey and the Dean allowed her to put leaflets on all the chairs. When she spoke at a rally in Trafalgar Square she found former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, was there. 'It has been encouraging that right from the beginning he has been

endorsing what we are doing,' Helen said. 'I was surprised how warmly I was welcomed by the activists. Among them were people hungry for spiritual care and I have far more impact in terms of evangelism than I normally do back in my parish. I am among people who are passionately working towards something and are so hungry for hope and for guidance.'

Helen shared many stories of her activity during that Easter Rebellion. You can find them elaborated on the website. For example, she camped at Marble Arch in London in Holy Week. 'I had managed to persuade some of my colleagues to come and do Maundy Thursday foot-washing. If I had just arrived and announced I was going to do that it would have been appalling. It would have imposed our tradition onto other people. But I had been there for five days by then and I knew everybody, so when I said, "I am thinking of doing foot-washing on Maundy Thursday," everyone thought it was wonderful. It is hard to get people in the parish to have their feet washed, but these people really grasped the symbolism. The story of the Passion was coming to life on the streets.'

One of the results that Easter was that the government in the UK did declare a climate emergency. 'So whatever you may think about Extinction Rebellion, they managed to push the Climate Emergency, and that word 'emergency', up the agenda. People began to talk in a new way,' Helen said.

Christian Climate Action



Christian Climate Action pre-dates Extinction Rebellion, Helen told the meeting. 'It is a protest movement believing in non-violent direct action as an expression of faith.' The Covid pandemic forced members to go online and on Zoom and it grew hugely. 'People could access it so easily and had very little else to do!' she quipped. They began to discover pilgrimage – walking and praying. So when she heard that COP-26 was going to be in Glasgow she 'foolishly said that we should walk there, and so we did.' They set off from Piccadilly, in London, and she quickly discovered another example of evangelism and Christian teaching opportunities. 'I walked with young people who would never have come through the doors of a church and we had amazing conversations because we are on the same page for our beautiful planet. They were really interested.' The journey took 56 days to cover 500 miles and because she also had to work she walked half of it! ⇒

‘We all knew that COP-26 was not going to deliver so we were walking in hope and in solidarity,’ she said, ‘but we were not walking with false hopes or optimism. We were walking because what else could we do? Every step was a prayer ... Climate breakdown will bring massive changes and we will have to learn to live together and we want love to prevail and not hate, because we have all probably begun to think what it might be like when people start protecting resources with guns. Will we be pockets of resistance where love prevails and not hate? For me, walking and pilgrimage are things that we need to focus on.’

The pandemic has offered an opportunity to stitch a new garment, to mend a broken garment, to discover a resurrection moment.

Now Helen’s question is; what does it mean to be a resurrection people in a climate breakdown?

‘Where I live we have a weekly public pause for the climate where we pray silently in the street,’ Helen concluded. ‘I commend to you starting a vigil in your community. It is just an amazing thing.’

There were vigils in Glasgow, and talks. Coffee at COP was a great success. Meanwhile, back in Surrey they are still trying to extract shale gas and oil just three miles or so from where Helen lives. ‘so we are holding something we call “Faith at the Gate”. Already people are arguing that if we ban imports of gas and oil from Russia we in the UK should start extracting our own. But our message is that we ought to stop extracting gas and oil altogether.’



FOCUSING ON THE PROCESS: A PRACTICAL SESSION

Anya Gleizer has degrees in Conservation Biology and Fine Art and is currently working on a DPhil in Human Geography at Mansfield College, Oxford.

In 2018 she founded The Flute & Bowl, Oxford’s Art & Science Society.

She is passionate about Art, Biodiversity and Climate.

She ran our third session and a fuller version of it is on the website.

Here Dick Lewis, our Editor, describes more briefly how the session progressed.

Introduction

Anya began by explaining that she is Russian and that her country had just gone to war. She has family on both sides of the conflict. ‘Care is the only thing that can drag us out of the conflict,’ she reflected, ‘just as care is the only thing that can get us through the ecological crisis that we are facing right now.’ She warned against thinking there’s nothing individuals can do about it. ‘Think about tackling a fire – if each of us contributes our bucket of water change is possible.’

A non-traditional art workshop

Anya challenged everyone in the meeting and at home on Zoom to concentrate on the process rather than on the outcome. This is something she learnt in icon painting. ‘The process was beautiful and that is what attracted me initially. Sadly, today, the focus in the art world tends to be about the product as a commodity;

we create it, it is beautiful and then we sell it to someone. But I think this misses something that we can learn from the act of creating something in itself.’

Painting an icon can take a year but Anya promised that in 25 minutes she could demonstrate the process and how to start practising it.

Icon painting reflects God’s work in creating the world (Genesis 1-2). It starts with light. Then minerals from the earth make up the coating for the board and make the paint. Plants provide the wood that goes into the board that supports everything, eggs from birds help fix the paint to the board, and the human touch comes last when you take up your brush.

‘Finally,’ she smiled, ‘if you do it properly, there is divine inspiration which makes an icon what it is.’

The creation process is like a prayer, and practising care can make a real impact on people’s lives and actions.

Rather than everyone grinding pigments out of clay Anya had provided ground up pigment ready-made. People taking part on Zoom had been given a shopping list of materials they would need. The fixative was made by mixing egg, vinegar and water. Everyone was to work on two small images, not focusing on the result but on the method. ‘I don’t want to hear you say, “I’m not a good artist!” That’s simply not the point – putting care into what you are doing every step of the way is what it’s about.’

All the time, Anya spoke to the camera so that people at home as well as in the building could see what she was doing. First, the egg should be opened like a box, she said, and split into two halves, then the white →



⇒ discarded and the yoke saved. For some people this was easier said than done! There was a lot of laughter at this stage, and a lot of spilt yokes, but very soon, as people helped one another, the job was done.



Once the yoke had been transferred to a cup the half eggshell was used as a measure for the vinegar and the water at the next stage. There was a lively buzz of conversation as this was going on and then a lovely tinkling sound as everyone stirred up their mixture in the cup using their paint brushes.

Then it was time to make the pigment packets of red-ochre were opened, a tricky process because the powder is very fine and tends to fly everywhere!



Anya explained that, when working on an icon, she would always start with red-ochre, painting in lines with a very fine brush, the idea being to build up layers so as to leave no brush marks. The egg fixative would ensure that the paint remained for hundreds of years.

Anya then demonstrated how to use a saucer as an artist's palette. Using the brush she took a tiny bit of the egg mixture and put it on the saucer. Then she used the brush to add a little red-ochre powder to make the pigment. Now for the task!

She asked everyone to fold their paper in half so that they could each make two images, one on each half. The first was to depict a non-human being that the artist has cared for over a period of time. The second was to depict a non-human being that has cared for the artist. 'The aim is not to produce a wonderful finished image but to concentrate on the process of working with care,' she reminded everyone.

In the church silence fell! The levels of concentration were almost palpable. On screen people could also be seen fully focused on the task. Soon there were murmurs of frustration.



'Mine looks like a cross between a chicken and a giraffe,' groaned Bishop Michael, and then broke into peals of laughter. Afterwards a number of people said they had found focusing on the process and not the result liberating and even therapeutic.

Sarah Farrow, who had done a wonderful job running the technology, asked if anyone online was brave enough to share what they had done so far and there followed a short time of mutual exchange of images.

Anya admitted that this had been a very funny workshop, but that focusing on



the non-human creature you cared for and the non-human entity that cared for you should help people to recognise that it isn't just any dog, for example, but **their** dog, and to appreciate all that the mutual time and caring for one another has meant for them.

'There is no quick-fix for care,' she said. 'The quick-fix is about focusing on the product and getting there as soon as possible. Care is long-term, and there will be no quick fix to the current catastrophes we are facing.'

Focusing on the care given to our dogs and cats, our fish and birds, and on how that caring had been of mutual benefit, should prompt us to invest similarly in all our relationships and interactions. 'Relationship is not just a result – it is a process,' Anya declared. She is convinced that bringing art into environmental work is important. 'What happens while you are doing it is transformative, and it will transform the environmental work that we do and the questions that we ask,' she said.



Photos of everyone's images were taken and Anya promised to take them all and, because they are all made of the same pigments, she would weave them into a big tapestry.

An icon's value is what it has given to the person who created it and what it will give to the people who experience it later. 'I hope that I have shared something of that sentiment with you in 40 minutes,' she concluded. It was clear from everyone's reaction that she had.

ANNUAL MEETING CLOSING WORSHIP

The Annual Meeting ended with worship led by Richard Stephenson, Tsiresy Domingos, Laura Elworthy (two young people who had chaired the sessions), Helen Harding and Helen Burnett. After opening prayers and a hymn, Jesus' parable of the rich man and his barns (Luke 12:13-21) was read, followed by silent reflection. Everyone, those in church and those at home, had paper leaves.

The life cycle of the leaf is instructive. It starts as a tiny bud, opens up as a tender fresh leaf and, as the season passes, it changes in colour, texture and shape, until in autumn the nutrients retreat back to its veins and into the tree. Eventually it falls to the ground and gives itself back to the earth.

Everyone was invited to write on their leaves one practical thing that they will commit to doing to care for and to preserve God's creation. Then those in church were encouraged to hang one leaf on the tree in the church courtyard and to take the other one home to remind them of their commitment.



EUROPEAN CHURCHES GRAPPLE WITH CHALLENGES OF SECULARISATION

European Churches are wrestling with the consequences of a secularised society for their life and witness, according to participants from Europe attending the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches which met via videoconference from 9th-15th February.



Downtown in Karlsruhe, Germany. Photo: Marcelo Schneider/WCC

At a meeting of the WCC's Europe region, participants reflected on the changing religious context found in their continent, as the WCC prepares to hold its 11th Assembly later this year in Karlsruhe, Germany - the first such WCC gathering in Europe since 1968.

'We're looking at a Europe characterized by increasingly secularized societies. This is our context,' said Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen, General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches, during a European regional gathering from 25th-26th February.

'Authorities are questioned nowadays and one of those authorities is the voice of the Church,' he said. 'And this leaves Churches with a new challenge – how to be a voice among voices in the public square. How do we maintain our constructive voice in building European societies?'

Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste, Romanian Orthodox Church, highlighted the consequences of secularisation for the missiological task of the Churches. Other issues highlighted by participants at the meeting chaired by the WCC president for Europe, Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd, included the importance of interreligious dialogue in Europe, which is increasingly a multi-faith society, as well as issues like migration, climate change, and ecology.

The Rev Karin van den Broeke from the Protestant Church in the Netherlands said it was important to discover the 'spirit of God' in secularisation, 'so that it is not only a problem for us but also an opportunity, and a chance to rethink how ecumenism, *diakonia*, mission, and being Church are related to each other.'

Summing up the discussion, Dr Wejryd said that Europe is undergoing great changes and these will change the role played by Churches. 'Secularisation can be devastating but can also create new openings for Churches,' he said. 'Many of the issues that confront churches in Europe are issues that will confront Churches in other parts of the world, and many questions we thought pertinent to Africa, Asia, and Latin America are coming to the surface in Europe.'

FOUNDER MEMBER REMEMBERED



Members of the Anglican-Lutheran Society Committee met in London on June 8th, 1995. From left to right, The Rev Brian Coleman, Anglican Treasurer, Mrs Marriane Haig, Lutheran, the Rev Flora Winfield, Anglican Co-Moderator and the Rev Ronald Englund, Lutheran Co-Moderator. Photo: Jonathan Draper

The Rev Brian James Coleman, pictured here in 1995, died on 4th February, 2022, at the age of 85. He will be remembered as a most kind, gentle and supportive man. Ordained priest in the Church of England, he served in parishes in Frimley and Guildford, until his retirement to Salisbury, UK.

Brian had a deep interest in the relationships between the different Christian Church traditions, and a desire to work and pray for reconciliation between the different denominations. He joined the Anglican-Lutheran Society when it first started in 1984 and was an enormous help in its early days as it was becoming established. He found it an ideal focus for his enthusiasm and, as the years went by, Brian, sometimes accompanied by his wife Alison, travelled widely to increase his understanding of Lutheran National Churches, share with them his own Anglican heritage, all the while acting as a great ambassador for our Society.

