

The Window

OCTOBER 2021

THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY

Issue No. 127

We hope you enjoy this issue of your Newsletter.

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And much more

SOCIETY MEMBER APPOINTED GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Back in June there was an election for the post of Secretary-General of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The choice was between Kenneth Mtata, Secretary General of the Church Council of Zimbabwe, and Anne Burghardt, Head of Development at the Theological Institute of the Estonian Lutheran Church and Church Adviser on International and Ecumenical Relations. It was she who was chosen.



Anne studied theology both in Estonia and in Germany, and is now completing a PhD dissertation on liturgy within the orthodox tradition.

In recent years she has worked at the theological faculty of the Church of Estonia, where a focus area was to strengthen the Lutheran identity in theological education.

At present high in the list of priorities for the LWF are precisely theological education,

Anne, a member of our Society and a keynote speaker at our conference in Hungary in 2014, is the first woman and the first Eastern European to lead the Lutheran World Federation. She will take over from Dr Martin Junge, who has held the position for the past 11 years.

Great experience

Anne has real in-depth knowledge of the Lutheran World Federation. She worked in the head office in Geneva from 2013 to 2018 as the study secretary for ecumenical relations.

She was content coordinator for both the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation and the 12th General Assembly which was held in Namibia in 2017.

Lutheran identity and equality, which includes fighting for the right of women theologians to ordination. These are areas in which Anne has a lot of experience.

Skilled theologian

Bishop Henrik Stubkjær, a member of LWF's Supreme Council and Chairman of its emergency aid organization, World Service, says that he is convinced that the Anne is the right choice. 'I am delighted! She is a highly skilled theologian, has been deeply involved in the ecumenical dialogue, and knows LWF from the inside. I look forward to working with her. I was on the selection committee, and Anne Burghardt has throughout the process shown great knowledge and overview and dedication to the new task that now awaits her.'

CHURCH APPEALS FOR SUPPORT AFTER SUDDEN FLOOD DESTROYS SEMINARY AND CLAIMS LIVES

At the beginning of August Moti Dabah, a student at Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis Ababa, joined our Society. He is completing his Master's thesis there. Only a few days later we heard that sudden floods had claimed lives and destroyed buildings at the Seminary. Please pray for Moti and for the staff and students, and for all affected by the disaster.

Moti writes: On August 17th, 2021, heavy flash flooding killed eight people, including three children, in my theological seminary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus after heavy rains. Besides the tragic loss of families who lost their loved ones, there is extensive damage to their properties and personal belongings. The Mekane Yesus Seminary suffered damage to more than 20 buildings. Due to this, the seminary was forced to suspend school after the incident. *Moti added:* My home is one minute's walk from the affected area so we are alright. We were without electricity and the internet for some days, and we have been busy comforting families and organising help.

Fredrick Nzwili, a freelance journalist based in Nairobi, Kenya, sent this report to the World Council of Churches: The floods swept away roads and displaced families in the seminary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). 'This catastrophic flood had a heart-breaking outcome,' said the Rev Yonas Yigezun Dibisa, President of the EECMY. 'Eight lives were lost, three children and five adults, and apart from this devastating human cost, 14 national and three expatriate families, a total of 98 people, have been displaced. The seminary has also temporarily suspended learning for more than 100 students.'

EECMY officials estimate that nearly US\$2.5 million will be needed to rehabilitate and relocate families affected by the flood, and carry out flood protection work. Part of the money would be used to renovate the damaged property, including 21 badly damaged buildings, the internal roads and other facilities. 'Therefore, we kindly request you to stand by and support us by all means you can,' Pastor Dibisa begs. 'We appreciate any kind and any amount of support, financial, material, prayer...'

Officials at the seminary said a large part of the institution was badly damaged, including staff residences for both inter-



Photo showing the damage done to the interior of one of the buildings



national and national missionaries. The missionaries lost all their personal belongings, including their travel documents. 'This catastrophic, heart-breaking and unprecedented disaster has resulted in the loss of lives, destruction and displacement of our people,' said the Rev Dr Bruk Ayele Asale, President of the Mekane Yesus Seminary. 'We are in an emergency.'

The photo above shows displaced people on rooftops, against a background of submerged buildings. The deputy mayor of Addis Ababa, Adanech Abebe, has urged people residing in the area to take extra protection against the floods, while warning of more rains in the coming days.

'We extend our heartfelt condolences to our loved ones, families and friends who lost their lives in the floods,' he said, after visiting the area and announcing support for people affected by the floods. The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation expressed sadness at the loss of lives and the damage to buildings at the seminary.

Marianne Ejdersten, WCC Director of Communication said, 'We stand in solidarity with you, and we pray for the victims and their families, the rescue team, the students and the faculty, and we seek God's mercy, love and grace that we may be empowered with strength to continue on our joint pilgrimage.'

The Seminary was founded in 1960 and has been providing training for pastors of the 10 million Lutherans in Ethiopia.

If any members would like to make a contribution towards the rebuilding and re-equipping of the seminary please send your donation via the 'Donate' button on the website labelling it 'Mekane Yesus Seminary Appeal' and we will forward the money.

PREPARATIONS FOR ANNUAL MEETING WELL IN HAND

We hope you will join us for our Anglican-Lutheran Society Annual Meeting taking place **Saturday 5th March, 2022 from 10am-4.30pm**. The focus will be on the climate emergency.

We will meet in person at St Mary's German Church, 10 Sandwich Street, London EC3 5BJ which is very close to both King's Cross and Euston Stations. However, with the German Church's help we plan to stream the meeting for those who are only able to join us online.

Following a short business meeting the day will be led by speakers who are closely involved in addressing climate change through their faith communities, local communities, and creative communities!



Canon Giles Goddard (Chair of Faith for the Climate) will speak about engaging church/faith communities in addressing climate change.

A local community group will describe their work providing pop-up space and encouraging conversations and action around climate change.

The Rev Helen Burnett (the Vicar of St Peter's and St Paul's in Old Chaldon) will share her experiences while working with Extinction Rebellion on how faith and climate action intersect.



Anya Gleizer, founder of "The Flute & Bowl" which is 'dedicated to the practice of art and ecology', will lead us in creative practice bringing together what we've discussed and learned throughout the day.

This will be an opportunity to come together to learn, act, engage and create as we examine our individual and common roles in addressing climate change. We hope to see a good number of you there, and more from around the world online!

Putting on an event of this kind involves the Society in some considerable expense so members attending in person are asked to pay £20 for a ticket which will include lunch and refreshments. Non-members will be charged £25.

To book your place, either in person or online, please send a message to angluthsociety@outlook.com so that we can order your lunch or send you the joining instructions in due course.

Our Annual Meetings are an important aspect of our work together. They are always lively, informative, worshipful and a good opportunity to meet other members.

Anglican-Lutheran Society 2022 Annual Meeting
SATURDAY 5 MARCH | 10AM-4.30PM

CLIMATE EMERGENCY
Connecting faith and community

An opportunity to come together to learn, act, engage and create as we examine our individual and common roles in addressing climate change.

£20
Tickets (includes lunch)

Tickets from
St Mary's German Church (in person & online)
10 Sandwich Street, London EC3 5BJ
angluthsociety@outlook.com
www.anglican-lutheran-society.org

NEW JOB FOR SARAH

Pastor Sarah Farrow, a member of our Executive Committee, who has taken the lead in organising the next Annual Meeting, has for the past few years been employed by the Council of Lutheran Churches (CLC) as Chaplain to the Students in London and Oxford. Her work has focused on Lutheran students coming to London from around the world, as well as being Chaplain at Mansfield College.



Mansfield College in Oxford, will be familiar to many older Lutherans as the place where, in the 1950s and 60s, Lutheran ordinands gained their theological training. The post of "Tutor and Dean of Lutheran Studies" was established with the help of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and remained in place until at least 1974. Unhappily, the connection between CLC and the College was forgotten until Sarah started work there. Through her work not just the Council but also the LWF was able to re-establish links with the College and it is hoped that meetings at Mansfield College can be arranged and the wider Lutheran Community invited to a place of great significance for Lutherans in the UK.

Now Sarah is moving on. She has been appointed to the Chaplaincy at Kings College, London, focusing St Thomas' and Waterloo Campuses. We wish her every happiness in her new ministry there.

Trondheim Conference 2022

A PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS HOPE

MONDAY 25th to FRIDAY 29th JULY, 2022

Plans are now well advanced for our conference in Trondheim next July. Accommodation has been booked in the Comfort Hotel Park and Nidaros Pilgrim Centre, both offering comfortable en-suite rooms and breakfast, and both within easy walking distance of the Cathedral and the Bishops House where our worship and sessions will take place.

There are still a few unoccupied rooms so it is not too late to book your place on the conference if you have not already done so. The booking form can be found on the Society's website, or you can contact Helen Harding, the conference registrar, at angluthsociety@outlook.com

The conference is taking place within the context of the St Olav Festival so there will be many events taking place in and around the city. There will be time in our programme for you to explore some of them as we pursue our theme, 'A Pilgrimage towards Hope'



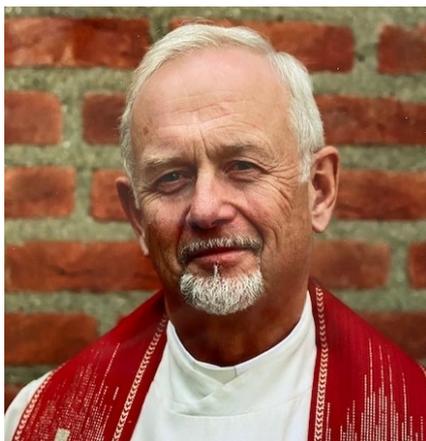
After dinner there will be a round table discussion chaired by Richard Stephenson with Anglican, Lutheran and Roman Catholic bishops taking up some of the issues raised in our virtual conference earlier this year.

The rest of the programme is yet to be finalised, but will include our usual mixture of study, worship and exploration, all in a holiday atmosphere.



Bishop Michael Ipgrave, our Anglican Moderator, will talk about 'Pilgrimage', and later in the week we shall all be invited to take part in two pilgrimage activities.

The first involves us being taken from the city for breakfast and then walking the route back into Trondheim that medieval pilgrims took. Fredrik Ulseth, our Society's regional coordinator in Norway and chief architect of our conference, says that it is 'not a very religious event but a wonderful experience'!



The conference will begin on the Monday afternoon at around 4.30pm with a presentation by the Presiding Bishop in Norway, the Most Rev Olav Fykse Tveit who, until his consecration as Presiding Bishop in May this year, had been the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches since 2009. His topic will be 'Hope'.

Then, that evening, we shall take part in a religious pilgrimage taking in a number of local churches and ending up in the Cathedral for worship.

Margarethe Stang from the Art and Media Studies department of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, an historian who will tell us all about St Olav, while Tor Berger Jørgensen, who was Bishop of the Diocese of Sør-Hålogaland in the Church of Norway but is now the Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, will tell us about Norway and church life there.

We shall enjoy tours of the old city and of Nidaros Cathedral, and will be introduced to Music and Prayer in Medieval Nidaros.



We will hear from Canon Hilda Kabia, the Principal of Msalato Theological College about how the Christians of Tanzania experience 'Hope'.

In addition to all that we shall be able to engage in some cultural activities around the city.

It promises to be a wonderful experience. Fredrik says, 'All together this plan is well balanced. We will meet not only the language of theology and worship, but also the language of art, history, music and culture. I think this matches up very well with the core aims of our Society. I do hope you can come and join us.'

LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN ETHIOPIA & TANZANIA MEET TO SHARE AND LEARN TOGETHER

Leaders of the two largest Lutheran Churches in Africa signed a joint initiative in July to enhance their missional journey through learning and sharing of experiences in order to enrich their Churches' ministries. (LWI)

Learning from one another "enhances our missional journey"

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) hosted 37 delegates from The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) for a week-long seminar, 12th-18th July, under the theme of "How good and very pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity," (Ps 133.1). The aim was to strengthen relationships between the two Churches and other Lutheran Churches in the region, by 'getting to know one another and share the gifts endowed to each Church for the mission,' as ELCT Presiding Bishop Dr Fredrick Shoo said. Concerned at the infrequency of regional church gatherings, Bishop Shoo added, 'We meet one another in Europe, we meet in America. When do we meet at home? When do we come together?'

EECMY President, the Rev Yonas Yigezu Dibisa, said, 'The purpose of this visit is learning through sharing which means we have something to share while we are here and much to learn from the ELCT. Through this learning, a stronger collaboration is envisioned and will grow and bear more fruits in the future.'

The President of the Lutheran World Federation, the Most Rev Dr Panti Filibus Musa, said Churches cannot be independent of one another. 'Churches are wonderfully knit together by the power of God. They are a body that points at a reality that no single Church can claim fully for itself, but that must be expressed and lived out jointly.'

Stressing the importance of the global communion, Archbishop Musa said, 'Never, dear sisters and brothers, should our regional processes draw us apart from our global relationships, but closer to them. Because... the ultimate inspiration of our togetherness is to express the deep rich-

ness of being fully the body of Christ and, as Lutheran Churches, a Communion of Churches gathered in worship.'

Missions and outreach

The delegation toured ELCT diaconal, educational and financial ministries. They learned about the academic curricula at ELCT's Tumaini University Makumira, and about programmes offered through the Tanzanian Lutheran Church's Uchumi Commercial Bank that assists the local community with debt relief, savings, and pension plans. Later in the week, representatives from both Churches gave presentations on the involvement of women and young people in ministry.

The delegation also visited Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre in Moshi, the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, the Usa River Rehabilitation and Training Centre for people with disabilities, the Women's Training Centre at Mshikamano and the Lutheran Sisters' Convent *Ushirika wa Neema* (Fellowship of Grace).

The Rev Jonas Dibisa remarked, 'It is good to see diaconal service in another setting,' adding, 'a connection between our university hospitals would further strengthen and broaden a relationship that already exists.'

Strengthening spirituality

Quoting Philippians 2.2, Bishop Shoo said, 'Paul's simple advice to Christians is to be united. There is strength in unity, both for spreading the Gospel and for our humility and faith.' As part of the initiative, the Churches agreed to strengthen their Lutheran identity and faith by sharing devotionals and by designating a Sunday

for joint prayer, and accompanying one another in times of difficulties. 'We can better love others and make a bigger impact for the Kingdom when we move forward as one, speak as one - unified in one Church - serving God's people,' he told the group.

Archbishop Musa reminded the seminar participants of how mission partners, sister churches and the LWF stood closely with the Churches in Africa as they advocated for independence and for equal value and dignity for every human being. 'Such sacrifices were and are still valued assets to churches in Africa,' he said.

'The joint initiative of the EECMY and the ELCT to bring leaders together at the levels of synods, dioceses and senior management, is an example of the rootedness of the communion in the grassroots work of the Churches,' said the LWF's Regional Secretary for Africa, the Rev Dr Elieshi Mungure. 'Coming together we share the Gospel message of salvation and embrace each other in unwavering solidarity to serve the neighbour and witness to the saving acts of God together.'

The EECMY hopes to reciprocate the hospitality of the ELCT in 2022 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



EECMY President Yonas Dibisa (seated right) and the ELCT Presiding Bishop Dr Fredrick Shoo (centre) signed a "Learning and Sharing" agreement in July. LWF President Archbishop Dr Panti Filibus Musa is seated left. Photo: E.Adolph/ELCT

GROWING UP IN THE ANGLICAN TRADITION

Owen C Thomas Jr recently joined our Society. He now lives in Oslo, Norway, but reached there via a very varied route as he explains here.

Growing up in an Anglican seminary in the Boston area undoubtedly influenced my life in ways that I am only now coming to fully understand. I can remember being baptised in the seminary chapel as a baby. I experienced a loving, extended family which included my godparents, the Rev & Mrs Eugene Goetchius, and the families of all the professors who were teaching at EDS (the Episcopal Divinity School, which recently moved to Union Seminary in New York), as well as some of the students with whom we had contact.

My world ranged from playing in the water of the fire hydrants that were opened in the summer to help assuage the sweltering heat, to playing street hockey on the snow-filled roads during the rigorous winter months.

I went to see my Dad preach in the seminary chapel, as well as the small church of the Episcopal Rectory in Dublin, New Hampshire, where we spent most of our summers. He spent many hours with me on tennis courts, and helping to sharpen my baseball skills, as well as getting up at the crack of dawn on those frozen New England mornings to take me to my hockey practice out in the Belmont area, where I played Pee-wee hockey. I can remember our study being full of eager students gathered around our black-and-white TV to watch the Boston Celtics play the Philadelphia 76ers in the National Basketball Association Eastern Conference Finals.

At the Seminary, our family would prepare and host the Easter dinner, usually ham with all the trimmings. The Goetchius family would host the Thanksgiving turkey dinner, and the Christmas dinner was given at the Dean's residence by Harvey and Doris Guthrie. All unforgettable events, where we kids ate so much that we had to lie down on the rug in front of the fireplace to be able to digest our food!

Soon came the confirmation course, which I did with two close friends: Charles Goetchius, my godparents'



son, and John Seager, the son of the principal of Shady Hill School, where I went as a child. In the course the Rev Lloyd Patterson taught us that God was in everything, and his teaching style left me with as many questions as there were answers. Shortly after this my two older brothers persuaded me that going to church was a waste of time, and for most of my teenage life I was an agnostic.

Fast forward about thirty years to when my father, the Rev Dr Owen Thomas, came to visit us at our house in the country outside Brasilia. My wife and I were leading a team of volunteers engaged in social projects in the area, including at the local orphanage, where we performed and provided care packages for the needy children. My father stayed with us for one month, and we had many deep conversations about faith and calling, including a new book he was editing, at the age of 90. As a result of his visit we got back in touch with the Episcopal Anglican Church in Brasilia, and attended the Easter service of 2013.

Bishop Mauricio de Andrade welcomed us that day, and we struck up an almost immediate friendship. Thanks to his enthusiasm and inspira-

tion, I accepted his challenge to study for the Lay Ministry, and became a Lay Minister at the Cathedral of the Resurrection in 2014. In the same year we accepted the invitation to teach English to the many children at risk at the Anglican Social Centre in a shanty town outside Brasilia. My wife felt led to join the Daughters of the King, a women's group from the church which was established by Patricia Powers, an American missionary with the Episcopal Church. When she came for a visit we became good friends, and she shared with the congregation how she knew my father, and how influential he was at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. We felt that we had found our spiritual home, due to the kindness and hospitality of the parishioners, and enjoyed fellowshiping at the Cathedral for five years.

In 2018 we felt it was time to move and prepare for retirement, and with heavy hearts we shared the news with Bishop Mauricio about our upcoming move to Norway. He encouraged us to follow what God was putting in our hearts, and encouraged us to seek out the Anglican fellowship of St Edmunds in Oslo. He also put us in touch with Bishop David Hamid, who greeted us warmly when we arrived at our new home.

The Rev Darren McCallig was the priest when we arrived, and we appreciated his Irish wit and charisma. It was a blessing to be introduced to an English-speaking congregation in a new and foreign country, and Darren was a faithful friend and mentor at that time. He challenged me to pursue my desire to serve in the Church, and recommended that I be admitted to the Licensed Reader Ministry, and I was supported in that by the Chaplaincy Council. Studying the Readers' Course at St John's in Nottingham, UK, was one of the highlights of my life as a student, and I will be forever grateful to my mentors and teachers there.

Although the style at our new 

NEW GENERAL SECRETARY OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND



⇒ church was a bit more formal, we adapted and soon made some good friends. The biggest challenge was losing my mentor, Darren, in March of 2020, and the closing down of our church as the pandemic took hold. I feel that I had taken our fellowship for granted and greatly missed being able to congregate as a body of believers. We have pioneered the Zoom ministry together, and we are grateful to those who have made it possible to continue to fellowship on-line with one another. One advantage to this set-up is that often we have All Chaplaincy Services, where we are able to meet and fellowship with members of other congregations from around Norway.

I would say that my experience with the Anglican Communion on three continents has given me a deeper understanding and appreciation of what we have as Anglicans. We have a rich and vibrant heritage that adapts to many different cultures, and our unity is celebrated by our diversity. The Anglican Church, which started in Great Britain and was carried over to America, who then sent seminary students to pioneer the Church in Brazil, has a unique story to tell. We are blessed with a mature faith that is not afraid to reach out to others and share our wealth. I am excited to see what the future holds as we join hands and walk together in love.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) is delighted that Dr Nicola Brady will be its next General Secretary. Nicola will join CTBI at the beginning of 2022 after a period of service as General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches.

Nicola says, 'I am grateful for this opportunity to help guide and support the work of CTBI at a critical time, in collaboration with colleagues across Britain and Ireland. It is important that we continue to build on the close working relationships that have really shown their worth as our member Churches responded to the multi-layered challenges of Covid-19. The vision for reconciliation and renewal that is at the heart of our ecumenical structures has much to offer a society that is struggling with multiple threats to social cohesion, both local and global. The pandemic experience to date has demonstrated the resilience of our faith as a force for good in society, and the hope-filled leadership that Churches can bring when they work together for the common good.'

CTBI Moderator, the Rev Graham Sparkes, says, 'We welcome Nicola at a time of challenge and opportunity. Across our four nations and beyond there are many fractures and divisions that threaten our shared humanity, and Nicola is deeply aware that CTBI needs to witness to the reconciling hope at the heart of our Christian faith. Her rich experience and deep commitment will guide and strengthen the ecumenical vision that guides and sustains us, and we very much look forward to her leadership amongst us.'

As General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches and Joint Secretary of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, Dr Nicola Brady facilitates relationship-building between Christian Churches on the island of Ireland and collaborative action on issues of shared concern to member Churches. Nicola has a BA in European Studies from Trinity College Dublin, and her

PhD, also from Trinity College, examined the response of the Catholic hierarchy to political violence in Northern Ireland (1921-1973) and in the Basque Country (1936-1975).