The Society holds regular international conferences and an early one, in 1989, was in Hanover. It was there that he met Superintendent Hans-Joachim Blankenburg from Ohrdruf in Thuringia, another member of the Society, who spoke about Church life in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) under the communist regime. They struck up a firm friendship which continued for the rest of Brian's life, and in October, 1997, Brian and Alison visited Bad Kissingen, a beautiful spa town in Bavaria, at Pastor Blankenburg's invitation, to take part in the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Erlöserkirche (Redeemer Church) where the retired Superintendent was now an assistant minister.

In Hanover Brian learnt a great deal in a short time about the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and about the dialogues between the EKD and the Church of England that led to the signing of the Meissen Declaration in 1991. This agreement was followed by the Porvoo Declaration in 1996

which brought into full communion four Anglican Churches in Great Britain and Ireland and a number of National Lutheran Churches in the Nordic and Baltic States.

Brian was keen that agreements such as these should not, to quote him, 'be merely a matter of making long ecclesiastical statements and having solemn signings of documents', but that they should 'mean something direct and practical at a parish level'. He was convinced that these agreements would only be effective if they were

'received' at parish and congregational grassroots. "You are in a good a position to make contacts, especially through the Anglican-Lutheran Society," a friend told him, so off went Brian to Sweden on an exchange he set up with Mats Johnsson, Pastor of a parish in Uppsala. Pastor Johnsson later visited Brian's parish in Guildford.

It was a wonderful, eye-opening experience, and Brian was especially impressed with the diaconal work of the Church in Sweden, with deacons as permanent Christian workers in a variety of settings in society rather than being the 'apprentice vicars' they tended to be in the Church of England. He enjoyed discussions with the Bishop and other church leaders and returned home with an impression of a Church in many ways similar to the Church of England. 'Broadly speaking,' he wrote, 'Lutheran liturgy and theology were familiar and there was the same sort of ecclesiastical variety.'

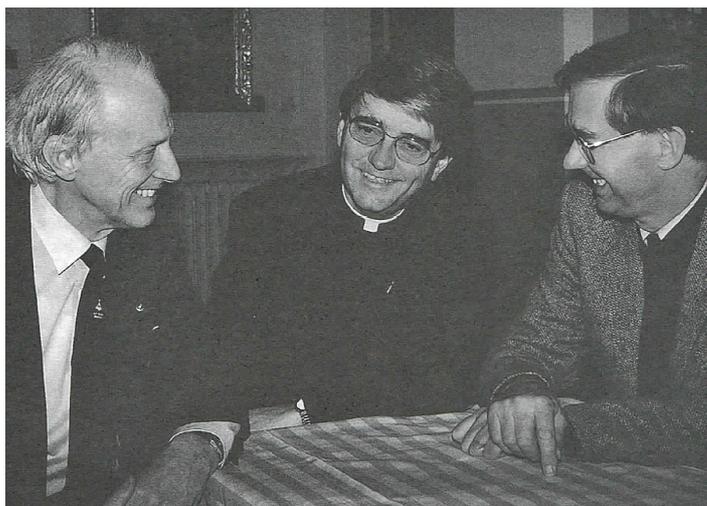
It was in 1996 that Brian and Alison went to the USA at the invitation of another Society member, Bishop Cyril Wismar and his wife Sylvia. Brian was to learn about the Concordat being brokered between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the Episcopal Church of USA, which was eventually signed and sealed in 2000 and which established full communion between the two Churches. They were there again in 1999 as guests of Pastor Ronald Englund, the Dean of the Southeast Massachusetts Conference, New England Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and co-moderator of the Anglican-Lutheran Society. During both these visits Brian was able to preach in significant Lutheran churches, and to inform meetings of clergy and laity about our Society and about Anglican-Lutheran relationships in Britain and Europe.

Brian acted as Treasurer of our Society for a number of years, relinquishing that role in 1999 before becoming 

⇒ Anglican Co-Moderator for one year in 2000. This was a crucial time for the Society. There was uncertainty as to the direction it should take and so Brian, with his Lutheran Co-Moderator, Helga Pettersson, canvassed the membership, analysed their responses and set the Society back on a firm footing. The success that it enjoys today is largely down to them.

Throughout his long association with our Society Brian never missed an opportunity to promote it, to inform people about its aims, its work and about the value of making ecumenical friendships, both within the UK and across national and denominational borders.

Brian continued as a supportive member of the Society until failing health prevented him from attending meetings and being more closely involved. The funeral took place on Friday 25th February in Salisbury Cathedral, and our Society extended condolences to Alison and their family.

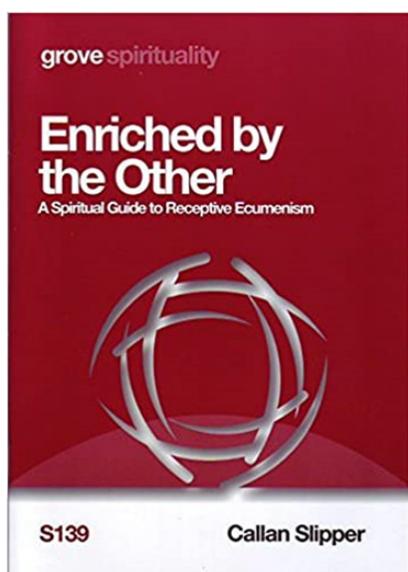


The Rev Brian Coleman (left) with the Rev Helge Pettersson (centre), elected Co-Moderators at the Annual General Meeting on 18th March, 2000, with Canon Dick Lewis, who joined the committee that year.

The Very Revd Tom Bruch, who was secretary of the Society when it was established in 1984, says of him: 'Brian was easy to find in a crowd; he was the one with a gentle smile, a reflection of his considerate and helpful nature. The Society was blessed by his involvement for many years; he was one of the building blocks, and we should thank God for this gift.' May Brian rest in peace and rise in glory.

ENRICHED BY THE OTHER : A SPIRITUAL GUIDE TO RECEPTIVE ECUMENISM

The Rev Stephen Copson reviewed this helpful booklet for Churches Together in England.



Talk of an ecumenical winter may not be wholly correct, but latterly many traditional denominations seem to have become more concerned with their own issues (or survival). The formal arrangements of the 1960s and 1970s, once so energising, seem rather tired, more old hat than pioneer, and newer expressions are often uneasily decanted into old wineskins.

Dr Slipper, an Anglican priest, writes

from a life of ecumenical experience, practice and reflection. He is deeply influenced by the remarkable Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement of which he is a member.

The starting point is that unity is not a by-product of Christian activity but its engine. It is not an optional extra but something that, if missing, impairs the Christian witness.

Receptive Ecumenism encourages us to be committed to listen, reflect and appreciate what others have to offer, both as individuals and as ecclesial communities. God scatters gifts among his people, for their edification and mutual sharing. In accepting the gifts, people are drawn deeper into the life of the Giver. This activity must extend beyond traditional ecumenical partners, and embrace more recently emerging Christian traditions that may not as yet recognise the value of "the other".

Dr Slipper encourages exploration of what you and your tradition bring to the feast. Readers will recognise cross-fertilisation during past decades in

styles of worship, in aspects of prayer and practical social action. Many congregations consist of people whose stories of faith started in other denominations, or none. Are the gifts that individuals bring necessarily the same as those that the ecclesial body offers? A gift is not to be put on display but to be put to work, so what sort of individuals and what sort of denominations might emerge from these bi-lateral conversations?

Each chapter includes some points for individual or group reflection and discussion. Callan Slipper writes with a measured passion, and issues a call to embrace unity with a new earnestness, and to continue to engage in a committed way. One thing is sure, that each new generation of Christians needs to be fired with the desire to worship, pray and work together. This booklet points one way the search may bear fruit. I warmly recommend you read it for yourself.

Enriched by the Other: a spiritual guide to receptive ecumenism by Callan Slipper, Grove Books 139, ISBN 0262 799X Price: £3.95

A HYMN TO BRING HOPE TO UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Peter Fischer-Nielsen (right) and Thomas Horneman-Thielcke (left), two Danish priests, moved by the flow of refugees from the war in Ukraine, have composed a new hymn.

In these weeks and months when the war in Ukraine fills our minds, many are preoccupied with how to help in this unfortunate situation. People are sending clothes and other necessities to Ukraine, others are driving to the border to pick up refugees. What else can we do as a Church?

According to Pastor Peter Fischer-Nielsen, parish and diocesan priest for ecumenism, mission and multi-faith meeting in Viborg Diocese, the Church can convey hope and hospitality.



‘Like everyone else, I follow the terrible things happening in Ukraine. It touches me deeply. One feels one wants to act and do something to help the poor Ukrainians. Writing a hymn has been a way of gathering thoughts and formulating some answers in a chaotic time,’ he says.

‘The hymn is about hospitality, both the hospitality we as a Church can show the Ukrainians, but also and most of all God’s hospitality, which not only extends to Ukrainians on the run, but also to troubled Danes, frustrated Russians and everyone else,’ he adds.

Pastor Peter has written the text for the hymn and Pastor Thomas Emil Horneman-Thielcke, who is parish priest in Herlufsholm Church, has composed the melody. They have composed a hymn together before, and it was therefore natural that they worked together to unite text and music.

‘I composed three different melodies, two were in minor keys, but the choice fell on this melody which is in major. It is a melodic hymn that in its rhythm expresses something positive and progressive. As a Church, we come with hope, and that is reflected in the music,’ says Pastor Thomas. ‘God’s hospitality is about God accommodating us all. We are hurt and feel powerless in this situation, but God opens his reality to us. What we can do is open our homes and give space to the hearts of those seeking help. The role of the Church is to provide comfort and establish relational and spiritual ties to people who seek the Church.’

You can listen to the hymn here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsGYJepCvNc>

And you can download a printed copy of the tune here: https://www.interchurch.dk/aktuelt/nyheder/sognepraester-udgiver-salme-der-forkynder-haab-til-ukrainere?ct=t%28Nyhedsbrev+februar+2022_COPY_01%29

Here is a very approximate English version of the hymn:

You who have suffered,
and who have lost the home that is yours;
the tears flowed as you said goodbye
to those you love deep in your soul.
You are welcome here in my house!

You who are rich,
but who are now intimidated by bombs and war;
you who are afraid of all that is happening,
fearful for tomorrow - hope and pray.
You are welcome here in my house!

You who are strong,
and who dare to fight against the work of evil;
who gives you direction and guides your feet?
Where do you find strength and courage?
You are welcome here in my house!

You who were cold-hearted
when you confronted your sister nation with force,
but who now repent and seek a place
where you can lay down your weapons.
You are welcome here in my house!

You who have power,
and can order the march of the soldiers,
forget your dreams of greatness and gain
a humble and loving enemy as a friend.
You are welcome here in my house!

You who are mine,
beloved child, you have fought and fought;
you were like the dead, but now I'm setting the table;
sit down - eat with your brother.
You are welcome here in my house!

ESTONIAN ARCHBISHOP SAYS “WE MUST BE PEACE SEEKERS”

Archbishop Urmas Viilma says churches in the region must pray for Ukraine and proclaim gospel of peace at all times (LWI)



Photo: LWF/A. Hillert

Responding to the Russian attacks in Ukraine, Churches are called to stand up for peace, condemning war and violence, whilst ensuring there is no backlash against Russian people, says the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Vice-President for the Central Eastern European Region, Estonian Archbishop Urmas Viilma. ‘The mission of the Church is to pray, to commemorate the victims of war and to proclaim the gospel of peace at all times.’

As the Russian military began its assault on cities in eastern Ukraine early on 24th February, Estonians were celebrating their national independence day. A week earlier, the ten-member Estonian Council of Churches had already issued a statement of concern about Russian troops gathering close to the Ukrainian border. ‘In a way, we were prepared for this, as we had been following the tensions of the past eight years,’ Archbishop Urmas says, ‘But nobody wanted to believe it would happen.’

The following day, the Archbishop urged people in Estonia to pray for an end to the conflict and to send donations directly to the Church in Ukraine that had already begun supporting those fleeing from the violence. Then, on 26th February, he held a service in Tallinn’s largest Lutheran church, condemning Russia’s actions and calling for bells to ring throughout the country the following week to remember the victims of the war. On 1st March, the Consistory of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC) also condemned the Russian invasion and called on people to give generously to four humanitarian organizations including the Red Cross and the LWF’s emergency fund.