Nicola has particular experience in the area of faith-based peace-building, both on the island of Ireland and also internationally, including human rights advocacy, support to victims/survivors, facilitation of civic dialogue, community engagement with policing, and research across a broad range of issues relevant to reconciliation. She is a Director of Christian Aid Ireland and the Maximilian Kolbe Foundation, which works to extend the lessons of German-Polish reconciliation after World War II to other conflict areas.

In 2017 she took part in an international workshop organised by the Catholic Bishops of Germany and Colombia which supported the peace process in Colombia, and engaged with victims and survivors, armed actors, NGOs and faith communities.

In 2019 she became an Eisenhower Fellow and undertook a professional development programme in the United States with a focus on developing the capacity of the faith sector to promote social cohesion in communities divided by race, violence, political polarisation and socio-economic inequality. She is currently chairing the Steering Committee for the Synodal Pathway of the Catholic Church in Ireland.



It's exactly 6.47pm, but I'm not sure of the day!

JOACHIM BREMER : AN APPRECIATION

by Bishop Rupert Hoare, former Anglican Moderator of our Society, and his wife Gesine

We have to report the sad death of a very enthusiastic member of The Anglican-Lutheran Society, Pastor Joachim Bremer, on 7th August 2021, following a heart attack. He was aged 75 and had just begun his annual holiday-cover for colleagues in the Dahme/Mark area of Germany, where he was looking after numerous small congregations in what used to be Communist East Germany. He himself came from Eschborn, near Frankfurt-am-Main, and had been pastor for German-speaking congregations in the North of England from 1990-1999. His final pastorate was in Kelsterbach near Frankfurt Airport.

He and his wife Christiane had three children. Sadly she died in 2011. Joachim now has five grandchildren. He was well-known as a great writer of letters, written in his meticulous handwriting. It was very soon after we had received one of these letters, which had included a photo of him with his two-year old granddaughter sitting on his lap, that we received news of his death. The photo shows how very proud he was of his grandchildren and his family.

A member of the German-speaking congregation in Manchester, Bärbel Grayson, has written: "Joachim was a 'character' and very much a hands-on



person. He was no stranger to a hammer and nails. But his practical nature also extended to his sermons which were pragmatic and at the same time Biblically sound in the fine tradition of German Protestant exegesis. They were never boring. His pastoral care was wonderful ..." He and the congregation there took a great part in Churches Together in Stretford, an involvement which continues to this day.

But Joachim had also learned a lot about the secular world. Although he had returned to Germany before the new tram system was introduced in Manchester, he keenly followed the setting-up of new routes and knew which old tracks they were pressing back into service. In a similar way, he was familiar with anything that had to do with textile machinery and the history of the cotton industry in the Manchester region.

Joachim was also a musician, both singer and pianist. This is where his commitment to our Society comes in. He was himself a tenor and he sang in choirs wherever he could. In 2016 he wrote an article for The

Window (Issue 109) about the role choirs could have in bringing people together. Its title expresses his conviction: it was "Crossing Borders and Building Bridges of Fellowship". In 2015 he had written for The Window (Issue 108) praising the A-LS's commitment to "Making Connections".

Joachim worked hard to promote the work of our Society by helping to staff its stall in several of the biennial German *Kirchentag* (for example in Stuttgart in 2015, see Issue 108 of The Window). He was interested in people and always ready to engage with them as he stood and talked to whoever came by. He could do this hour after hour when the rest of us started to flag and need a break! A good number would enter the stall to have a sit down.

Joachim thought that this might have an ulterior motive: he commented: "Thanks to our Lutheran President, Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter, we have mugs (from the LWF) and, thanks to his wife, we have tea and biscuits and jelly babies – and at one time strawberries!" He added wryly, "To some passers-by these things seemed more attractive than our ecumenical motivation and message!"

But Bishop Johannesdotter should have the last word because another of Joachim's commitments was to the work of the Meissen Commission, and they had a service at the end of each *Kirchentag*. Joachim was determined to attend, so he asked permission (!) of Bishop Jürgen to leave the stall before the exhausting business of dismantling and packing up the stall was complete. Bishop Jürgen said of course he must go. After the service, by now late in the evening, Joachim actually came back to make sure the Bishop and any others remaining to finish clearing up were still alive! Joachim's enthusiastic commitment to the rest of the team as well as to the cause of A-LS was typical of him.

We thank God for him.



Joachim chatting with a passer-by at the Kirchentag in 2015

ONLINE COURSE ECUMENICALLY LINKS STUDENTS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE

Direct contact in courses was the old way; going online is, for some, delving into the unknown, but students thrived in their recent Online Course in Ecumenical Studies at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey and found a new way.

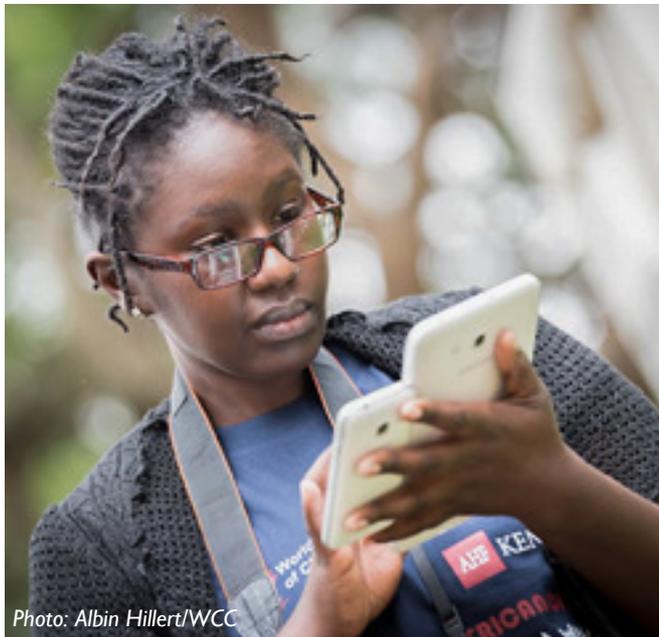


Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

The Rev Dr Simone Sinn, Professor of Ecumenical Theology at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey near Geneva, believes 'it was indeed an excellent experience' after the 5th April-12th June course ended. 'It was a pilot project, but the response was outstanding,' she says. The course had 60 participants from 32 different countries, and the students learned a lot. 'They were from a huge array of different regions and confessional groups and are still connected. They have a Facebook group, and they have exchanged their contacts. So the network goes on, without us organising it.'

The teaching team consisted of six Bossey faculty members with expertise in diverse theological fields. Many of the students have full-time jobs in church or theological education, but they linked up well, said Dr Sinn. 'People engaged in conceptual discussion about ecumenism as well as looked into real practical concerns and opportunities. And for me, that was a great value. They learned about the challenges between the Churches or with society as they tried to find answers,' she says.

Looking at the practical

Direct personal encounter continues to be the hallmark of ecumenical learning at Bossey. However, the faculty decided to expand its programme and offer an online course to respond to the travel restrictions due to COVID-19.

Argyro Delidaki from the Orthodox tradition is from Greece, but since 2019 has lived in Vienna, and had been a theology faculty student at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. 'I found the course fulfilling,' she says. 'It was an excellent overview of the Ecumenical movement. It was also firmly structured. Additionally, I had the unique

opportunity to communicate and exchange views with people from all around the globe. We became good friends and still maintain contact after the course.'

Preparing to serve God

Dr Sawako Fujiwara of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church said she took the course 'because I hope to prepare myself to better serve God and people in becoming a board member of the National Christian Council in Japan.' She noted that Christians make up only one percent of Japan's population. 'I believe that Bossey's online courses will be of great help to me as I use my expertise and characteristics to contribute to the revitalization of the ecumenical movement at the regional and local levels by motivating laity, women, youth and other marginalized people,' she says.

The Rev Fredrick Ochieng Onyango is a parish priest for the Anglican Diocese of Maseno South in Kenya and is also the diocesan missions director. 'As a theological resource and enabler, my role is facilitating ecumenical theological engagement and training church leaders from diverse traditions on how to respond to contemporary challenges in society,' he says. He would like to see the study period extended to 12 weeks to further engage with the Church and Society module. 'I believe that more time should be given in exploring the location of the church in the public sphere,' he declares.

Baptist pastor Débora Angélica García Morales, from Managua in Nicaragua, teaches feminist theology and mission at the Baptist Seminary there. She found all aspects of the course 'critical and pertinent'. 'In Nicaragua we need to engage more in ecumenical studies, especially in the Baptist Church. Also, we need to hear more about the historical theological contribution of Latin America and the Caribbean in ecumenism,' she says.



Learning is fun

Photo: Peter Williams/WCC

CANADA :THE WATERLOO DECLARATION AT 20 REFLECTING ON PAST AND FUTURE IN FULL COMMUNION



Bishop Telmor and Archbishop Michael signing the Waterloo Declaration in 2001

Photo: Vianney Carriere

Twenty years ago, in July 2001, the Waterloo Declaration was signed by the Telmor Sartison, then the National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and Archbishop Michael Peers, who was then Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. In it the two Churches entered into a full communion agreement.

To mark the anniversary the journals of the two Churches did what they called a “column swap”. The ELCIC National Bishop, the Rt Rev Susan Johnson, wrote a reflection for the “Anglican Journal” while Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the ACC, wrote a column for the “Canada Lutheran”.

They are reproduced here.

An Analogy of Marriage: Two Churches on a Journey

by Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church in Canada

There are times when an analogy may help us more fully understand our experience. In that spirit let me muse about the relationship between our two churches on the journey of Full Communion through the analogy of a marriage, fully recognizing there will be limits to that comparison.

Prior to 2001 our Churches were in the courtship phase of our relationship tentatively exploring what we might be able to share and learn together. From 1983 a series of steps moved us in 1989 to praying for one another, recognizing each other’s Churches and interim Eucharistic sharing, and further in 1995 to the invitation into parish joint projects, annual shared Eucharists, full recognition of baptism and confirmations of lay people in each other’s Churches, a move to recognizing ordained ministers serving either Church and moving toward Full Communion.

The courtship was slow and careful, fostered in places where Anglicans and Lutherans are close to one another and at the national level through joint dialogue and leaders meeting.

When the Full Communion agreement was ratified in 2001 it was the culmination of 18 years of courting! The “wedding” was indeed a celebration as evidenced when the Anglican Primate, Archbishop Michael Peers, and Lutheran National Bishop Telmor Sartison danced the recession at the end of the Eucharist that morning. The marriage had begun.

As a parish priest in those years I was aware of the conversations and heard the news of the new agreement. I was eager to explore possibilities with a neighbouring Lutheran congregation. We already shared in a good and supportive ministerial association in which we occasionally shared services and preaching in each other’s churches during Lent.

As Christ the King-Dietrich Bonhoeffer Lutheran Church in Thornhill, Ontario, at that time invited its pastors from the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, we enjoyed sharing that wider international Lutheran life through them. This led to the opportunity to share a student intern doing her international experience year of formation. Berit Scheler shared her time between

our two congregations and expanded our horizon of what ecumenical Full Communion could mean.

Although our differences sometimes seemed small there was an approach in preaching and a way of expressing the faith through a Lutheran lens that made Anglicans listen afresh. Occasional pulpit sharing and deepening friendships continued.

In the spirit of this friendship and our Full Communion, Pastor Martin Giebel, now serving a joint Anglican-Lutheran congregation in Midland, Ontario, was a presenter at my ordination as Bishop in 2008. These are just a few small signs of our growing communion.

The last 20 years have invited us all into exploring this “marriage”. Local parishes have been encouraged to share ministry together; clergy have been cross-appointed in ministry. Congregations have joined together in exciting shared ministries. Our bishops have met regularly for fellowship and dialogue. Our national leaders have developed close bonds of friendship and support through

shared statements and messages of solidarity and understanding.

We have also - like any married couple settling into life together - discovered the surprising moments where our differences clash. Our theological understandings meet local needs differently. Our polities and cultural norms have collided and we occasionally look at each other and wonder whether this was a good idea. These are the normal challenges of learning to live in communion together with mutual love and respect, seeking the greater good of the gospel we serve while respect-

ing our unique gifts and frailties.

Neither of our communions is perfect. Rather we are called by Christ to live into the prayer shared at the Last Supper, "That they may be one" (John 17.21), learning from and with each other as fellow disciples in faith.

In joyful celebration of growth into that unity over the past 20 years, and in recognition that the challenges are calling us into even deeper sharing, and with thanksgiving for our Full Communion, I pray we continue to affirm the closing words of The Waterloo

Declaration of 2001:

"We rejoice in our Declaration as an expression of the visible unity of our Churches in the one body of Christ. We are ready to be co-workers with God in whatever tasks of mission serve the gospel. We give glory to God for the gift of unity already ours in Christ, and we pray for the fuller realization of this gift in the entire Church."

May God who has called us into Full Communion grant us the courage and grace to live more fully into it day by day. Thanks be to God!

Trees that Yield Fruit

by Susan Johnson, National Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. (Psalm 1:3)

In 2011, during a joint meeting of the Anglican Church of Canada's Council of General Synod (CoGS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Church Council (NCC), our two Churches planted a tree to honour the tenth anniversary of their full communion at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, Mississauga, Ontario.

Many years later, in March of 2020, CoGS and NCC met again at the same location and went back to that tree we planted. We were amazed how much it had grown and flourished. It was now even strong enough to have someone sit on one of its branches!

When we affirmed the Waterloo Declaration in July of 2001 we planted something new, and in these last 20 years, we have watched it grow. Let me share with you some markers of our growth together. We now have an Anglican full voting member serving on NCC and a Lutheran full voting member serving on CoGS. We have joint national events such as the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) gathering and the National Worship Conference. Up until the time of the pandemic, the bishops from both Churches met together annually.

When Archbishop Fred Hiltz was elected Primate and I was elected as National Bishop, we started monthly

phone calls, something Archbishop Linda Nicholls and I still carry on. We continue to look for ways to facilitate synergy among staff. Lately, we are focused on certain areas: communications, social justice and ecumenical and interfaith relations. Not that we do everything together – but we know we are stronger when we work together.

We have seen huge growth in the number and variety of ways that Anglicans and Lutherans work together in local ministries, sometimes with other ecumenical partners, including joint congregations, parish alignments, a synod and diocese working out of the same office, and so on.

In 2013, we tried a grand experiment of having a Joint Assembly in Ottawa. We did as much as we could together and separated into "General Synod" and "National Convention" only to carry out business matters. It was amazing! We are looking forward to coming together again for Assembly 2022 next year in Calgary.

When we adopted the Waterloo Declaration, we laid out some ongoing homework for our Churches. We are still working on a common understanding of deacons. We have not yet come to a consensus regarding who should preside at confirmations.

I believe God has more lessons and opportunities for us as we engage these questions. Some of our most exciting work has to do with our commitment to continue working together

for the unity of the body of Christ. We have entered into full communion relationships with our partners across the border - the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and The Episcopal Church. Our two Churches are in conversation with the Northern Province of the Moravian Church. We are hopeful that we can continue to build relationships that will strengthen bonds to enhance the body of Christ.

We certainly have learned to share gifts with each other, some expected and some surprises. One of the biggest gifts to me has been participation in four different Sacred Circles [national gatherings of Indigenous Anglicans for prayer, worship, discernment, and decision-making – Ed]. Building relationships with the Anglican Indigenous Church has been a gift I have been able to share with my Church and it has helped us walk on the road towards reconciliation.

To what can we attribute the growth and such fruit of full communion? Is it our own wisdom and work? Of course not! What has led us to this day is that both our Churches are fed and nourished by the true vine, Jesus Christ. *"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."* (John 15.5)

It is God's grafting of branches from our two Churches onto the true vine that allows us to root and grow. I look forward with excitement to see where God takes us next!

The Pathway to the Waterloo Declaration in 2001

The "Anglican Journal" and "Canada Lutheran" shared a feature article written jointly by Matt Gardner, a staff writer for the Anglican Journal, and Chris Krejilgaard, Pastor of Our Saviour, Owen Sound, Ontario. It offers some useful insights into how congregations can come together and the benefits that can ensue.

The Waterloo Declaration established a full communion partnership between the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). Much hard work followed as the two Churches cemented their partnership through shared ministry but, at the signing of the Declaration itself, work was set aside for a moment as Anglicans and Lutherans joined together in celebration.

'It was humbling, and I just felt so extremely honoured to be part of it,' recalls Telmor Sartison, then National Bishop of the ELCIC. He felt a 'quiet joy' after the document was signed and saw a similar joy in the face of his counterpart, Archbishop Michael Peers, then Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.

After the signing and worship service, Anglicans and Lutherans marched out together and began dancing and singing "We Are Marching in the Light of God".

The Waterloo Declaration marked the culmination of years of ecumenical dialogue in Canada. The work had begun internationally in the 1970s with discussions between the worldwide Anglican Communion and the Lutheran World Federation - part of a broader ecumenical movement that was sweeping Christianity at the time.

Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Ecumenical Officer of the Anglican Church of Canada from 1991 to 2009, describes ecumenism as rooted in 'the vision of the one Church of God' and the fundamental wish of Jesus that all Christians be one. She roots the origins of the Waterloo Declaration to two developments: the defeat of a plan to merge the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada in 1975, and the merging of several different Lutheran Churches into the ELCIC in 1986.

'I think [Anglicans] were all smarting a little bit from [the former] and thought, "Well, if church union is not the way to proceed ecumenically, maybe there's another way,"' Canon Barnett-Cowan says. 'That's why we began to talk about relationships of communion rather than union, and the Lutherans were interested in that model.'

A key factor in the growing bond between the Anglican and Lutheran Churches in Canada was the close personal friendship between Bishops Peers and Sartison. The two had first met in 1986, shortly after Telmor Sartison's ordination as Saskatchewan Bishop of the ELCIC. At that time Michael Peers was moving from Regina, where he had served as Bishop of Qu'Appelle, to Toronto to take over as Primate.

When Bishop Sartison visited Toronto and Archbishop Peers visited Winnipeg, the pair went on walks together and established a strong rapport 'at a faith level, but also on a personal level,' Bishop Sartison says. They soon wrote to their respective church committees and encouraged them to work towards a potential agreement between the two Churches. The National Bishop and Archbishop began a tradition of bringing together Lutheran and Anglican bishops once a year in Toronto, where they would hold joint meetings to talk about issues of mutual concern alongside their separate meetings. In 1995, the two Churches established a joint working group to move towards the implementation of some form of partnership.

Anglicans and Lutherans in Canada found they shared the same faith, territory and understanding of the Eucharist. They agreed on many points of doctrine and Scripture and worshipped in a similar way. Though differences remained on understandings about ordained ministry and apostolic succession, Canon Barnett-Cowan says, 'We discovered that our similarities vastly outweighed our differences.'

The joint working group prepared a draft of the Waterloo Declaration, which was circulated for discussion through the two Churches. In July 2001, both the ELCIC National Convention and the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada took place in Waterloo, Ontario, and they both formally approved the Declaration.

Canon Barnett-Cowan calls the Waterloo Declaration 'a good model for ecumenism,' balancing independence and cooperation. 'Each Church is still free to be itself,' she says. 'But we do so much in partnership.'

The Waterloo Declaration may have marked the culmination of growing ties between their respective Churches, but Anglicans and Lutherans in Canada had been worshipping together long before the signing of the agreement.



How the tree has grown! Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre, Mississauga, Ontario 2020

SOME EXAMPLES OF ANGLICANS AND LUTHERANS WORKING TOGETHER IN CANADA

Providing shared ministry in Saskatchewan and British Columbia

Redeemer Lutheran in Biggar, Saskatchewan, has been part of a shared ministry arrangement with St Paul's Anglican since 1999. A Lutheran couple, the Rev Brenda Nestegaard-Paul and the Rev Ian Nestegaard-Paul, then ministered to both congregations, one to Redeemer and one to St Paul's.

Under their shepherding, the congregations began to share services, alternating buildings once a month. After a time, the local Presbyterians contracted services from Redeemer, and worship rotated between three buildings. According to Redeemer Congregational Council chair, Cindy Hoppe, this meant the members of the three congregations got to know each other and become familiar with the worship practices of each congregation. She sees the church gaining 'a greater appreciation of the gifts of each denomination and more impatience with structural stones in the road,' and she adds, 'I hope we grow closer and do more co-ordinated ministry and mission together.'



After serving in Biggar, Brenda accepted a call to serve at Trinity Anglican + Lutheran Church in Port Alberni, British Columbia. She reports that in such partnerships, support, resources and values are shared and are able to make the transition into the future better. 'Rather than worrying about having enough funds, enough people, enough talents to be the Church, by working together and pooling our resources and experiences, we can focus on what's most important now,' she says. 'At the same time, [we can] experiment, think outside the box, follow where we think God is calling us as we look to the future,' she advises. 'There is nothing more important than a Christian presence of unconditional love - no ifs, ands or buts - being present in our communities, in my humble opinion.'

'Working together we model, not just for the wider Church, but for the wider community ... what can be gained by church bodies functioning as partners and not being consumed by competitiveness or simply surviving,' she says.

On being raised in a Joint Congregation

*The Rev Dirk G. Lange,
Assistant General Secretary for
Ecumenical Relations at the Lutheran
World Federation, reflects here on his experience at
St Stephen and St Bede, Winnipeg. More on the next page.*



I have been a member of St Stephen's since my birth. All my formative years were spent in the parish. The years that are most memorable are after the two churches began working together in the same church building, in 1970. I remain an "honorary" member of the congregation, sharing in worship and in events when visiting family in the city - and now sometimes online as well.

I was very young when Pastor Mott and Father Peers began the collaboration. However, as a teenager, my faith was deeply shaped by Pastor Johann Kunkel and Father R S H Greene. They taught me to witness (to confess the gospel in the world); how the liturgy is itself a confession of faith; and how faith is lived not only in the walls of the church but in the streets, with the suffering neighbour.

The youth group in the 1970s was probably the most successful aspect of cooperation between the two parishes in those years. It helped the parish imagine what it means to be united. Several of us are still in regular contact since those days and have, in our personal lives, pursued pastoral vocations.

Through this joint experience, I, as a Lutheran, gained a deeper appreciation of the liturgy as something dynamic and beautiful that leads one deeper into faith. Of course, those early years of collaboration and then the eventual merger taught me something foundational about ecumenism and about Church.