Practical and psychological support

Meanwhile, the EELC’s diaconal arm began partnering with the Estonian government to roll out support for refugees and to map all the churches in the country that were able to welcome people into their congregations. As of 9th March, 10,000 refugees had arrived in Estonia, that is five times the number that the government initially predicted. Some are in transit to Sweden or Finland, while the majority of those who remain are women and children in need of both practical and psychological support. Members of the ecumenical

chaplaincy team are travelling to and from the Polish-Ukrainian border doing what they can to provide pastoral and spiritual care for those escaping from the conflict. So far Lutheran congregations have offered hospitality for 500 of the refugees, as well as supporting the response of other humanitarian organizations. ‘Compared to the million and a half refugees that Poland has already taken in, this is a small number that Estonia has received,’ Archbishop Urmas says, ‘but we are a small country with just 1.3 million people.’ Talking with bishops in the region, he says, ‘We must be prepared for the long term. At the moment everybody wants to help, but if the war stops now, Ukraine will need rebuilding and we must plan for that.’

Archbishop Urmas has been sharing conversations with Archbishop Janis Vanags in Latvia and Bishop Mindaugas Sabutis in Lithuania, and he notes that all three Baltic States have large numbers of Russian citizens and Russian-speaking people living within their borders. A recent survey said more than 30% of those living close to the eastern border with Russia are supportive of the war, which is ‘very, very alarming,’ he says. Early in April the Estonian government decided to shut down Russian media channels in the country, but tensions are high. ‘I have not heard about any violence against Russians,’ he says, ‘but the secular media is expecting our Estonia Council of Churches to drive out the Russian Orthodox Church but this is not acceptable. We have always had good cooperation with them. But people do expect local Metropolitans to distance themselves from the statements of the Moscow Patriarch Kirill,’ he says.

The Church, especially in the Baltic context, needs to be ‘a balancing influence in a very difficult situation,’ he insists. ‘On the one hand, we need to condemn President Putin’s actions and the violence against the Ukrainian people, but on the other we need to ensure there is no rioting against the Russian speaking people in our societies. We can be critical, but we must not create more tension or remove people, for the Church is made up of people.’

‘We need to stand for peace always,’ he concludes, noting that the Ukrainian conflict has been on the horizon for a long time. ‘There are always attacks and wars and violence against groups or countries or faith communities, but if they are very far away from us, we really do not notice them so much. But we need to be aware that they could come to our streets, our homes, our neighbours’ yards and that is why we must be peace makers and peace seekers all the time,’ he says.



One of millions of refugees from Ukraine. Photo: Filip Błażejowski

THE GREEN REVOLUTION : NOT JUST ABOUT CLIMATE – BUT ABOUT LOVE

What Sarah Ziethen, parish priest at Roskilde Cathedral on the island of Zealand in eastern Denmark, learnt from visiting a monastery in the desert

Just think! People who live close to the poverty line (\$2 a day) and do not have the full education were an inspiration to me, a fervent climate activist and advocate of the green transition of the Danish National Church! I was on a study trip to Egypt, and went on a retreat at the educational site Anafora, where they live out their belief that faith is not something you have, but something you do. Here, people from the poorest areas of Egypt come to be taught waste sorting, composting techniques and organic farming. Here students learn about church-based development work and ecology and economics, and here believers come and feel how taking care of nature is caring for God's creation.

[Anaphora, a non-profit organization, is a retreat centre and farm located about 75 Km north of Cairo, Egypt. It was founded by His Grace Bishop Thomas, the Bishop of Quossia (Upper Egypt) pictured below, in 1998. Anaphora is located in a landscape of one hundred and twenty acres. Over the past 10 years, Anaphora has hosted a total of 70,000 people for conferences, seminars, and spiritual retreats - Ed.]

For Anafora is a place where spiritual inspiration, ecological living and sustainable education and development go hand in hand. It is based on Bishop Thomas' vision of a holistic place where people can grow and develop in every way. Here are three churches that are Coptic but ecumenical in their spirit, serving as places of education, trauma treatment for women, rehabilitation of the disabled, re-schooling of boys who have dropped out of the school system, with craft schools such as weaving, a candle foundry, wood workshop and icon painting. They have various relationships with universities at bachelor and master level. And there is the retreat centre itself.

At Anafora people are seen as embedded in and part of nature, and by taking care of people one also takes care of nature and vice versa. Therefore, it is just as necessary to sort waste and avoid pesticides as it is to go to church and take part in our communities. Anafora is much more than a monastery, but at its heart are about 50 Coptic sisters and volunteers working in the workshops, in the fields and in the kitchen. They receive guests, are a role model for everyone who comes and offer an hospitable and green approach to their fellow human beings.

We were a mixed bunch of travel companions - representatives from the Areopagus, the Interchurch Council (MKR) and the Centre for Church Development Cooperation (CKU), who were monitoring a first collaborative project training of local leaders in various environmental improvement initiatives and microfinance projects.

We got a thorough introduction to Anafora and the vision on which the retreat area, the rehabilitation and education

centre and church are built. We visited potential partners in Cairo, CEOSS (Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services) and the Danish Embassy, as well as travelling to Corsea in southern Egypt to visit the upcoming project Anafora Too and evaluating the ongoing Danida-supported projects with responsible composting and waste sorting, savings and loan groups for women as well as newly started green committees that work for green initiatives locally in collaboration with existing organisations. In addition, we gained insight into the school's work as a bridge-builder between religions, and their approach to climate challenges and the education of future generations. It was wildly inspiring! These people are far more affected than us by climate change, but are not to blame for it. They never come close to an aeroplane, they may get beef once a year and the over-consumption of clothes we have they cannot afford here! But they are worried as we are - and they are making a difference - right down to the very basics! There is no waste system, so for the past many years people have just thrown their rubbish on the ground. Plastic bags, shit buckets, leftover food - all have been left in the heat or burned off on the fire. But now it must stop! For these people care about climate change and about the animals that eat plastic; they worry about their children getting toxic fumes in their lungs. So now garbage collection groups have been set up to collect garbage, sort it, recycle everything they can - including a lot of what we did not think could be recycled!

And who set it in motion? It is pastors and parishioners who have been on courses at Anafora. There they learn how they can make a difference! It's brilliant! The Church really lives up to the fact that faith is not something you have - but something you do! I want to take home with me the challenge: if these people, who live behind mountains of old rubbish, in the smell of burnt plastic and without knowing if they can feed their children tomorrow, are doing what they can to limit climate change, how much more can we, privileged people, do - both for us - and for them. For the green revolution is not about being climate crazy - it's about genuine charity, *charitas*, love.



LUTHER AND PILGRIMAGE

As part of his preparation for our Conference in Norway in July Richard Stephenson has been thinking about Martin Luther and what his attitude to pilgrimage and our conference theme might be if he were alive today.

I'm really excited about the ALS conference planned for Trondheim (Nidaros) this year. For many it will be the first extended trip abroad since Covid. The programme already looks fascinating without being too academic. There should be plenty for both the professional theologians amongst us and for the rank-and-file members of the priesthood of all believers like me. The theme centres around 'pilgrimage towards hope', Trondheim being an ancient pilgrimage site.



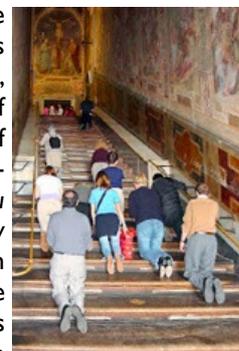
Nidaros Cathedral, Trondheim, Norway

Martin Luther is more associated with 'here I stand' than with travel so I thought it might be interesting to reflect on his views on pilgrimage. As with many of his teachings his attitude towards it seems to have hardened over the course of his career – in this case from neutrality to downright negativity. It is probably fair to say that Luther was not the greatest fan of pilgrimage, at least in the sense of a religiously inspired physical journey, although he was of course a great advocate of life's inner pilgrimage.

Whilst it might be the case that Luther undertook pilgrimages during his early life, and he certainly made many lengthy trips around Germany during his ministry, but as far as we know Luther only left Germany once – to undertake his fateful journey to Rome in 1510. The trip to Rome was not primarily one of pilgrimage. It was to assist in resolving a dispute between two branches of the Augustinian Order. Luther was a member of the 'observant' order whilst the majority of the congregations were 'conventual'. The Vicar General in Germany, Johannes von Staupitz, wished to merge these two branches of the Augustinians. Ironically given Luther's subsequent reliance on von Staupitz, his monastery at Erfurt opposed the merger concept and was seeking to appeal to the Vicar General of the entire order, Giles of Viterbo, to put a stop to the whole scheme. But, contrary to popular belief, Martin Luther was not the main delegate - that was a Brother Anton Kresz - but it is likely that Luther's legal training may have singled him out as an able deputy. Ultimately the diplomatic mission was a failure, however this failure extended Luther's visit to around four weeks. He certainly viewed it as an opportunity for pilgrimage and seems to have set about visiting the holy places with his usual energy and enthusiasm.

The experience was to affect him deeply. Many historians believe it seeded in his mind concerns regarding corruption in the Roman Church that resulted in the posting of the 95 Theses in 1517. No doubt what he saw in Rome heavily influenced thesis 86 when he asks: "Why does not the Pope build St Peter's Minster with his own money - since his riches are now more ample than those of Crassus - rather than with the money of poor Christians?"

We know the 27-year-old Luther made the entire journey of 850 miles to Rome on foot, the long expedition giving him plenty of time for meditation. He arrived a devout follower of the papacy, even famously climbing the Scala Sancta at St John Lateran, saying the Lord's Prayer on each step, to free his own grandfather, Lindemann Luther, from purgatory. He visited many of the sacred sites and saw the chains of John the Baptist. His initial impressions were of awe; "Be greeted, thou holy Rome, truly holy because of the holy martyrs, dripping with their blood." Such was his enthusiasm for Rome that he is said to have wished his parents were dead so that he could help them out of purgatory by saying mass in the holy places; "Blessed is the mother whose son celebrates mass on Saturday in St John of the Lateran!" This utopian view was not to last. For the seriously minded, pious Luther some of the practices he encountered in Rome were to shake his faith in the religious establishment of the time. As with much Luther lore it is hard to separate fact from invention, so we will never know if he really did hear the words of scripture, "The just shall live by faith" (Rom 1:17), thunder in his head on each step of the Scala Sancta or if doubts were merely sown in his mind. Luther was shocked to be urged to hurry up when celebrating mass and to observe that a Roman priest could finish seven masses in the time it took him to do one. He was appalled to hear priests at the consecration say in Latin, "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain; wine thou art, and wine thou shalt remain."



Scala Sancta



... onions to Rome and brought back garlic

By the time his visit ended Rome had certainly created a bad impression on the young friar who is quoted as saying, "Rome is a circus, a running sewer," and "You can buy anything in Rome, even eternal life!" He wrote that,

"Where God builds a church, the Devil puts up a chapel next door. ... It is almost incredible. What infamous actions are committed at Rome; one would require to see it and hear it →

⇒ in order to believe it. It is an ordinary saying that if there is a hell, Rome is built upon it. It is an abyss from whence all sins proceed ... Rome, once the holiest city, was now the worst. Let me get out of this terrible dungeon. I took onions to Rome and brought back garlic."

He left questioning the practices he had seen and the wealth of the Church. Not a pilgrimage towards hope – but certainly one that has impacted not just on Luther but on every Christian since.

Pilgrimage is not one of the medieval practices that Luther spent much time attacking. References to pilgrimage are relatively sparse in Luther's writings. By 1520, Luther's views on pilgrimage were made clearer in his "Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation". He is against them, 'not because pilgrimages are bad, but because they are ill-advised at this time.' He goes on to say: 'To eradicate such false, seductive faith from the minds of simple Christian people and to restore a right understanding of good works, all pilgrimages should be dropped.' Luther categorises pilgrimage as 'adiaphora', things that are not necessarily harmful or by any means prohibited, but which are also by no means necessary for salvation or to be expected of the faithful. We need to keep in mind that in truth almost all the liturgical practices, vestments, hymns and festivals so loved by today's Lutherans (and Anglicans) fall very firmly into the same classification!

Luther's *Smalcald Articles*, intended to be his last theological testament (1537), explain more clearly his opposition to pilgrimage; "Now it is indeed certain that such pilgrimages, without the Word of God, have not been commanded us, neither are they necessary, since we can have these things [the soul can be cared for] in a better way, and can omit these pilgrimages without any sin and danger. Why therefore do they leave at home [desert] their own parish [their called ministers, their parishes], the Word of God, wives, children, etc., who are ordained and [attention to whom is necessary and has been] commanded, and run after these unnecessary, uncertain, pernicious will-o'-the-wisps of the devil [and errors]?"

Luther condemns the medieval pilgrimage as a "good work" intended to draw benefit from the Church's treasury of merit resulting in remission from purgatory for the pilgrim (or a nominated benefactor). Clearly for him this was anathema. Moreover, he believed that pilgrimages diverted Christians from or indeed caused them to neglect the true 'good works' inspired by faith, specifically caring for our neighbours. Prolonged absence from family and parish in the context of the times could be viewed as self-indulgent and neglectful.



"Those who make pilgrimages do so for many reasons, very seldom for legitimate ones. The first reason for making pilgrimages is the most common of all, namely, the curiosity to see and hear strange and unknown things. This levity proceeds from a loathing for, and boredom with, the worship services which have been neglected in the pilgrims' own church. Otherwise, one would find incomparably better indulgences at home than in all the other places put together. Furthermore, he would be closer to Christ and the saints if he were not so foolish as to prefer sticks and stones to the poor and his neighbours whom he should serve out of love. And he would be closer to Christ also if he were to provide for his own family." (Luther's Works Volume 31.198)

It is a shallow interpretation of Luther to suggest that he was against the well founded devotional practices which pilgrimages can be. As expressed in the Augsburg Confession, "Furthermore, it is taught on our part that it is necessary to do good works, not that we should trust to merit grace by them, but because it is the will of God". The whole of Luther's Pauline theology is that good works come as a response to faith in the redeeming work of Christ, not to pay for it or earn it. Thus, it is unchristian for the Church to purport to sell what God freely gives, whilst pilgrimage in grateful response to God's grace, for prayer and devotion, is well within the bounds of Christian freedom.

It is notable that other early reformers such as Calvin took a much firmer line against pilgrimage. Calvin directed In 1547 that anyone going on pilgrimage from Geneva should face imprisonment and fines. Luther in 'On the Freedom of the Christian' sets out a more subtle theological position. He states that "A Christian is an utterly free man, lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is an utterly dutiful man, servant of all, subject to all" (Rom 13.8 and 1 Cor 9.19), so it follows that a Christian may not be obliged to do what is not commanded by scripture but nor should he be prevented from doing something not forbidden by God's word. It would be very hard to argue that pilgrimage is not scriptural. The Bible contains numerous examples of prophets being sent to remote places to receive a revelation; one thinks of Abraham's 400 mile journey to Canaan, Elijah's forty days and forty nights traveling to Mount Horeb. In the New Testament it is in the wilderness that John starts to preach repentance and to baptise and it is on the road to Emmaus that the disciples are met by Jesus. It would be equally hard to argue that the scriptures command pilgrimage – in the way that for example Muslims must undertake the Hajj.

But what would Luther think about pilgrimage today? He did understand that visiting other lands and holy cities could have benefit saying, 'if he [the potential pilgrim] wishes to make the pilgrimage out of curiosity, to see other lands and cities, he may be allowed to do so.' The advent of modern travel means that pilgrims can, for example, visit Jerusalem without being neglectful of their normal calling. I suspect few now undertake pilgrimages with the view that by doing so they earn the grace of God. It is not without irony that Luther himself has once again become a magnet for pilgrims – although the focus today is thankfully more on understanding his teachings than wanting to see miraculous ink blots and fire proof portraits (both would be interesting!).



⇒ It is usually futile to try and give counterfactual views on behalf of historical figures, but it always an interesting exercise! Luther would no doubt be dismayed at the secular nature of the Western World and our so called 'post-Christian society' whilst being pleased with the achievements of the welfare state. Luther lamented the lack of basic religious knowledge found during the Saxon Visitation of 1528, "Dear God, what misery I beheld! The ordinary person, especially in the villages, knows absolutely nothing about the Christian faith." One can only wonder what his reaction would be to a society where only half the population can even name just one of the four Gospels.



In this context, given the constant pressure of modern life, the lack of space and time for personal devotions and for reflection I think Luther might actively advocate pilgrimage and retreats if he were 'reforming' the church today! It was after all Luther who said, "I have so much to do that I shall

spend the first three hours in prayer." His monastic training taught him the value of taking time out from the tasks of day-to-day life. It seems to me that modern pilgrimage is more about exploring faith (or trying to find one), rediscovering our heritage or simply taking time out for reflection than any mistaken transactional relationship with God.

Whilst it cannot be denied that pilgrimage has a major economic benefit for the popular pilgrim destinations this is no longer in exchange for the sale of indulgences. Luther would probably be scandalised that five hundred years after the posting of the 95 Theses the pilgrimage sites are every bit as commercial as they were in his day – but he might at least take some comfort from the fact that it is largely only souvenirs on sale rather than salvation! Is pilgrimage today a little closer to the genuinely good intentions of the early pilgrims, to learn from the lives of saints, set aside time for prayer and to receive the benefits of God's grace? If so, on balance, I think Luther would approve. I am looking forward to meeting our members in Nidaros!

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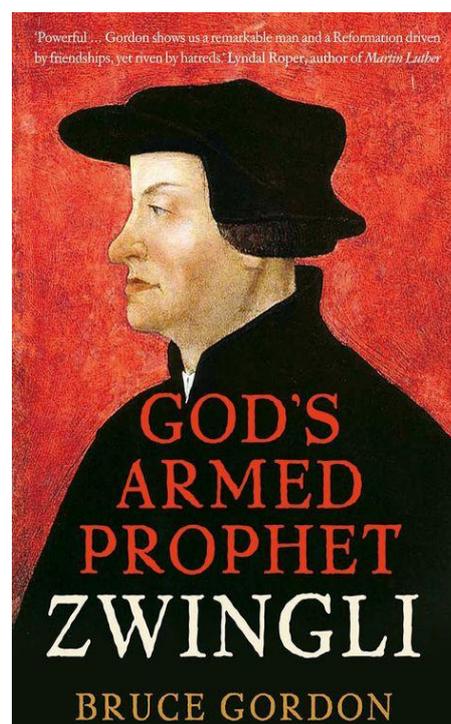
HULDRYCH ZWINGLI :A NEW BIOGRAPHY

The Rev Dr Roy Long recommends a book about a Reformer who did not always see eye to eye with Martin Luther

Bruce Gordon's **God's Armed Prophet: Zwingli** (New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 2021. ISBN: 978-0-300-23597-5) is a new biography of the pioneer Swiss Reformer, Huldrych Zwingli, and a welcome addition to the range of new books with Reformation themes – the more so because it is dealing with a reformer who has been in danger of being overlooked in the light of the emphasis on Martin Luther during the recent 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The book is obviously very thoroughly researched and gives the reader a readable and interesting birth to death account of Zwingli's life. Of special interest to Lutherans will be those sections of the book which deal with the relationship between the two reformers – especially the sections dealing with the Marburg Colloquy of 1529, when they famously disagreed

over the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. There was no love lost between Luther and Zwingli, and the German reformer seems to have made some crude and un-Christian remarks about his Swiss colleague after the latter's death in battle in 1531.

The picture that emerges of Zwingli is of a reformer immersed in the Classics as well as Scripture; of a man deeply influenced by Erasmus, rather than Luther; and of an ardent patriot for his adopted home of Zurich. But what interested me most were the tantalising references to Zwingli's eventual successor in Zurich, Johann Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575), who must be one of the least remembered of the 16th century continental reformers - would that someone would write a biography of him for English-speaking readers!



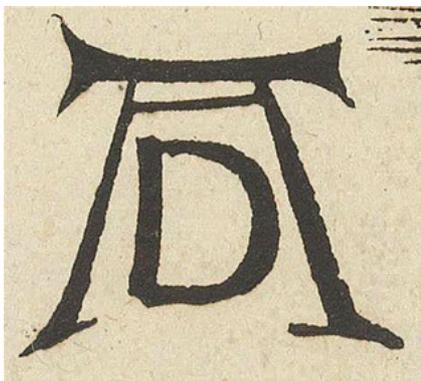
A HARE, A DANDELION, TWO PRAYING HANDS

Society member, Anne Boileau, shares some impressions of a 16th Century artist who might have relished social media

Albrecht Dürer has come on show at the National Gallery in London! We have a rare opportunity to see some of the finest works by this astonishing 16th Century artist from Nuremberg.

Dürer's father was a goldsmith and wanted him to follow in his footsteps; his early training in this trade must have sharpened the boy's eye and dexterity; but when he was sixteen he confessed that he really wanted to be an artist, so he was apprenticed for three years to the painter Michael Wolgemut. Under him he learnt the craft of oil and watercolour painting, silver point, engraving and etching.

At nineteen he went travelling, learning from artists in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy. He rode on the wave of exciting new information technology of printing, and developed his own brand, the famous A looking like a D.



When he discovered other people were using his brand without his permission, he took legal action, travelling especially to Rome to object. I think he would have relished the publicity of Social Media and would have had a huge following on Twitter and other platforms.

He made this self-portrait in 1500 when he was 30 years old; it caused a stir when first shown, as it seems to be a picture of Christ. Was it blasphemy to paint yourself looking like Christ? Or did Albrecht see a spark of divinity, not only in himself, a man, but in everything he gazed at: the stillness of a hare, the vivid blues and greens of a crow's wing, the delicacy



of a dandelion, or the weirdness of a Rhinoceros? Whether a portrait, a landscape, an animal, or a group, he applies the most minute attention to detail, a thoroughness amounting to reverence.

Dürer was married to Agnes Frey but they had no children. He gazes out at us across 522 years. Look at the detail in the picture. The hair is not only curled but braided in tiny plaits. His finger nail shimmers like a pearl. The fur is so fine you can almost reach out and touch it.



We all know Dürer's drawing of a pair of praying hands. They were the hands of his brother Albert, who would also have liked to train as an artist, but their parents could only afford to send one of their many sons as an apprentice.

In 1971 there was a grand trade fair in Nuremberg and Dürer's self-portrait was blown up very large and displayed in the main hall of Nuremberg railway station. At that time a great many immigrants were arriving in Germany from poorer countries like Italy and Turkey; they were responding to an invitation to come and live there as *Gastarbeiter*. Some new arrivals, when they saw the portrait of what they perceived as Jesus, fell down on their knees in thanks at having arrived in a safe and Christian country.

Anne concludes her article with this poem entitled;

SELF PORTRAIT AD 1500

No, this painting is no blasphemy.

In the mirror the artist observes strands of gold in his braided curls, a glowing pearl in a fingernail.

He sees a flame in his own gaze, stillness like a diamond at his core.

Dürer: the name means maker of doors.

But Albrecht made no door, he opened one to reveal that light in everything. It shines in the stillness of a hare,

in a clod of turf, a dandelion, the vivid wing of a hooded crow, in his brother's hands at prayer.

We meet his steady gaze across five hundred years. And if in this self-portrait we see Christ

then it is Christ who dwells in our beholding.

HOW CEC CAN HELP CHURCHES AMPLIFY THEIR COLLECTIVE VOICE

Bishop Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds in the Church of England, is a board member of the Conference of European Churches (CEC). He reflects on how Churches can bring their unique collective voice to carry faith into the public arena, as Susan Kim, a freelance journalist from USA discovered.

In his view of today's complex socio-political environment, Bishop Nick Baines believes it's vital for Churches to bring a prophetic voice of faith. 'What's more, that voice needs to be loud enough to be heard,' he says. 'This is a time when Churches need to be confident about their inclusion in the public discourse and engagement in the public square. Christians cannot be mere observers of conflict or - as in the UK - the corruption of the public discourse, complaining about what is ethically wrong and challenging the rule of law or the dignity of people.'

Churches must ensure that their engagement is thoughtful, confident, humble and informed. 'Whatever we do as Churches, we can't hold back,' he insists. 'To hold back for reasons of fear, or fear of backlash, is to deny the prophetic vocation of the Church.'

CEC is making a new push to enhance Church voices in European institutions through advocacy. Particularly as we emerge into a post-COVID-19 pandemic world, Bishop Baines and other CEC leaders believe that the collective Christian voice has a fresh opportunity to ring out prophetically within European political institutions and beyond.