The Church is not a closed community, but porous and welcoming. And there are many and varying expressions of faith! In fact, that which unites us is faith. We can have different practices, different ceremonies, different habits; but these do not impact our oneness in the body of Christ. I learned through the parish of St Stephen and St Bede to receive into my own life and faith the spiritual gifts of other traditions.

Though I could not have articulated it at the time, I have come to understand that which is so powerfully expressed in the Second Ecumenical Imperative*: We must let ourselves be continuously transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith.

*The Five Ecumenical Imperatives are a set of ecumenical principles agreed on by the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation in 2017.

More about St Stephen and St Bede, Winnipeg

This is the congregation in which Dirk Lange grew up (see previous page). They tell their story here.

One of the country's first joint Anglican-Lutheran congregations was the Church of St Stephen and St Bede in Winnipeg. Here, Michael Peers, later to become Archbishop, played a vital role. In 1970, he was the Rector of St Bede's and had struck up a friendship with Win Mott, Pastor of the nearby St Stephen's Lutheran Church (now a retired bishop of the breakaway Anglican Church in North America). The two began to talk about the possibility of their congregations moving into one building, which they believed could create a stronger neighbourhood ministry and make their finances more manageable.



On Sunday, October 18th, 1970, the congregation of St Stephen's walked 500 metres to St. Bede's and took part in an inaugural service for the combined church - Lutherans on one side, Anglicans on the other. As the years went on, that divide between the two traditions gradually began to disappear. Canon Murray Still, an Anglican and current Pastor at St Stephen and St Bede's, says the two churches' early challenges involved sorting out questions like who was using the building when, whose property was whose, where items such as dishes went and how to manage the building.

Initially, the church held separate services for each denomination on Sunday: one at 9:30am, the second at 11am. The Altar Guild members had to rush to prepare for the second

service, since Anglicans and Lutherans set up the altar in different ways. Jean Brown, a 93-year-old Anglican and retired nurse, served on the Altar Guild for 35 years. In the early days, she recalls, Anglicans and Lutherans maintained separate altar guilds and some members were 'very protective of their territory.' However, as members moved away or died, the congregation put the two guilds together.

In a similar vein, early on the joint church had separate coffee hours for Anglicans and Lutherans. But Jean Brown remembers overseeing the Anglican coffee hour alone when a "very nice" Lutheran woman approached her and the two decided to co-operate, merging the coffee hour and taking turns to organise it.

By 1996, ties had grown close enough for the church to begin offering joint worship services for the first time. Brita Chell, a Lutheran who participated in the 1970 walk and has worshipped at St Stephen and St Bede ever since, served as a member of the Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission from 2010 to 2019. She found that worshipping with Anglicans clarified the Lutheran teaching that salvation comes from God's grace, as well as distinctions between the Lutheran and Anglican liturgies.

'You start to appreciate things in your own liturgy and you start to appreciate things in the Anglican liturgy as you bring it together,' she says. 'And you build something that is meaningful, spirit-filled, for both denominations.'

The experience of St Stephen and St Bede played a vital role in laying the groundwork for the Waterloo Declaration, offering a glimpse of what is possible when Anglicans and Lutherans work together. Canon Still says that members were 'justifiably thrilled' by the signing of the Declaration, which 'validated what they were already doing.'

But Brita Chell says it did not impact their life together 'because, in effect, we had been living the Waterloo Declaration long before it actually came into being.'

Patience and Space to Grieve The learning curve of amalgamation



Patience and providing space for people to grieve were key elements in the amalgamation process between St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and St David and St Patrick's Anglican Church in Guelph, Ontario. The process saw the creation of **All Saints Lutheran+Anglican Church** in 2017. Lutheran Pastor, the Rev Jeff Smith, and Anglican priest, the Rev Thomas Vaughn, oversaw and helped guide the process which began over a meal between congregational leaders.

'You have to have patience and you have to allow people time to grieve and for each congregation to have a voice if the process' ➡

THE CHURCH OF DENMARK HAS TWO NEW BISHOPS

The Rt Rev Paneeraq Siegstad Munk, from Attu has been elected Bishop of Denmark's largest diocese, Greenland, and the Rt Rev Peter Birch is the new Bishop of Elsinore.



Celebration awaited

In early 2020, the outgoing Bishop of Greenland, the Rt Rev Sofie Petersen, announced that she would retire at the end of the year. So on 2nd September, 2020, elections were held and the Rev Paneeraq Siegstad Munk took office on December 1st, 2020. Unfortunately, the episcopal celebration has been delayed due to COVID restrictions but is to take place as soon as large numbers can assemble again in church.

The Rt Rev Paneeraq Siegstad Munk is 43 years old and comes from Attu. In 2001 she became a Bachelor in Theology at Ilisimatusarfik, and in 2017 she completed her master's degree in theology at the University of Copenhagen. In 2004, however, she chose to take a break from her master's studies to become a priest, and was thus ordained in 2004.

Since then she has worked as a priest in several different cities, and since 2017 she has been a provost in Provstegarfik Kujataa. She has also been chairman of the Greenlandic Clergy Association. As the Bishop of Greenland, Paneeraq Siegstad Munk also has a seat on the Danish Church's Interchurch Council.

Celebration at last

On 1st February this year, Peter Birch took over the episcopate after the former Bishop of Elsinore, the Rt Rev Lise-Lotte Rebel, retired. As soon as coronavirus restrictions were lifted a grand ceremony was held in Elsinore Cathedral on August 29th when approximately 400 people attended, among them the Queen and the new Minister of Church and Culture, Ane Halsboe-Jørgensen. During the ceremony, Bishop Peter Birch preached on the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Peter Birch studied theology at the University of Copenhagen and at the *Kirchliche Hochschule* in Berlin, and he graduated in 1989. Before becoming Bishop he was parish priest in Hellerup, Provost of Gentofted Deanery, and Chairman of the Provost Association. Peter Birch is the fourth Bishop of Elsinore Diocese.



➡ is going to work,' Pastor Smith explains. 'It was a four-year process talking about how this could work.'

Part of the process was determining how to respect the traditions and practices of the respective congregations as they forged a new identity. Thomas Vaughn likens the process to a game of Jenga. 'Built too fast, your tower will fall,' he explains. 'But slowly, with intention, you can build a solid foundation. The congregations built their future together by being intentional in the present.'

By the time the amalgamation talk began in earnest over a meal between representatives of the two congregations in 2013, there was already a foundation of collaborating on outreach efforts, especially the Chalmers Supper - an outreach dinner in downtown Guelph where people from both congregations served. The congregations also shared a summer service schedule.

Once the amalgamation process was underway, there was a learning curve that needed to be tackled. A joint task force was struck to examine the possibilities amalgamation offered and the two-year trial process began in 2015. The Anglicans at St David and St Patrick's moved all of their resources to St Paul's, the leadership having decided that too large an investment was required to repair and maintain their property. The trial period allowed for the relationship to deepen and develop further.

'People had to understand what a Lutheran is and what an Anglican is, and even to understand the terms the two use,' recalls Pastor Smith. One of the main challenges faced by the congregations was the difference in governance models. The Anglican Church generally operates in a more top-down fashion than Lutheran congregations. The current council chair, Brian Janzen, says it is a challenge that still arises from time to time. 'Not only did the leaders have to learn, but the congregation members as well,' he explains. 'This took some time and we still have to pause once in a while to clarify just how decisions are being made.'

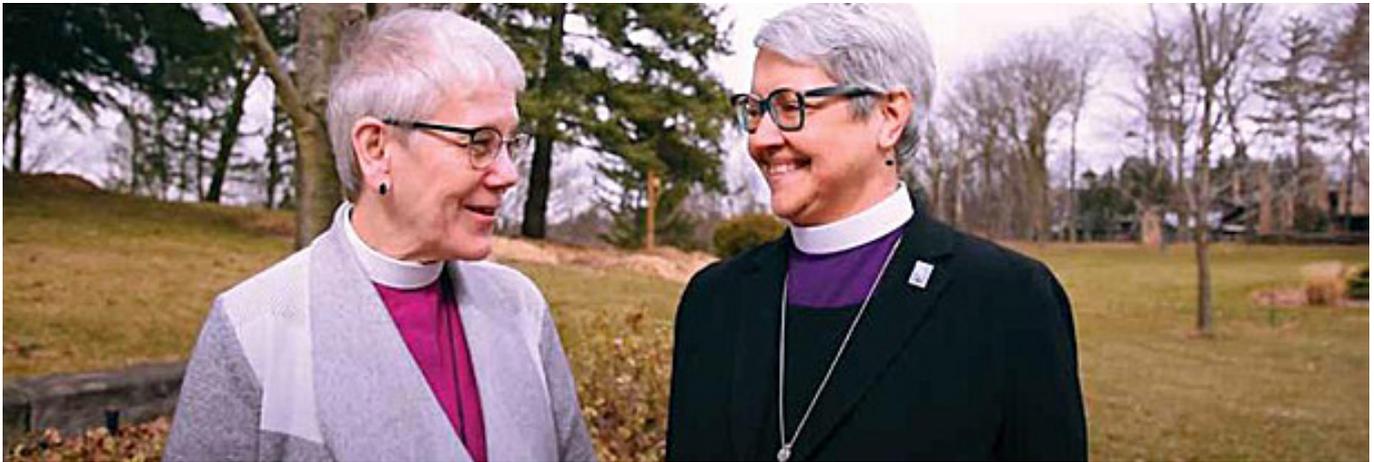
Steps were taken to ensure that both congregations were represented in all aspects of church life. Brian Janzen points out that constant communication was essential to ensure the process operated as smoothly as possible so as to ease concerns over the identity of both denominations.

The two-year process allowed for the members of both congregations to become familiar with each other's worship practices. 'It even came down to questions about where you put Confession and Forgiveness. Lutherans put it at the beginning and the Anglicans place it before the prayers of the people,' Pastor Smith says, adding that even deciding on which hymnal to use was a point of discussion. 'In the end everything worked. The people realized that this is a wonderful opportunity to make a statement about how the Lutheran-Anglican relationship can work.'

'WE'RE THE ONES WHO ARE TESTING IT OUT'

How full communion in Canada fits into global ecumenism

Matt Gardner, Anglican Journal staff writer, sums up the significance of Canada's Anglican and Lutheran experience.



The full communion partnership between the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada is both influenced and influencer when it comes to models for ecumenical partnerships. Primate Linda Nicholls and National Bishop Susan Johnson (pictured here), leaders of the Anglican and Lutheran Churches in Canada, suggest that full communion between their two Churches draws upon previous models while offering a testing ground for similar partnerships in other countries.

An early partnership between Anglican and Lutheran Churches was the Porvoo Communion, established in 1992 between Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran Churches predominantly in Northern Europe. But, as Bishop Johnson notes, 'that has far less practical application because there are very few in each other's Churches.'

Many Churches in the Porvoo Communion, such as the Church of England, are State Churches that predominate in their respective nations. 'You don't get a lot of Anglicans in Sweden or Norway or Finland or Estonia or whoever's a part of Porvoo,' Bishop Johnson says. 'But it does allow for exchange of clergy and exchange of memberships.'

In Canada, she adds, 'we're talking about two churches in the same territory in more or less equal numbers. So it allows us to do different things. 'There are a number of other relationships involving Anglicans and Lutherans in other Churches in other areas, but I think we're the ones who have taken it the farthest in terms of the work we do and the partnerships we have.'

A major influence on the full communion partnership in Canada was the similar agreement between The Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The two US churches have been in full communion since 1999, although they did not sign a formal agreement until 2001. 'I was at the signing ceremony, and it had failed the first time it went in front of the Lutherans,' Bishop Johnson recalls. 'So we learned a lot from that failure as we pre-

pared for [the Waterloo Declaration] in 2001 ... Sometimes you learn from failures as much as successes.'

'I think both our agreement and the one in the States are kind of forerunners,' Archbishop Nicholls adds. 'We're the ones that are testing it out, and testing it out because we need to. We need to be on the ground. We need to be pointing to that unity as Churches. It doesn't require us to be identical, but can show us working together and having a stronger voice because we do work together.'

A growing four-way partnership between these Churches in Canada and the United States has emerged, now called Churches Beyond Borders. Bishop Johnson highlights how work of the different Churches can complement each other in different areas, such as dismantling racism. 'There's a lot more work being done in the States in terms of anti-Black racism,' the National Bishop says. 'But there's more work being done in Canada in terms of racism against Indigenous peoples. So we're bringing those things together in terms of racism and our work there. We can learn from each other and share gifts with each other, which is the whole point of a full communion.'

Meanwhile, dialogues between the Anglican Communion and Lutheran World Federation have been continuing at the international level. From work together in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification Group, the Anglican Lutheran International Commission on Unity and Mission (ALICUM) has been established to find new areas for shared work between the two denominations. ALICUM is modelled on the similar International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity in Mission (IARCCUM).

Archbishop Nicholls says that the work of ALICUM 'will concentrate on supporting local cooperation in mission and ministry between Anglicans and Lutherans. Like IARCCUM, which was the Roman Catholic version, it's looking for ways to nurture support and lift up places where Anglicans and Lutherans are working on the ground together.'

DO WE STAND UP, OR SIT DOWN?

Executive Committee member, Dr Richard Stephenson, on a matter of some confusion



I've noticed that at meetings of the ALS there is occasional confusion during worship about when to stand up and sit down. Everyone has a vague idea that Lutherans and Anglicans do this at different times, but when and why is more of a mystery. Things get even more complex when one group decides (out of politeness) to follow the custom of the other, resulting in no one having any idea of what they should be doing!

So, what are the rules and why are they different? It should be noted at the outset that rubrics about posture fall very firmly into the Lutheran theological concept of 'adiaphora'. Luther was opposed to legalism when it comes to divine worship writing, "I would kindly and for God's sake request all those who see this order of service [his Latin Mass] or desire to follow it: Do not make it a rigid law to bind or entangle anyone's conscience, but use it in Christian liberty as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful." However, he wasn't always that relaxed about the issue of what was correct. In a sermon on John's Gospel (therefore preached on a Saturday) Luther appears to strongly support the view that 'posture' can be very important indeed, lamenting failure to kneel during the 'Et incarnatus est'.

Luther wrote, "The following tale is told about a coarse and brutal lout. While the words 'And was made man' were being sung in church, he remained standing, neither genuflecting nor removing his hat. He showed no reverence, but just stood there like a clod. All the others dropped to their knees when the Nicene Creed was prayed and chanted devoutly. Then the devil stepped up to him and hit him so hard it made his head spin. He cursed him gruesomely and said: 'May hell consume you, you boorish ass! If God had become an angel like me and the congregation sang: 'God was made an angel,' I would bend not only my knees but my whole body to the ground! Yes, I would crawl ten ells down into the ground. And you, vile human creature, you stand there like a stick or a stone. You hear that God did not become an

angel but a man like you, and you just stand there like a stick of wood!' Whether this story is true or not, it is nevertheless in accordance with the faith (Romans 12:6). With this illustrative story the holy fathers wished to admonish the youth to revere the indescribably great miracle of the incarnation; they wanted us to open our eyes wide and ponder these words well." (Luther's Works, Vol. 22, 105)

Interestingly, Hugh Latimer, a saintly Anglican martyr, also used exactly the same illustration in a sermon preached on 26th December 1552. As can be seen, whilst there were circumstances when Luther could be distinctly didactic on 'reverence', the Lutheran Confessions make it clear that local traditions are exactly that, and should be respected without becoming 'rules'.

The Augsburg Article VII (2) reads "And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is rites or ceremonies instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Ephesians 4.5-6."

We also need to remember that at the time of the Reformation standing would have been the normal posture as most churches didn't have pews or seats. Although some churches did have pews or reserved seats – often for local potentates – it is certainly the case that these were very rare. Only the frail or elderly would have enjoyed the privilege of seating - on the ledge or bench like this one



around the walls (which is where the expression 'weakest to the wall' comes from). Anyone who has been to an Orthodox liturgy will know that standing for a long time is very much required! Can we safely assume this to be the most ancient and traditional practice since the Orthodox never change anything? It is an interesting footnote that the Orthodox view pews and seats as separating people from the priests, thus creating an unnecessary barrier in worship and preventing the full participation of the laity in the 'movement' of the divine liturgy.

It seems that when considering the issue of when to stand up or sit down we are largely talking about German rather than any specifically Lutheran tradition.

Following the Reformation sermons, often lengthy, became the main focus of the parish worship rather than the celebration of the Mass. Although Luther himself famously denounced 'long' sermons, "To me a long sermon is an abomination, for the desire of the audience to listen is destroyed, and the preacher only defeats himself," he meant a homily lasting more than an hour! Seating thus became a necessity as not many will happily stand listening for more than a few minutes.

Also, movement by the congregation during the liturgy was no longer required to any extent. In some forms of Anglican worship, in Evensong for example, there is virtually nothing for the people to do other than to stand up or sit down at the correct time. →

⇒ In both the Anglican and Lutheran traditions, it became commonplace for families to purchase or rent their own pew – in some instances these were jealously guarded with locked doors and enclosed within a pew box. The ownership of a prominent and well-appointed pew indicated high social status and impressed the neighbours. Some churches had small stoves inside the boxed pews to keep their wealthy occupants warm whilst enduring or sleeping through the preaching.

If you attended the Society's conference in Visby you may recall that box pews with doors and family names were still very evident in the Swedish Lutheran churches we visited. The picture shows similar pews in St Mary's Church in Stelling Minnis, Kent, UK.

In modern Anglican worship there are three postures, standing up, sitting down and the strange position known as the 'Anglican crouch' - which has essentially replaced kneeling. Life is simple: stand up to sing hymns (or indeed anything in the sung part of the liturgy), stand up for the Gospel, Creed and Eucharistic prayers, sit down for everything else except the prayer of the church when the 'Anglican crouch' is adopted, as illustrated here!



Usually in Anglican worship regular instructions to be given to the people, 'if they are able', to stand up or sit down in addition to printed directions in the service books. Even so, any departure from the norm results in half the congregation doing one thing and the rest the other until some uneasy equilibrium is reached with much embarrassment for those left standing at the 'wrong' time (even if they do happen to be 'right'). Due to the natural reserve of the English the adop-



tion of any other activity by the congregation during a worship service than the three aforementioned postures can be interpreted as being 'charismatic' or even 'high church'.

In the German influenced Lutheran Churches it's a tad more complicated. My observation is that specific directions to the congregation are rarely given by the Pastor and generally the people are expected to know what to do.

A good rule of thumb is to stand to praise God, offer prayer, throughout the Eucharist, to confess the Creed and to hear the word of God proclaimed (both Gospel and Epistles). Sit to receive teaching as during the sermon and also during instructional hymns (such as the hymns of the Catechism). In practice the big difference compared with Anglican worship is that the congregation stands for processional and recessional hymns and sits for other hymns interspersed within the liturgy. There is a slight exception (isn't there always!) and that is that a particularly well-trained congregation will spontaneously stand during the last verse of a hymn if it contains a doxology, such verses being marked with a red triangle in the hymn book rubrics. Lutherans either stand to address God in prayer or (more rarely) kneel. The 'Anglican Crouch' is unnecessary in Lutheran worship. Luther does specify standing or kneeling in the Small Catechism as the only alternatives for prayer - as mentioned earlier sitting was simply

not an option in his lifetime.

It is unclear when sitting to sing became 'Lutheran Tradition', however it was certainly established by the time of J.S. Bach's appointment as "*Thomascantor*" (1723) when it was possible to rent pews in the Leipzig churches.

The reason is almost certainly the sheer length of some Lutheran hymns (and services) – as many as 14 verses not being unheard of, and between 9 and 12 stanzas usual. In the bigger Lutheran churches, particularly those in university towns, the singing of a Cantata lasting around 30 minutes to illustrate the Gospel immediately prior to the sermon resulted in a period of at least 90 minutes 'instruction'. That made sitting a small mercy.

The parish Eucharist might routinely last three hours which pushed the endurance of the people to the limit, especially during the winter (choir boys were allowed out to stretch their legs during the sermon). Even here the 'rules' are a little opaque as during the cantata the congregation would frequently rise to its feet and enthusiastically join in the chorales!

If you are still confused about when to stand up or sit down you will be in good company – but remember it really doesn't matter! The best thing to do when visiting a church of another tradition is to identify a 'regular' and copy them. Dare I say – 'when in Rome do as the Romans'!

FRANCE: RENOVATING BORDER CHURCH, SYMBOL OF RECONCILIATION

In the spirit of Christian unity, President Christian Albecker of the Union of Protestant Churches of Alsace and Lorraine (UEPAL), a Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member Church, together with Bishop Jochen Cornelius-Bundschuh of the Protestant Church in Baden, have launched the renovation of the Chapelle de la Rencontre, a small chapel built in 1948 as a symbol of reconciliation between Germany and France. (LWI)

Situated near the border of Strasbourg, France, and Kehl, Germany, in the *Port du Rhin*, is the *Chapelle de la Rencontre*. It needs major interior and exterior work, and the work on its restoration is being supported by the two Churches, the City of Strasbourg, fundraising campaigns, and individual donations.

The aim of the two Churches reflects the original vision for the chapel. It should be a welcoming place, where people of different cultural backgrounds and religions can meet. The hope is that the restored chapel will host both residents and visitors who want to learn languages and experience diverse cultural events.

Canton *Deux Rives*, where the chapel is located, is home to various economic groups and people of different ethnicity. President Albecker states that ‘the *Chapelle de la Rencontre* is a place to foster cross-border encounter and fellowship within the framework of a “city of change”.’ This refers to recent urban redevelopment in Strasbourg that expands across the Rhine.

‘In the name of the Gospel, we want to live in unity, erasing borders,’ he says. ‘Galatians tells us there is neither Jew,



nor Gentile, neither slaves nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus. This is the spiritual meaning underlying the renovation project carried out by the community. First and foremost, the renovation of the *Chapelle de la Rencontre* is a life project not solely a building project. The chapel is a concrete example of solidarity in a city undergoing profound changes.’