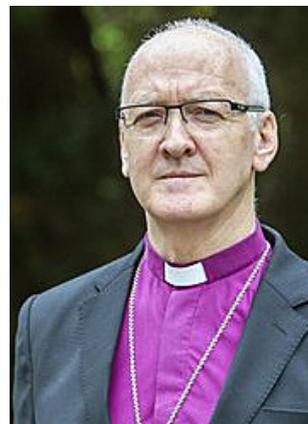
'Churches have been amazingly inventive since the first COVID-19-related lockdown two years ago,' the Bishop says. 'Challenges were met with great creativity, in relation to online worship and fellowship. Individuals and parishes discovered new gifts and opportunities for outreach.'

That creativity can now be applied to ongoing dialogue with European institutions,' Bishop Baines maintains. 'We are emerging into a different world, and looking to build on the experience - and doing so with confidence in God, the gospel, the Church and our people. CEC's unique gift is to bring together both large and small Churches, thus giving a voice to smaller denominations that might otherwise struggle to engage in vital political and cultural debates.'

Individual Churches can view CEC as being big and as having enough focus to engage with the European Institutions in a way that a single Church cannot do alone. 'Therefore CEC can bring together Churches across Europe to add a voice and a perspective that has credibility, offering confidence to those who might otherwise feel less so when speaking alone,' he explains. As the people of Europe struggle to shape their present and their future, the collective Church can take some of its learnings from the pandemic and carry them forward with renewed participation in the public square. 'In England in March 2020 - the first lockdown - we had to keep distinguishing between "the churches are closed" and "the Church is open". That is, the buildings might be closed for a period, but the praying, worshipping and witnessing community has never closed; we just moved to occupy new spaces.'

Bishop Nick Baines has been encouraged by the way churches engaged in new ways instead of giving up during lockdowns. 'Pastoral care can carry on; service of the local community (for example, through food banks) can develop with commitment and creativity; fellowship can take new forms,' he said.

Can the Churches assert that witness and faith are a legitimate element in European political decision making? The Bishop believes CEC can help Churches do just that. 'Now we need to work out how to maintain this creativity in working out our common and mutual commitment,' he says. 'Creativity is in the bloodstream of the Christian Church - we can do this!'



NEW PASTOR ORDAINED IN LEEDS

It was a great occasion for the Lutheran Church in Great Britain when, following a meeting of their Synod on 23rd April, Joseph Nelson was ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament and Priest in the Church of God.

It was a truly ecumenical occasion. Joseph comes from a Roman Catholic family, he completed his training at St Hild's, a Church of England training institute, and the service took place in the United Reformed Church in Headingley. Joseph will serve as Pastor to the congregation of St Luke's Lutheran Church in Leeds and as a chaplain to the student community in Leeds.

Here Joseph kneels before Bishop Tor Jørgensen who is flanked by Dean Eliza Zikmane and Bishop Walter Jagucki.

BISHOP FARRELL: 'SYNODALITY' AND THE SEARCH FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

As Christians came together to mark the annual ecumenical Week of Prayer the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), Bishop Brian Farrell, said that Pope Francis' synodal process could make a 'hugely important' contribution to improving relationships between the different Churches. (LWI)



Bishop Brian Farrell Photo: LWF/A. Hillert

Week of Prayer gives hope for progress in ecumenical relations

Congregations and individuals in many parts of the globe participated in the 18th-25th January Week of Prayer initiative which originated over a century ago and is organized by the PCPCU in partnership with the World Council of Churches (WCC). Each year an ecumenical group in a particular region of the world is invited to prepare resources that can be used for different kinds of ecumenical initiatives during the octave of prayer.

This year, worship materials were prepared by members of the Middle East Council of Churches, focusing on the theme of the Magi who "saw the star in the East and came to worship" the Christ Child in Bethlehem.

Bishop Farrell felt that the material, available in seven languages, was 'filled with a deep, genuine spirituality that will be very effective when used by communities around the world.'

Facing common challenges together

Christians in the Middle East, he said, are so profoundly affected by the economic, social, cultural and the

religious complexity of their region, marking them out as 'a community of faith, living in difficult circumstances with a strong identity and sense of purpose.' While there were tensions over "territoriality" in the past, Bishop Farrell said, 'today there is close co-operation as they understand they are all facing the same challenges.' He pointed to a recent document called "We Choose Abundant Life" as an important part of the reform process of Churches in that region as they seek to 'come out of isolation and respond together as part of the one Christian family.'

Reflecting on the problems which cause many young people to leave their countries in search of better opportunities abroad, Bishop Farrell felt that Churches should try to 'be in solidarity with them and make public opinion aware of their challenges.' Pilgrimages to the Middle East are an important way of learning about their centuries-old presence, he added, as well as offering economic support to Christians there today.

Bishop Farrell, who marks the 20th anniversary of his appointment this year, said the COVID-19 pandemic had caused additional difficulties for

those preparing the Week of Prayer resources. Despite the impossibility of meeting in person they had managed to work online to produce what he described as 'really excellent texts'. He added that, in a broader sense, the pandemic has 'slowed down momentum' of many of the theological dialogues because online meetings 'are not the same as sitting together, to see the reactions and feel the commitments of our partners.' On the other hand, in terms of 'practical ecumenism,' he noted, 'people across the globe have been working much more closely together and seeking to respond to each other's problems.'

Reaffirming the fundamentals of faith

Looking ahead to significant events on the ecumenical calendar over the coming months, the bishop pointed to the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea which will be marked by all Churches in 2025. 'We are already working very hard with our partners in WCC and with the Ecumenical Patriarchate to prepare for the anniversary of that First Ecumenical Council,' he reported. That event was 'hugely important because it settled controversies about the nature of Christ and consolidated structures of the Church. We hope to turn the anniversary into an opportunity for Christians to reaffirm the fundamentals of the faith and give momentum to our shared ecumenical efforts,' he added.

Looking ahead to other events on the agenda for 2022, he noted that ecumenical delegates will participate in the WCC Assembly in Germany in the autumn and in the Anglicans' Lambeth Conference in England in the summer. He said that a recent document on Anglican-Catholic relations, entitled "Sisters in Hope of the Resurrection", could provide 'a stimulus, not just in Anglican-Catholic relations, but also in the Lutheran →

ANGLICAN BISHOPS TO DISCUSS “LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY IN A CONFLICTED WORLD”

Bishops encouraged to join in preparation for the Lambeth Conference due to begin in July 2022.

During February and March this year the Bishops of the Anglican Communion have been taking part in a new series of discussions as part of their journey towards the Lambeth Conference. “Ministry in a Conflicted World” ran online in February, March, and April 2022. Using a range of Biblical reflections, films and discussion, the series offered theological, strategic and practical input on three formational habits that can help to shape ministry and leadership - it explored what it means to “Be Present, Be Curious, and Reimagine.”

During 2021, the Lambeth Conference team ran a 6-month series of Bishops’ Conversations, where bishops studied the book of 1 Peter and started discussing some of the conference themes. So this series continued this “listening phase” of the Lambeth Conference, focused on helping bishops to pray, meet, and prepare for the full event in July 2022.

Anthony Poggo, Adviser to the Archbishop of Canterbury on Anglican Communion Affairs, said: ‘The Lambeth Conference theme is all about exploring what it means to be “God’s Church for God’s World”. The world we live in today is complex and divided. Bishops around the world are often leading and ministering in situations facing conflict, challenge, or polarisation. Our hope and prayer is that this series will have provided bishops with a space to share and listen to one another, and to learn from each other’s contexts and the challenges they face.’

The course was delivered by the Lambeth Conference in partnership with Difference, a part of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s reconciliation ministry. It included video contributions from theologians and practitioners from around the world whose ministry has been formed in particularly complex and divided situations.

Session 1 explored a theology of incarnation and lament to help the bishops discuss what it means to be ‘present’ in ministry with those who are suffering, marginalised or who disagree with us.

Session 2 considered a theology of encounter to assist bishops in ministering across divides, with a curiosity that seeks to listen, grow understanding and enable fractures to be healed.

Session 3 discussed a theology of hope and reconciliation as mission designed to encourage bishops to focus on ways of enabling our Churches to reimagine and bring transformation. It is through community that reimagining often takes place.

Each of these sessions included a short film to watch about the topic made by expert practitioners and theologians on leadership and conflict. The bishops were then invited to gather in groups with others from around the Communion to reflect on a passage of scripture (guided by commentary from Bible scholars from around the world), and to work together on developing and applying the session’s content, and to listen to, learn about and pray for each other’s contexts.

A part of each session was dedicated to praying for peace across the Communion. A few bishops in each session shared their experience of conflict, division and hope, and the others responded in prayer. The course provided a valuable opportunity to experience the power of God at work through the global Anglican family and deepen understanding of how the bishops might pray for one another in the lead up to the Lambeth Conference.

and Reformed dialogues too.’ The document, from theologians who form part of the Malines Conversation Group, calls for Churches to “align our theory with practice” regarding the recognition of ordained ministry. On this basis, Bishop Farrell said, ‘we can move forward and apply the vision of the Vatican II ecclesiology regarding the real yet incomplete communion between our Churches.’

Reflecting on the so-called ‘synodal process which Pope Francis has inaugurated in preparation for a meeting of the world’s Catholic bishops in 2023, Bishop Farrell said, ‘There is a huge interest among our ecumenical

partners who have already been invited to participate in the consultations.’ The aim of the process, he explained, is ‘a hugely increased participation of the whole people of God in the life, the governance and mission of the Church. This is vital from an ecumenical point of view, because the over-centralisation of the Church has been an obstacle recognized by every Pope since Vatican II. If the process is successful, I think there will be a different appreciation of the Catholic Church, which will be very beneficial in the search for Christian unity.’

Responding to Bishop Farrell’s comments, the Lutheran World Federa-

tion’s Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations, Prof Dr Dirk Lange commented: ‘The synodal process does indeed open up wonderful possibilities and we were grateful for the invitation to reflect on ‘Synodality from a Lutheran perspective’ during our visit to Rome in June 2021. The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification Consultation process, which brings together Reformed, Methodist, Anglican, Catholic, and Lutheran world communions, is also exploring ways in which our different faith communities can work together in joint proclamation and service. It is an exciting time for the ecumenical journey!’

LATVIAN ORDAINED PRIEST IN DUBLIN : A FIRST FOR IRELAND'S PORVOO RELATIONSHIP

Our Anglican Co-Patron, Archbishop Michael Jackson, presided at an historic occasion



The Rev Imants Miezis (centre) with Archbishop Lauma Zusevica and Archbishop Michael Jackson and the Rev Andris Habakuk, Dean Emerita Ilze Kuplens Ewart and the Rev Robert Marshall.

Imants trained in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute using an individual learning agreement with the Latvian Church Worldwide. After the service, Archbishop Michael commented: 'It is a great delight to see the Porvoo Agreement come to life in this way. We in the diocese wish Imants all that is best as his ministry continues to unfold.'

In her sermon, Archbishop Zusevica said that the day of Imants' ordination had been long awaited. 'We are so grateful that we can gather here in happiness as envisioned in the Gospel reading of the Sermon on the Mount,' she stated. She said that Latvians could understand what the people of Ukraine were going through and acknowledged that in everyone's everyday lives they encountered struggle. She said that Imants could tell others how to reach God in times of

The congregation at Christ Church Cathedral's Eucharist on Sunday morning, 3rd April 2022, witnessed a small bit of history. The Rev Imants Miezis was ordained to the priesthood for the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Worldwide, the first time such cooperation has taken place between Churches of the Porvoo Communion in Ireland.

doubt, fear, struggle and darkness.

Imants was ordained by the Archbishop of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Worldwide, the Most Rev Lauma Zusevica, and the service was celebrated by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson.

Afterwards Imants noted that there are more than 25,000 Latvians living in Ireland so ordination was very important to him.

The Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Worldwide (LELCW) is a Lutheran denomination with a presence in Latvia, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and the United States. The Church was originally established by refugees after the Second World War when Latvia was occupied and incorporated into the Soviet Union. It is a member of the Porvoo Communion of Churches which is made up of Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches which have bishops and the Anglican Provinces of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England. The Porvoo Agreement was signed 20 years ago and its bedrock is the recognition of ordained ministry by its member Churches and their people along with shared initiatives in parishes and dioceses.

The ordination of Imants brought together two member Churches, the LELCW and the Church of Ireland, in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. In a short legal ceremony after the service, Archbishop Jackson gave Imants a licence to officiate so that he has authority to exercise his priestly ministry in both the Latvian Church and in the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough in the Church of Ireland.

THE RISE AND FALL OF ADAM AND EVE

*The Rev Dr Roy Long recommends a book
that examines creation stories*

Stephen Greenblatt is the John Cogan University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University. I looked forward to reading **The Rise and Fall of Adam and Eve (New York/London, W.W.Norton & Company, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-393-24080-1)**. I was not disappointed. It is a history of the ways in which the Genesis story of creation has been interpreted over the millennia and has especially interesting sections on Augustine, John Milton, and Charles Darwin. However, he also introduces his readers to lesser known figures, like the early 17th century French Calvinist thinker Isaac La Peyrère, who at an early age put forward the theory that Adam and Eve were the ancestors of the Jews, while other races and nations had their own unique creation stories. Threatened with burning at the stake he eventually converted to Roman Catholicism and ended his days in a monastery. The book has very thorough notes and two appendices: the first gives quotes from significant thinkers – including Martin Luther – and the second offers a selection of creation stories from around the world. An excellent read; highly recommended.

ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN-METHODIST RELATIONSHIPS

David Carter, Methodist Observer on the Society's Executive Committee, offers a survey of the current state of play between our two communions and the Roman Catholic Church.

Recently, in their ecumenical planning for the next five years, Finnish Lutheran bishops suggested the development of a triangular relationship between Anglicans, Lutherans and Methodists. As recently recruited Methodist observer on the Society's Committee, I was intrigued to find out what had prompted this suggestion.

Jaakko Rusama kindly sent me information concerning a local dialogue between the Lutheran Church in Finland and the United Methodist Church in Finland, which is related to the United Methodist Church in USA, rather than British Methodism. A long-standing dialogue between the two churches had, in 2010, resulted in a common statement, *Partakers in Christ*, and establishing of mutual Eucharistic hospitality though not full inter-changeability of ministry.

As a life-long British Methodist, I am reasonably familiar with Anglicanism, particularly that of the Church of England, but I am still very much on a steep, though enthusiastic, learning curve where Lutheranism is concerned. But the more I have thought about the Finnish bishops' suggestion concerning those three communions in the specific context of Finland, the more I think there is mileage in it.

So, what have the three in common? What can and should they share with each other?

All three profess the catholic Trinitarian faith expressed in the three historic creeds of the early Church, in common, of course, with almost all Christians. More specifically, they share a common heritage in the Reformation, in its desire to reform the Church so that the centrality of justification by grace through faith can stand out more clearly than it had in the late Middle Ages. They were determined that the Scriptures should be available for all the faithful to read, study and understand. Methodism, starting in the eighteenth century, was indebted particularly to the English Reformation, but also stressed Luther's acute understanding of God's free and unconditional grace.

All three stress the centrality and normativity of the two gospel sacraments, whilst allowing for rites of confirmation, ordination and assurance to penitents of God's forgiveness without formally affirming them as sacraments. Since the late eighteenth century, they have been vigorous in pursuing mission throughout the world in ways that have been increasingly understood as holistic, not simply evangelism in a traditional sense.

All three have been prominent in the twentieth century Ecumenical Movement. They are the three communions that have been involved in constant international dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church and, indeed, others. There has been convergence on Eucharistic doctrine, if not yet total agreement on it between Roman Catholics and the three partner Churches. Sources for this include mutual learning from the insights of the Liturgical and Ecumenical



For many years Lutherans and Anglicans and Methodists have engaged in dialogues and have recognised that they have much in common. Is it time for the three communions to engage in discussions together?

Movements, the recovery of the concept of anamnesis and, for Methodists in particular, a recovery of a vital element in their heritage, the Eucharistic hymns, 166 in all, of Charles Wesley.

All three are also signatories to the Joint Declaration on Justification with Catholics. They have also each been in separate dialogues with the other two. They have also been in dialogue with the Reformed tradition and, in some cases, in unity schemes or other close relationships with the Reformed (Indian sub-continent in case of Anglicans and Methodists; EKD and other Leuenberg Churches in the case of Lutherans and Methodism - it should, however, be noted that the Lutheran Churches of Finland and Sweden are not members of Leuenberg/Community of Protestant Churches in Europe).

All three communions accept, and have stated in dialogue with Roman Catholics, that they are called to unity in faith, life and mission.

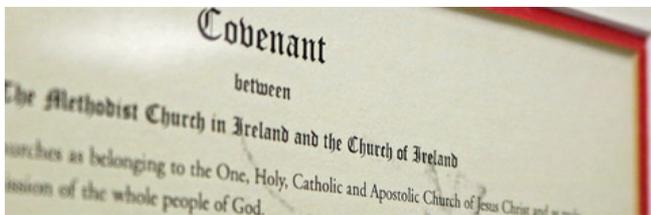
All three are currently seeking to understand more fully the nature of *diakonia* and, in particular, to emphasise the particular ministry of ordained deacons (see the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue of 2013 and the British Methodist report 'What is a Deacon?' of 2005).

All three have sought to equip the laity more fully through catechism (a particular stress of Luther), to see vocation as applying to 'secular work' not just ministry (another particular stress in Luther), and to focus on general discipleship. Methodists particularly pioneered elements of lay ministry in preaching and teaching, increasingly taken up by Anglicans from the late nineteenth century.

All three accept the priesthood of all believers in the sense that all Christians have access to the Father through the Son in prayer, and believe that all Christians should intercede for others, both within the Church and beyond it. 

⇒ All three believe that the Church is the communion of all the faithful, modelled on the divine Trinity in Unity. They all accept the need for wider episcopate and oversight beyond the local congregational level, though some matters remain to be resolved with both Methodists and some of the Lutherans as to how they could receive the sign of the episcopal succession in a manner acceptable to Anglicans and to their own particular Churches.

Of particular interest is the 2015 agreement under the Irish Anglican-Methodist Covenant. In it, the Church of Ireland recognises that the President of the Irish Methodist Conference exercises responsibilities analogous to those exercised by bishops in historic succession as the Church of Ireland has received them. This has resulted in recognition of the successive Presidents as episcopal ministers. Irish bishops now share in the installation of such Presidents and Presidents of Conference are invited to share in the laying on of hands in Irish episcopal consecrations. There is now also full interchangeability of presbyteral ministry between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church of Ireland.



All three communions have also given some attention in their dialogues to the Petrine ministry as a possible focus for global Christian witness. The practice of that ministry by Pope Francis may lead all three communions to seek to go further in such exploration.

Particular gifts of the three communions for sharing with each other and beyond.

The **Anglican** desire to welcome the key insights of the Reformers into the freely justifying grace of God *alongside* a continuing emphasis on the positive heritage of the Church across the previous generations is shown in their retention of, and continued insistence on, the episcopal succession as a sign of continuity and wider communion. Rémy Bethmont is a French convert to Anglicanism who, in his excellent book, *L'anglicanisme*, also stresses their greater emphasis on liturgy and spirituality in contrast to the detailed dogmatic stress of many continental Reformation traditions. Many Anglicans see themselves as a bridge Church between the older Orthodox and Catholic Churches and the Reformation and later Protestant traditions. Recent and ongoing Anglican-Orthodox dialogue on the divine image in human beings will be of great value to both Lutherans and Methodists.



Lutherans stress Baptism and Eucharist not as offerings of

self or community to God but as God's self offering through His Son to us in visible signs that anchor and aid our faith. They also emphasise everyday discipleship to lay people and clergy alike. Both are called to express it through faithful discharge of their particular vocations in constructive work as part of God's gracious provision for the general welfare of human society. They are called to general acts of everyday kindness to immediate neighbours. Christian faith and vocation alike help us to be, as Luther puts it, 'free, joyful, almighty workers under all tribulations, servants of our neighbours and yet lords of all', confident and joyful in Christian daily discipleship.

Methodists stress, as Pope Francis does now, the joy of the gospel and, like Lutherans earlier in Germany, expressed their faith from the beginning in hymn singing, a custom later taken up by the mainline Churches of the English-speaking world. Methodists expected active lay participation in commending the gospel and in living out its implications in the world. Lay people played a then unprecedented role in preaching, in spiritual leadership in the early class meetings, and in the routine daily running of local congregations - both features later imitated by Anglicans as well as other Free Churches. Methodists stressed the need to 'press on to full salvation', a matter that once led to tension with Lutherans and some evangelical Anglicans, but which has now been largely reconciled in dialogues with the Lutheran tag '*simul justus et peccator*'.

Each communion has also been engaged in dialogue with the other two at international level and also within varying National Church contexts. The report of the only international Lutheran-Methodist dialogue, *The Church, Community of Grace*, was published in 1984, recommending steps be taken to declare and establish full fellowship of word and sacrament. Two international Anglican-Methodist dialogue reports were issued respectively in 1995 and 2014, the 2014 report recording agreement in faith and calling for common acceptance of the historic three-fold ministry.

A very major step towards unity for both Anglicans and Methodists was the conclusion of full communion agreements in 1999 and 2010 with, respectively, the Episcopal Church of USA and the United Methodist Church, both stressing what could be learned by each partner from the other.

The particular dialogues.

Anglican-Methodist.

Two international reports have been issued, the first being *Sharing on the Apostolic Communion* in 1995, the second being issued by AMICUM in 2014, the International Commission on Unity and Mission, and entitled *Into all the World: Being and Becoming Apostolic Churches*. Both accept that there is unity in the key essentials of the apostolic faith, that there is need for oversight (episcopate) in the Church beyond the local level, and that both traditions have expressed this in their polities. Both draw widely on general ecumenical thinking about episcopate and episcopacy, especially in the *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* document of the WCC (1982). The second report gives detailed examples, particularly mentioning the personal episcopacy that exists in many ⇒

⇒ Methodist Churches, though not in British Methodism. It also reviews many of the ways in which Anglicans and Methodists across the world have sought closer unity, and in particular ways in which episcopacy in apostolic succession might be received without compromising convictions of both partners. In one country, Ireland, success has been obtained and, as I have already noted, each President of the Irish Methodist Conference is inducted and ordained as an episcopal minister by a group of ministers, including both some of his or her predecessors and also some Anglican bishops, with complete inter-changeability of presbyteral ministry there.

British and New Zealand Methodism are both interested in the Irish Agreement as offering a model for closer unity in their countries. In England, there is already considerable co-operation under the Anglican-Methodist Covenant of 2003, which allows Eucharistic hospitality but not inter-changeability of presbyteral ministry. The Joint Implementation Committee has done valuable work in promoting greater Anglican-Methodist mutual understanding and reception, the latter in accordance with the Covenant agreement to 'harvest the fruits of each others' traditions'. There is, however, as yet no agreement as to how quickly work should be done on promoting the President-Bishop scheme suggested in 2018 - a scheme closely related to the Irish one. *Into All the World* also surveys developments in America and other parts of the world. There are ongoing discussions between the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church as to the possibility of a full communion agreement.

Lutheran-Methodist.

There has only been one international dialogue between Lutherans and Methodists. It began in 1977 in the wake of the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) declaration on the importance of unity in reconciled diversity and is marked by the mutual acceptance of the implications of that statement. It should be noted that this applies only to relationships between LWF churches and Methodists, and not to the Churches of the International Lutheran Council which make up about 10 % of world Lutheranism.

Traditionally, there had been a slight element of feeling on both sides that the relationship between Justification and Sanctification was not clearly understood by the other. John Wesley himself had said that no-one understood Justification by Grace through Faith better than Luther, but also that no one had understood the need for sanctification less!