NATIONAL ECUMENICAL ROUND TABLE FOR ENGLAND

Churches Together in England (CTE) have set up a new forum for nourishing ecumenical relationships, as the General Secretary, the Rev Dr Paul Goodliff, explains.

From the earliest days of lockdown in March 2020, representatives from CTE’s national member Churches have gathered on Zoom on Mondays to share news of the responses their Churches are making to a fast-changing set of circumstances. First meeting weekly, then monthly, this ‘Coronavirus Roundtable’ proved to be an invaluable forum to exchange news, interpret regulations as they applied to churches and, most importantly, to deepen our fellowship and ecumenical friendship.

Roundtable member Philip Cooper (Moravian) writes, ‘These meetings

have provided an excellent space for the sharing of information and have enabled the Churches to support one another during the pandemic, share concerns, seek advice, and journey together during this difficult time.’

Until the meetings began a smaller group of National Ecumenical Officers had met twice a year. Now this broader group includes members of Churches Together in Wales, the Scottish Christian Forum and the Irish Council of Churches. We meet far more regularly without any necessity to travel. Zoom is our friend, and the only cost is an hour of our time!

Ecumenical collaboration played its part in strengthening the arguments that kept churches open in the January lockdown

and gave confidence to CTE in arguing strongly for the fullest up-take of vaccines as medically possible in the face of considerable “vaccine hesitancy.”

Now a new forum called the National Ecumenical Instruments Roundtable (NEIR), launched in September this year, will follow a similar pattern of meeting and continue to monitor the ways in which the pandemic and its aftermath affect our life and witness as Churches, follow trends in social change and government legislation, and changes within our Churches. It is my hope and prayer that this new Roundtable will deepen our bonds of friendship, expanding our spiritual ecumenism, and equipping us better for the tasks of witness to Christ.



HOLY COMMUNION AS A COMMUNAL FEAST AMID COVID-19

Continuing the discussion in recent issues of *The Window* we have two more contributions. This one from Dr Jari Jolkkonen, Bishop of Kuopio in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. The other is from a Romanian Orthodox priest, see page 25.

Throughout the history of the Church, the people who have closed cathedrals and forbidden Christians to celebrate the Eucharist have been cruel tyrants and godless dictators. The global COVID-19 pandemic changed this. Bishops, pastors and church leaders have had to announce to their congregations: You are not welcome at church, you may not gather to praise God and celebrate the Holy Communion together.

Despite knowing all the good reasons behind these restrictions, the moratorium on celebrating the Eucharist together has caused spiritual pain for Church members and leaders. How can Christians worship God when churches are closed? Can pastors serve and heal the people of God with the Word and Sacraments when gathering together is not possible? How can ministers carry out their pastoral duties, strengthen people and proclaim hope to the general public when the normal instruments of grace cannot be used normally?

One old method is still strong, but perhaps sometimes forgotten, more especially in the secular West. That method is: *private prayer life*. Persistent prayer, in private or with family, strengthens human beings to endure prolonged stress. We know this not only by our own experience but also from anthropological studies. For example, Richard Sosis, Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Connecticut and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, examined the extent to which women in the northern Israeli town of Tzfat



recited psalms to cope with the stress of the Second Palestinian Intifada. His findings underscore the importance of religious practices like praying and reading the Bible as coping mechanisms that reduce anxiety and provide a sense of control under conditions of high stress and uncertainty (Richard Sosis: "Psalms for Safety," in: *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 48, No. 6 (December 2007), pp. 903-911). A corresponding study showing similar results has also been made among Palestinian women during the time of the Israeli Occupation. In a situation of prolonged stress, persistent praying heals, helps and strengthens.

The other method, of course, is *public prayer*. Today, technology offers us new tools for praying, proclaiming and worshipping together. Online liturgies in particular have been a great success



in allowing people to gather together virtually, to hear the Word of God and to take part in liturgy *spiritualiter*, while perhaps as few as ten people are allowed to be present in the church.

Church response to COVID-19 challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a pastoral and theological challenge to every church and to our Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) as well. Here I would like to reflect briefly on our findings.

In the first place, it should be the duty of **church authorities** and not **state officials** to establish restrictions regarding religious freedom. Of course, churches must exercise this freedom in a responsible way. Church leaders

must listen to specialists, communicate with the authorities and have the courage to make all necessary efforts to combine our right to worship in freedom with our duty to protect people, both of which are anchored in the Ten Commandments.

Right at the very beginning of the pandemic (16th March 2020), we bishops of the ELCF concluded that, although church members could not physically take part in the liturgy, divine services must be held in every local parish every Sunday by an ordained minister, a cantor and other necessary staff. Continuity of common worship is based on theological, canonical, symbolic and pastoral reasons. Worship is not a hobby, but God's command, and public prayer belongs to the necessary signs of the Church Catholic, as Luther writes in his 1539 treatise *On the Councils and the Church*. The canonical principle of Church Order of the ELCF (CO 2:2 §), according to which divine service must be held in every local parish every Sunday, is in force even during a time of pandemic or other tribulation. A Church building with ringing bells and shining lights in its windows on Sunday is a symbol of living hope and



for the whole world.

resilience: within the church building the assembly, though only a pastor and a few chosen representatives, still prays for the sick, for their caregivers and

Thanks to technology, local parishes are able to broadcast online liturgies so that church members can participate in them via remote systems. At first, only the Liturgy of the Word (without the Liturgy of the Eucharist) was broadcast and not without good theological and medical basis. The prayers are our sacrifice to God, ☞

⇒ but the sacrament is God's gift to us, and because the sacrament could not be distributed to the people, something seemed to be missing. Still, the Christian liturgy is based on patterns of Jewish prayer and reading of scripture which included prayer, recitation of psalms, reading of the Scriptures and interpreting them in preaching. Celebration of the Liturgy of Word is better than no liturgy at all.

Later, we also began to broadcast celebrations of the Holy Mass with both the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. According to Lutheran understanding, both a



pastor representing divinely ordained ministry and the assembly representing the common priesthood are necessary and must be physically present to legally celebrate the Eucharist.

The Sacrament of the Altar was not instituted for the private devotion of the minister, or the special interests

of small clubs of like-minded people. It was instituted for the public remembrance of the death and resurrection of Christ, who serves the congregation with the Word and Sacrament.

The body and blood of Christ

The proper way to take part in that Communion is to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine both *spiritually* (in faith) and *physically* (with the body), *oraliter* (with one's mouth), as some reformers put in the latter dimension. But if pandemic, illness, a long distance to the altar, or some other physical restriction, hinders our taking part in the Communion Table physically, we are never excluded from the mercy of God, nor from the Church of Christ. In those cases it is always possible for us to receive the Lord Jesus with our heart - that is, spiritually.

This happens when we take part in the online liturgy, hear the Gospel, confess his presence in the Eucharist and receive his grace by putting all our trust in Christ.

According to Martin Luther, this is *spiritualiter manducare et bibere*, "eating and drinking the sacrament in spiritual way" (*De captivitate*, StA II, 199, 11).

According to our understanding, Christianity is based on the faith that "the Word became flesh", therefore not all worship can be performed virtually or online because Baptism, confirmation, ordination, anointing, weddings and funerals are always corporeal actions with audible songs and visible elements. You can follow these actions online, but only when they are physically celebrated in a certain place with a specific minister and a communicant whose real body is touched by the sacramental sign.

Therefore, our bishops have said *non possumus* to the idea of an online Eucharist in which a person eats bread and drinks wine on his or her sofa at home, while watching the Eucharistic Celebration on the screen.

Here, it may be good to follow the old distinction between proclaimed Word and celebrated Sacrament. When the Word of God is proclaimed, it communicates the grace of God to a mind by touching a heart.

When Baptism or Eucharist, which are sacraments instituted by Christ, are celebrated they communicate the very same grace of God to a body by touching a body with the physical elements of the sacraments. Christ is both loving and creative: he always finds the way to us, even during a time of pandemic.

Dr Roy Long recommends a book that paints the Reformer in a less familiar light

NOT A STANDARD TAKE ON LUTHER

Dr Lyndal Roper is the Regius Professor of History in the University of Oxford, and she hit the headlines several years ago with her biography of Luther, **Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet**. (London, The Bodley Head, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-847-92004-1). She has followed this up with a new book, **I Was Your Plague: Luther's World and Legacy** (Princeton/Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2021. ISBN: 978-0-691-20530-4). The chapters cover a range of topics, including themes such as *The Luther Cranach Made*, *Luther and Dreams*, and *Luther Kitsch*, as well as the chapter entitled 'Living I Was Your Plague', which deals with some of Luther's supposed dying words, and which provides the whole book with its title. With my own particular concerns in mind, I was particularly interested in Chapter 6: *Luther the Anti-Semite*.

The book is set against the background of the celebrations – particularly in Germany – of the "Luther Year", when a whole series of events took place to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the posting of the 95 Theses. In her introductory chapter she says that "How Luther was com-

memorated was ... a question of national significance. This difficult hero, with his stodgy determination, his love of beer and pork, his relentless hatreds, his penchant for misogynist quips, and his four-square masculinist stance, has always been a divisive figure. In the final chapter of the book – the one entitled "Luther Kitsch" – Dr Roper expresses the view that the celebrations essentially failed.

This book has many things to recommend it; it is backed up by considerable research and scholarship, is full of excellent illustrations, but is difficult to assess. Dr Roper clearly knows her Luther and recognises what an important role he has played in world history, but it is unclear what she feels about the reformer. Is she in the least bit sympathetic towards him? She paints a picture of a man obsessed with his own image and highlights his faults and failings in contrast to the sympathetic and nuanced portraits more familiar to Lutherans. It is well worth reading, but readers will have to draw their own conclusions. Inside the front cover it says: "[this] is a splendid work of cultural history that sheds new light on the complex and enduring legacy of Luther and his image".

BRAZIL : LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN HONOURED FOR THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Five renowned Latin American women from different Christian traditions were awarded an honorary degree by *Faculdades EST*, one of Brazil's leading centres of education and research. (LWI)

An online ceremony on 26th August marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of *Faculdades EST* by the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IELCB). *Faculdades EST* has become an important training and research centre in Brazil and one of the most respected in Latin America. Its general objective is to promote academic training and foster scientific research in the field of the human sciences, applied social sciences, linguistics, letters, arts and health. The ceremony also marked the 30th anniversary of its Chair of Feminist Theology and the contribution it has made over the past three decades at both national and global level.



From left to right, Dr Maricel Mena-López, Dr Nancy Cardoso, Rev Dr Lori Altmann, Rev Dr Mercedes Garcia Bachmann and Dr Wanda Deifelt. Photos: Private

Five theologians were awarded honorary degrees; Brazilian Lutheran the Rev Dr Lori Altmann, Colombian Catholic Dr Maricel Mena-López, Brazilian Lutheran Dr Wanda Deifelt, Brazilian Methodist Dr Nancy Cardoso and Argentinian Lutheran the Rev Dr Mercedes Garcia Bachmann.

The ceremony took place during the 7th Latin American Congress on Gender and Religion, which brought together theologians, social movements, grassroots organisations, faith communities and activists from across the region and beyond to discuss the theme "Courage, Creativity and Hope".