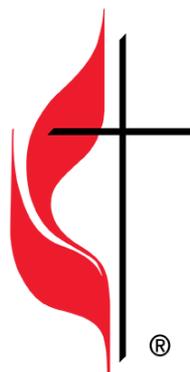
Five main topics were studied. First was the authority of the scriptures, with Methodists accepting that their previous considerable emphasis on the authority of experience had always been subject to the test of Christian experience by the yardstick of the Scriptures. Next came the agreement on salvation by grace through faith, in which it was accepted that 'Christian faith is faith that is active in love and is ever anew called to do good works because of God's command and for the sake of the neighbour'. The tension between the Lutheran stress on *simul justus et peccator* and Methodist teaching on entire sanctification could, in both this and later national dialogues, be accommodated by a dual stress that though sin normally remains to an extent in the believer, there can also be no limits set on the power of the Holy

Spirit to transform Christian lives. On Church and Ministry, it is stressed that 'our two traditions have emphasised the ministry of the whole people of God both in their everyday vocations and in their particular responsibilities within the Christian community. Both accept the need for a special ministry of Word and Sacrament, but do not believe that any specific form of this is mandated in the New Testament and that thus Churches may vary in the exact forms they adopt. However, the need for wider episcopacy is accepted. The fourth section, focusing on the means of grace, records the common conviction that the three most important are the preaching of the Word, and the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Baptism is an effective sign of God's grace, 'God's gift of salvation for men and women who are sinners'. The Eucharist, too, is 'an effective sign of the saving presence of the risen Christ' though 'Lutherans tend to emphasise the real yet mysterious union between Christ's body and blood more than Methodists generally do'. Finally, the nature of the link between saving grace and mission is stressed. 'Having been freed by God, Christians find their noblest vocation in the service of the neighbour'.

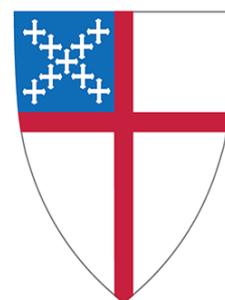
In their conclusion, the dialogue teams rejoiced in the fact that there were already some national dialogues and agreements on mutual communion. They recommended that 'our Churches take steps to declare and establish full fellowship of word and sacrament', via a process of establishing pulpit exchanges and mutual Eucharistic hospitality.

This call was heeded in subsequent years. Agreements were made between the Methodists and local Lutheran Churches in Germany (1987) and Norway (1990). The Methodist accession to the Leuenberg Fellowship (now the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe) in 1994 brought European Methodists into communion with most Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Europe, including three which are members both of the Porvoo Communion and the CPCE.

Particularly significant also have been the full communion agreement of 2009 between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the United Methodist Church, by far the largest member Church in world Methodism, and



United Methodist
Church



Episcopal
Church

the statement, *Partakers in Faith*, of 2010, minuting dialogue between Methodists and Lutherans in Finland, resulting in a mutual hospitality agreement but not, as yet, full inter-changeability of ministry. ⇒

⇒ **Anglican-Lutheran dialogue.**

International Anglican-Lutheran dialogue began in 1970 and has produced several reports since. It was preceded by a long history of mutual contacts from the late 19th century between the Churches of England and Sweden. Differing views of the historic episcopate were tackled from the very beginning. Anglicans saw it as central to their heritage whereas Lutherans, though usually accepting the need for wider oversight, tending to see its continuity as legitimate, but not in any way essential. To them matters of order were always secondary to those relating to key doctrines.

It is helpful when studying the later development of the dialogue to read the two summaries at the end of the first dialogue report in which the two co-chairs explained the relative positions of their two communions. The Lutheran chair accepted that there was a valid challenge from the Anglicans on episcopacy and that it might lead Lutherans to reconsider their earlier view that all matters of Church order were *adiaphora*, of secondary importance.

Inevitably, the second report in 1987 concentrated on questions of episcopate and their relation to the total mission of the Church. The work was also influenced by the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document of the WCC Faith and Order Movement in 1982. Anglicans were challenged to find ways of affirming the authenticity of current Lutheran ministries and National Churches challenged to do detailed work on mutual recognition and intercommunion.

Those challenges were particularly taken up by both communions in North America and northern Europe. First, the Northern Europeans produced the Porvoo Agreement in which they recognised the apostolicity of life, doctrine and ministry maintained in their Churches, including those that, at the Reformation, had experienced a break in succession. Later, the North Americans concluded full communion agreements which would involve Anglican participation in episcopal consecrations, thus allowing Lutheran bishops to come into the historic succession.

The Porvoo Agreement of 1992 between six Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches and the four Anglican Churches of the British Isles is particularly significant because of its very thorough analysis of the ways in which apostolicity is maintained, not simply by the episcopal succession but by many other means, such as faithfulness to the apostles' teaching, in service and other ways. The result was that Anglicans accepted that the succession had been maintained where, despite a short break at the Reformation in three of the Lutheran Churches involved, continuation of the pre-Reformation sees had continued. As years went by the Church of Denmark, the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, the Latvian Church in Exile and the Reformed Episcopal Churches of Spain and Portugal, now integral parts of the Anglican Communion, signed up to the agreement.

The Church of England also made the Meissen Agreement with the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD). In it, the two Churches acknowledged each other as true Churches but did not agree on full interchangeability of ministry. The EKD could not see that what it perceived as an Anglican canonical peculiarity should be universal necessity. Conversations continue in that relationship.



Bishop Lind, Lutheran Church in Great Britain (centre left), and Archbishop Elmars Ernsts Rozitis, Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (centre right) after signing the Porvoo Agreement in 2014

A key feature of the international dialogue has been the attention given to the diaconate in two reports (1995 and 2013). This has been a very valuable wider contribution to overall ecumenical dialogue on the nature of a ministry which is widely recognised to reach back into the Apostolic Church, but which is very differently exercised even within communions as well as between them.

CHILE: LUTHERAN CHAPLAIN TO PRESIDENT

Bishop Izani Bruch will be responsible for worship, pastoral care at the government headquarters (LWI)



On 21st April, Bishop Izani Bruch of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) was appointed Chaplain of the *Palacio de La Moneda* of Chile, headquarters of government affairs and ministries in Chile.

'The Church is very happy and we receive the role with humility, with fear and trembling, but also with great hope and commitment to make the new Chile, which we are all dreaming of, possible,' the Bishop said. She is a native of Brazil, but moved to Chile in 1992 and was ordained as a pastor in 2002. She is active in the ecumenical movement and human rights advocacy, and has been bishop since 2019.

Since 1999, the law grants equal legal status to all churches and religions registered in Chile, and the IELCH has 3000 members in different regions of the country. As chaplain, the bishop will be responsible for worship and pastoral care for palace staff and employees who are members of various denominations, including Lutherans, Evangelicals and Pentecostals. 'We seek to establish an open chaplaincy, respectful of the diversity in our religious world,' she said.

NORDIC CHURCHES CONCLUDE PROJECT ON “BAPTISM IN TIMES OF CHANGE”

The project “Baptism in Times of Change”, conducted by five member churches of The Lutheran World Federation’s (LWF) in the Nordic region, concluded with an online consultation on 19th and 20th January this year, just after our January issue went out.

Recommendations included exploring variations in baptismal practice, and special services and liturgies for different contexts and age groups. (LWI)

Learning about differences and reflecting on the familiar

‘It has been encouraging to find new ways for Churches to work together as churches,’ said Prof Dr Harald Hegstad of the MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society. He has served as “Baptism in Times of Change” project manager. ‘The project has gathered practitioners, church leaders, and researchers in a fruitful exchanges of insights and experiences,’ he said.

The “Baptism in Times of Change” project, conducted from 2020 to 2022, was a pilot project of an overarching initiative, “Churches in Times of Change”, which focuses on understanding changes in ecclesial practice and theology in the Nordic region. The Churches participating in the initiative are the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

‘Even if the situation in the Nordic setting is similar, there are also many differences,’ Prof Hegstad explained. Learning about these differences sheds new light on one’s situation. For example, in some Churches it has been taken for granted that baptisms are part of the main Sunday service. However, baptisms take place in homes or as special church services in others. ‘To learn that other Churches have a differing practice has led to renewed reflection on our own practices,’ he said.

The COVID-19-pandemic has also affected baptism practices. Infant baptisms declined at the beginning of the pandemic, and we do not know whether the number will return to a “normal” level afterward. Instead of baptisms in public services, numbers of private baptismal services have increased. It remains to be seen whether the pandemic has caused permanent changes in baptismal practices in the Nordic churches.

Different contexts

A primary outcome of the project is a list of 18 recommendations. They take as a point of departure the themes identified in an annotated book with contributions from all Churches, identifying challenges and relevant questions, and pointing to examples of “good practice” concerning baptism, without necessarily entailing endorsement from all participants. Furthermore, the recommendations are not binding policies for participating Churches as each national group needs to continue working on utilising the recommendations in their context and constituency.

An important side-effect of the project has been that it strengthened contacts between the Churches at the leadership level and among practitioners. ‘By sharing common concerns and experiences, we have come closer to each other,’ Prof Hegstad reflected.

Much parallel work was done in the Nordic churches, ‘but we have not always been able to learn from each other enough.’ In addition, using English as a common language for the project helped cross language barriers.

‘What made this project unique is the collaboration of the LWF member Churches in the region,’ said the Rev Dr Ireneusz Lukas, LWF’s Regional Secretary for Europe. ‘Collaborating on a fundamental topic for the present and future of every Church has shown the potential of exchanging our ideas, experiences, and creative theological discussion.’

He also welcomed the fact that the outcomes are available in English on



One of the findings of the “Baptism in Times of Change” project in the Nordic region is that numbers of infant baptisms are declining but the baptisms of youth and adults are increasing. Photo: folkekirken.dk

the “Churches in Times of Change” website so that they can be used by Churches in other regions. [It is a site that our members might find very interesting and thought provoking – Ed]

There were about 50 practitioners, researchers, and church leaders at this last online consultation of “Baptism in Times of Change” gathering.

The outcomes are based on the information collected and collated by the researchers following nine webinars on baptism that were conducted in 2021. They focused on four aspects of the baptismal landscape: Statistics and Societal Change, Theologies of Baptism, Communicating Baptism, and Baptismal Practice.

The Nordic Churches will develop further projects under the “Churches in Times of Change” umbrella using the same methodology.

‘My advice to the LWF and member Churches wanting to use this kind of approach is to utilize an online format and to facilitate conversations between practitioners, church leaders, and researchers on themes that are vital to the churches and the Lutheran communion,’ Prof Hegstad concluded.

WOMEN MUST LEAD THE WAY OUT OF CLIMATE CRISIS

The Lutheran World Federation and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America host an event exploring ways in which women are driving movement for more sustainable living



Women from Gawar in northern Cameroon building energy efficient clay stoves, as part of an LWF environmental programme. Photo: Tcheou Tcheou ABEL

Women may be more likely to die in climate related disasters, but they are also increasingly driving the movement for cleaner energy sources and more sustainable ways of living. In a panel discussion at the United Nation's 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Lutheran leaders from Africa, Europe and USA called for women's knowledge and experience to take centre stage in all decision making about tackling the climate crisis.

The event, hosted by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), also showed how young people are already taking action to make sure women's voices are heard where key environmental policies and programmes are determined. Entitled "Women on the Frontlines of Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation", the event ended with a call "to get climate finance into the hands of women farmers and entrepreneurs" in order to make progress towards meeting the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Statistics show that women are 14 times more likely than men to lose their lives when natural disasters

strike. They are also much more likely to be displaced by increasing droughts, fires and flooding that destroy homes and livelihoods. But even the women who survive are more vulnerable to the damaging effects of climate change, as LWF General Secretary, the Rev Anne Burghardt, stressed in her opening remarks. In much of the developing world, she said, 'women and girls are primarily responsible for collecting water and firewood. With increased droughts, they have to walk longer distances, often increasing their risk to sexual and gender-based violence.'

Innovative energy solutions

Anne Burghardt pointed to ways in which the LWF works at global and local levels to promote sustainable and equitable climate financing for practical solutions. Success stories, she said, include supporting women to become solar cell engineers, installing photovoltaic panels in impoverished areas, as well as preserving endangered flora through innovative livelihood projects. As a global communion of Churches involved in humanitarian and development work, she insisted, the LWF seeks to uphold the rights and dignity of all human beings by rooting these activities 'in our faith tradition.'

Leading the discussion from a government perspective was Christina Chan, who is senior adaptation advisor to John Kerry, the US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change. She noted the need, not only to bring women to the decision-making table but, if necessary, 'to move the room to where women are.' Her government is committed to achieving the goals set out in the President's Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE) which was launched at COP26. This includes provisions to make sure women and girls have access and knowledge to make better decisions, to support locally-led decision making for development and to mobilise resources to support those already working on adaptation and mitigation measures.

Environmental engineer Abdoul Aziz, an LWF project coordinator in northern Cameroon, shared his grassroots experience of working with women and girls who walk long distances to fetch firewood which is in increasingly short supply in the region. He has been training women in Minawao refugee camp in the use of solar-powered ovens, as well as the production of energy-efficient stoves and ecological charcoal made with biomass. Women are also engaged in tree-planting, he explained, using innovative "cocoon" technology to preserve precious water supplies and to fertilise the surrounding soil.

Intersectionality of climate crisis

Speaking from a global perspective, LWF's Program Executive for Youth, Savanna Sullivan, shared experience of leading a large delegation of young climate activists to the COP26 summit in Glasgow last November. Young people, she stressed, will bear the brunt of the climate crisis, with young women continuing to suffer in a doubly disproportionate way from the effects of global warming. She gave examples of how young women in the COP delegation took creative action to communicate the urgency of the crisis, ☐

⇒ including the production of video clips on TikTok and a presentation on work with Indigenous communities living just south of the Arctic Circle in Canada.

ELCA's first African-American female bishop, the Rt Rev Patricia Davenport, stressed the way the climate emergency is part of a wider crisis of moral and spiritual values, where decisions are based on the desire for constant economic growth.

'A pivot is needed,' she said, adding that advancing gender equality in the area of climate justice will also bring results across a variety of sectors including health, food security and poverty reduction. 'We can care for creation and care for one another because God has equipped us to do so,' she insisted.

ELCA's Director of Public Policy, Regina Banks, said that governments and decision makers must listen to the stories of women who are striving to combine their environmental concerns with the practical challenges of their family and work life. Attending COP26, she added, was 'paradigm shifting' as she connected with others working in grass roots communities to build a momentum for change at national and global level.

Isaiah Toroitich, the LWF's Head of Global Advocacy, stressed that 'the climate crisis is coming on top of existing vulnerabilities and inequalities,' negating the effects of progress made towards upholding people's dignity and human rights. 'We are still way below what is needed to achieve what was agreed in Paris to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees,' he said, adding that the 'catastrophic impacts' will continue to disproportionately affect women and girls unless 'gender transformative action' can be stepped up.

The event concluded with a strong call to action from Nora Antonsen, leader of the Church of Norway's Youth Council and member of the LWF delegation at COP26. Though her country is often seen as a success story in terms of gender equality, she noted that 'few women are present in the transport and oil sectors.' Studies show that women globally are more concerned about the climate crisis and are more likely to support policies to reduce emissions, yet only about 10 percent of world leaders at COP26 were women, she pointed out. In the lead up to the next climate summit, she would like to see governments increasing funding for the women already spearheading solutions and she called on faith leaders to inspire others by the modelling of 'long-term engagement for intergenerational climate justice.'

BISHOP PHILIP HUGGINS: "THERE IS NO HIDING PLACE FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE"

Dozens of church leaders in Australia - including many whose communities have been directly affected by flooding and bushfires - signed an open letter calling for government leaders to take effective action to protect the climate.



"Easter is a celebration of life," the letter reads. "In order to celebrate life all people need to flourish, but we acknowledge that Australians have been enduring dark days – with droughts, bushfires, severe storms and massive floods."

The church leaders reflect that damage to the climate is a key contributing factor to these disasters. "Yet over these shared struggles there is Easter, a message of hope," the letter reads. "The greater challenge of preventing such disasters in the future requires systemic transformation."

The letter urges government leaders to heed the advice of the climate experts to reduce carbon emissions.

"Churches, along with other institutions in civil society and the business community, must examine our own practices so we can help reverse damage to the climate," reads the letter.

Among those who signed the letter is Bishop Philip Huggins, who is the Director of the Centre for Ecumenical Studies at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture. He joins other churches leaders in urging Australia's government to stop the nation's climate change isolationism.

'Consistent with the purposes of the Paris Agreement, Australia now has obligations with a timeline,' he reflected. 'You would not know this from current pre-election discourse.'

Bishop Huggins believes the obligations are entirely sensible. 'There is no hiding place from the consequences of climate change,' he said. 'We must contain carbon emissions if we are to prevent global temperatures rising beyond the 1.5 degree target of the Paris Agreement.'

IT MATTERS TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN USA THAT ISSUES OF JUSTICE BE A PART OF “GOSPEL WORK”

In 2021, Daniel Kirschbaum joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) staff as Programme Director for Young Adult Ministry. In this interview he recounts how as a child he was involved in church programmes for young people and how he hopes that churches might make room for youth-led ministries. He also reflects on his involvement in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Global Young Reformer Network and the public and theological issues that matter to young people.



Tell us about your religious and faith formation

Growing up I went to an ELCA congregation in a small town in Wisconsin, which is in the Midwest region of the United States. I joined in Sunday school and faith formation events. I went to summer camp each summer for a week, participated in Vacation Bible Schools put on by my church, attended confirmation

classes and First Communion classes and went to the ELCA National Youth Gathering.

Church was a space where I felt safe. There was certainly a divide between the experiences that felt academic versus the experiences that felt more relational, because those relational pieces provided safe community for me. They allowed me to lean into those relationships in a way that I didn't experience necessarily at school or elsewhere.

What are your current interests? What are you passionate about?

I love to be outside. I love to canoe and hike. Basically, I love to be steeped in creation. I'm passionate about justice work and organising folks around issues of justice like anti-racism, climate justice and queer liberation. And I really love to play board games and volleyball.

How can churches create radically welcoming spaces for young people?

We are global citizens and digital natives [people born or brought up during the age of digital technology – Ed] and are positioned just enough outside family systems that churches are often structured for. Churches should seek opportunities with youth that may go unnoticed. It matters to young people that church budgets, time and decision-making be reflective of the values that churches claim to hold such as anti-racism, climate justice and gender justice and anti-ableism – these all matter to young people. So, if those issues are not a part of it, the church risks distancing itself from youth and from our Gospel values. Churches should be ready for hard conversations that allow people to show up as their authentic selves.

I often think people are afraid of young folks who say, 'I'm spiritual but not religious.' But when I meet people who say

that I often discover a deeply faithful and deeply Christian person who has simply witnessed our institutions becoming separate from our faith. Those young people have chosen to distance themselves from the religiosity of Christianity. There are plenty of gifts that our churches give us, but that is what I hear from our young folks who resist those gifts.

What are some of the ways you see youth engaged in public ministry?

In the ELCA Advocacy offices there is a programme to eradicate hunger worldwide, and we have incredible young adults in that programme who spend a year in fellowship at our advocacy offices, learning about advocacy work and bringing the gifts and perspectives they have as young adults into the programme. They work alongside our advocacy teams to influence policymakers. Listening to the young adults in the LWF Youth delegation that attended the COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow this year was overwhelming. Their voices are prophetic voices, and they have the capacity to make real changes in our public ministry spaces. It was incredible to listen to them.

How can the church better support youth-led ministries instead of mostly youth-targeted ministries?

Something I have been saying lately is that 'Young Adult Ministry is not really Young Adult Ministry if young people are not the leaders of it.' That makes some folks uncomfortable, but I am convinced that it is the truth. I witness a lot of people, often older folks, but people in general, who are terrified to just let go and trust youth and young adults to lead. I think that fear comes from a lack of relationship and a fear that change might actually happen. It is possible that "holy disruption" of our current way of expressing faith might be God speaking to the Church. As a Reformation Church we should affirm the ways disruption creates spaces for God to speak into our ministries.

How has your work on LWF Global Young Reformers Network informed your work at the ELCA? Why is the work of the GYRs important for the LWF communion? Or what does it mean for your church, your work, and you to be a part of the Communion of Churches?

Working with the Global Young Reformers Network has been an awesome experience. It has broadened my own perspectives and challenged me and invited me into a conversation that is way bigger than our local context. The Spirit connects us all, and we inhabit this creation together, and so listening to the strategies and postures of my fellow reformers across the communion, has deepened our work at the office of Young Adult Ministry in the United States and has created an urgency of commitment to each other for the sake of the Gospel. Our work matters, our work should be heard, and we all must be a part of that witness.

PHILIPPINES: TRAINING EQUIPS LAY LEADERS TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

Nineteen new leaders graduate from the Lutheran Church in the Philippines' Biblical-Vocation Lay Institute



Nineteen laymen and laywomen of the Lutheran Church in the Philippines (LCP) are now ready to “Run With Endurance” after graduating from the LCP’s Biblical-Vocation Lay Institute (BVLI) on 5th March, ‘equipped and ready to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ LCP President, Antonio Reyes, said.

‘The Biblical Vocational Lay Institute (BVLI) is an institution developed to train and equip our young people to become lay missionaries with the knowledge of the Word of God for the work of Christian service. Lay people are important because they are an integral part of the royal priesthood chosen to proclaim the wonderful deeds of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light,’ he told the graduates and their guests.

A part of God’s mission

In a keynote message, Dr Danilo V Ayap, a member of the LCP Board of Directors and lay representative of the South Luzon District (SLD) said, ‘The graduation theme taken from Hebrews 12:1-2 deeply reverberates

God’s calling for all Christians, guided by the Holy Spirit, to be part of God’s mission of spreading the Word.’

This is the second batch of graduates of the BVLI programme. The BVLI is open to Lutheran and non-Lutheran members aged 18-35 and older adults if desired, after qualifying in a screening process. The BVLI students are provided with room and board at the Lutheran Centre in Tiaong, Quezon Province for the duration of the nine month programme. Subjects learned were within the framework of Biblical and practical studies, fieldwork and vocational training.

‘I enrolled at BVLI to learn more about vocational development and, at the same time, more about God’s Word,’ said Romel Batil, who was class president and leadership award recipient. ‘I think that when I start work in my particular vocation, I will also share the Gospel with colleagues, friends and other people that I encounter.’

Called to serve in various ways

Although the lay leaders are not

trained to have pastoral responsibility, after graduation they are prepared to work and serve within their home congregations and communities in various ways. ‘God is calling me to teach children and youth in my congregation. In addition to that, I am called to share the Gospel with my family, community, and friends,’ said Hyna Tanas, BVLI student of the year.

The comprehensive BVLI coursework offered graduates training in writing devotional materials for young people, preparing lesson plans, assisting with catechism and altar preparation, leading prayers, organizing youth events, evangelism programming, and administrative assistance. The graduates will receive a “love” gift according to their roles in the parish.

However, the geographic mission field is not limited to the parish or even within the country. Some graduates will have the opportunity to go abroad in the future. ‘The staff at BVLI help each student choose a course that fits their personality, gifts and abilities,’ Hyna Tanas said, reflecting on her experience.



The Window

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

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The Anglican-Lutheran Society

The Anglican-Lutheran Society

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LWF GENERAL SECRETARY AWARDED “DER FRIEDENSTEIN” PRIZE

The Gotha Cultural Foundation says that the prize “sets a sign for the importance of faith in times when faith and hope are dwindling.”



The Rev Anne Burghardt

Photo: LWF/Albin Hillert

The General Secretary of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Estonian theologian Anne Burghardt, has been awarded the 2022 “Der Friedenstein” and received her prize at a ceremony in Gotha on 5th May. This prize has been awarded since 1997. Previous award winners include Queen Silvia of Sweden, orchestral conductor Kurt Masur, and Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng.

The Gotha Cultural Foundation, in announcing the award, said that this year’s prize honours ‘a woman from one of the world’s largest organizations for Christian philanthropy, social cohesion, and peace.’ The Rev Anne Burghardt, they said, is ‘a proven expert in theology and is committed to ecumenism and international relations.’ We are well aware of that because Anne is a member of our Society, and we extend to her our congratulations on receiving the award.



When she received the news of the award, Anne Burghardt said, ‘One of the central tasks of the Church is always to be aware of the three Early Church Dimensions: Kerygma, Liturgia, Diakonia; the proclamation of the Gospel, worship and prayer, and service to others.’ The prize is worth 5.000 EUR, and she plans to donate the money to LWF’s work in peacebuilding and reconciliation.

In the year in which the LWF celebrates its 75th anniversary, the city of Gotha is also celebrating “500 Years of Reformation in Gotha.” Martin Luther had stayed in the city several times and he preached in the Augustinian Church, pictured here.