Key to construction of gender justice

The Institute's Chair of Feminist Theology was inaugurated in 1991 in response to a growing demand from the women

who began studying at *Faculdades EST* in the 1950s. It became the first such centre in Latin America to specialise in feminist theology and remains one of the few educational institutes in the region to offer this specialisation.

'The Chair of Feminist Theology was, and continues to be, fundamental in the training of ministers of the Church and researchers in theology as an instrument for the construction of gender justice,' said the Rev Dr

Marcia Blasi, LWF Programme Executive for Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment.

The recipients of the honorary degree are all pioneers in the field of feminist theology, affirming the importance of studying gender within the broader context of interconnected issues in Church and Society. Dr Altmann has specialised in work with Brazil's indigenous communities and was ordained as an IELCB pastor in 1990. Dr Mena-López was the first to formulate an Afro-Caribbean feminist black theology and is currently teaching at St Thomas University in Bogotá. Dr Garcia Bachmann specialises in lay and ordained leadership training and is well known in ecumenical circles for her work with Latin America's different faith communities. Dr Deifelt was the institute's first professor of feminist theology and has served as theological advisor to the LWF and the World Council of Churches, while Dr Cardoso has worked with indigenous communities to develop a feminist agro-eco-theology and is currently teaching at the Methodist University of Angola.

AUGSBURG ANNIVERSARY 2030

When Lutheran World Federation representatives met the Pope in Rome last June both he and they looked forward to the 500th Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession in 2030. LWF President, Archbishop Dr Panti Filibus Musa, expressed the hope that the anniversary would provide common ground on which to strengthen the commitment of both Lutherans and Catholics to unity and reconciliation. Pope Francis noted that the Confession originally 'represented an attempt to avoid the threat of a division in Western Christianity,' and expressed the hope that shared reflection in the run-up to 2030 'may benefit our ecumenical journey.' He went on to say that 'Ecumenism is not an exercise of ecclesial diplomacy but a journey of grace. It depends not on human negotiations and agreements, but on the grace of God, which purifies memories and hearts, overcomes attitudes of inflexibility and directs towards renewed communion: not towards reductive agreements or forms of irenic syncretism, but towards a reconciled unity amid differences.'" Archbishop Musa agreed; 'May the Holy Spirit continue guiding us so that we will gather one day at the table where God, through the gift of Christ, has made us already one,' he said.

CHURCHES ON THE WAY: OVERCOMING ECUMENICAL CHALLENGES

Last June leaders of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) paid a two-day visit to Rome encouraged by Pope Francis' exhortation to continue 'with passion on our journey from conflict to communion.'

That passion, said LWF Assistant General Secretary Prof Dr Dirk Lange, is lived out, both 'through our solidarity with those who suffer and through a renewed commitment to deepening our doctrinal dialogues.' (LWI)

A Papal Audience on 25th June was a high point of a visit by a large LWF delegation, including representatives from the seven regions of the global Communion of Churches. Earlier in the day, the director of LWF's World Service and the Secretary General of *Caritas Internationalis* shared a Common Vision Statement which highlighted the theological and spiritual foundations of their humanitarian work and proposed a path forward for increased collaboration with local churches (see page 27).

The delegation also met Cardinal Kurt Koch, the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, to discuss the next steps that the Lutheran-Catholic theological dialogue might take. Both sides stressed the urgency of translating the Gospel in ways that remain relevant for all generations, and they underlined the need for ongoing formation and contextualization for both ordained and lay people. Dr Lange, Assistant General Secretary of LWF, noted the progress represented by the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) process, which brings together five global Christian communions in joint proclamation and service. 'The JDDJ continues to unfold its ecumenical potential,' he said, 'thus becoming an encouraging sign of what God has done and continues to do in our midst.'

Lecture on 'synodality from Lutheran perspective'

During a public lecture at the Dominican University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) Dr Junge explored the concepts of synodality and Christian unity from a Lutheran perspective. Synodality, he noted, is at the heart of Pope Francis' vision for 'a church on the way.' He continued: It is a question which 'challenges each one of us, not only in our spiritual life, but in the life of our ecclesial institutions and the ways in which we define and use authority and power.'

Noting that the concept of synodality 'encompasses both the realm of governance and the spiritual realm,' Dr Junge looked back at the way decision-making was practiced in the nascent Christian community. He went on to note that Martin Luther, in his day, grappled with the same issues, writing at length about the early councils and the attempts to 'confess and defend the ancient faith' while listening to the Holy Spirit at work in the life of individuals and communities.

Focusing on the connections between Luther's insistence on the priesthood of all believers and the Catholic understanding of the *sensus fidei* (instinct of faith in every baptised person), Dr Junge stressed that 'every Christian is called to discern the gift of the Spirit in others, leading to unity of



The Rev Dr Martin Junge delivers a lecture at the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) on 'Synodality and Christian Unity from a Lutheran perspective'. Photo: LWF/IA. Danielsson

faith, as well as growth in communion.' Every Christian, he insisted, 'is equipped to walk together on this way, ever deeper into communion, living out and witnessing to God's act of reconciliation.'

Within a 'fragmented, exclusionary, adversarial, isolationist society,' he continued, 'the Churches are called by God to engage in a "synodal way" in order to model dialogue and hope in the midst of political and social tension.' But this entails 'an awareness of one's own vulnerability' and the need for 'a deep reliance on the hospitality of others.'

Welcoming the deepening of collaboration between LWF World Service and the global Catholic Caritas network, Dr Junge noted that through 'our commitment to the poor and the marginalized and suffering in this world, as we listen and learn from them we, as individuals but also as Churches, are transformed in that encounter.' In conclusion he said, 'As we listen ever more carefully to the instinct of faith, to the priesthood of all believers, and to the yearning for peace and reconciliation among all peoples, our doctrinal dialogue will be transformed.'

**There's still time to book into
our Conference in Trondheim**
(see page 4 for details)

**Just complete and return the booking form
or, if you have mislaid it,
contact angluthsociety@outlook.com
and ask for another.**

LWF RESPONDS TO DECISION BY LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LATVIA

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has issued a statement in response to the decision the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) has taken to join the International Lutheran Council (ILC). The decision was approved by the ELCL's General Synod at a meeting on 6th August. The statement notes that "ILC membership criteria subject Churches to a set of theological principles, commitments, and practices, several of which are at odds with what LWF member churches hold in common."

The LWF says that "dialogue is required", adding that it has "reached out to the leadership of the ELCL to understand how it sees its ongoing relationship with the LWF, of which it has been a member since 1963."



Central Riga with St Peter's Church tower visible on the left-hand side. Photo: Unsplash/Martin Kleppe

MEMBER ORDAINED IN IRELAND

On Sunday 12th September Society the Rev Martin Dean Steele was made a Deacon by Bishop Patrick Rooke in the



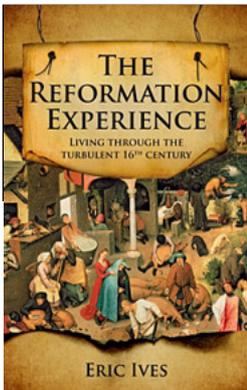
Cathedral Church of St Patrick, Killala in the United Diocese of Tuam, Killala and Achonry. He is to serve the people of the Kilmoremoy Union of Churches in County Mayo, Ireland. This photo was taken after the service and you can see Bishop Patrick, Martin and the Rev J W Kernohan, who is Rector of Martin's home parish.

Martin is currently finishing his research for his MTh. He is writing a dissertation examining the Blessed Virgin Mary's role as an ecumenical bridge between Anglicans and Roman Catholics within the Irish context.

He asks members to pray for him as he moves into this new stage in God's service.

EVEN-HANDED TREATMENT OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD

Dr Roy Long recommends a book that offers the reader a refreshing approach



Over the past five decades there has been a seismic shift in the study of the Reformation in England and Wales. This has been accompanied by a polarisation between those who take a "traditional" view of the events of the 16th century (a corrupt Roman Catholic Church ultimately replaced by the Elizabethan "Protestant" Settlement), and those who take a more positive view of the pre-Reformation Church. Dr Eric Ives is a distinguished (now retired) Reformation scholar whose book **The Reformation Experience: Living through the turbulent 16th Century (Oxford, Lion**

Hudson plc, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-7439-3277-2 currently out of print but used copies are available - Ed) manages to bring together these polarisations into a balanced and readable book which deals even-handedly with different interpretations of the Reformation, primarily – though not exclusively – in England. To take one example: many historians of the Reformation begin their description of the reign of Queen Mary I by stressing the sufferings of the Protestant martyrs who were burned at the stake, but Dr Ives presents us with an objective examination of the positive catholic reforms envisaged by Archbishop Reginald Pole. Of course, he does not forget the Protestant martyrs, but it is refreshing to hear the other side.

The beginning of the book focuses on events in continental Europe, and the sections which deal with Luther and the other reformers are particularly informative. I was particularly interested in the information that Dr Ives presents about the French proto-reformer Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples – someone whose work I intend to pursue further when time and opportunity present themselves.

This is a book that I can heartily recommend, though I *do* have two minor reservations. The first concerns Chapter 12 ("Spain, Italy, and France"), where, in the section on Italy, Dr Ives makes no mention of the Waldensians. Though small, and limited in geographical terms to the far north-west of what we would today term "Italy", they were important precursors of the Reformation, so surely deserve a mention. My second quibble is the reference on p140 to the Bible translator Miles Coverdale, who is erroneously referred to as *Matthew*.

EUCHARIST AND COMMUNION DURING THE PANDEMIC

The second of two articles continuing our reflections on celebrating the Sacrament during lock-down, this is by the Rev Cristian Sonea from the Romanian Orthodox Church. Fr Cristian is a professor of Orthodox Missiology at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. He is interested in contemporary theology of Orthodox mission and the common Christian witness, and he is actively involved in ecumenical dialogue. See page 18 for the other article.



The COVID-19 crisis affected most Christian communities that survived multiple lockdowns or were asked to practice social distancing as, in fact, it affected all human communities worldwide. While for other communities the isolation had a negative impact on the economy or on human relations on a psychological level, in the case of the Christian Orthodox communities the social distancing measures seemed to impact the very being of the Church, in which the Eucharistic community plays an essential role. That is why, within Orthodox communities, one may find many voices that vehemently criticise the decisions of the authorities regarding the current crisis.

In this context, it is therefore natural to try to answer some questions such as: what is the relation between the Eucharist and the community? To what extent can an online gathering be considered a church? Does the absence of the gathering in one place nullify communion?

In an attempt to find answers to these questions, I offer here a short reflection based on Fr Dumitru Stăniloae's Eucharistic theology. In his book "Spirituality and Communion in the Orthodox Liturgy" (1986), he tried to recover the original meaning of the Eucharist and of the Liturgy by showing, among other things, that Liturgy is not only about the mystery of the Eucharist, the transformation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, but also about the recapitulation of the entire economy of salvation in Jesus Christ. So, in the Liturgy, we distinguish different aspects of Christ's presence and work in the world, which are inseparable and complemen-

tary and represent different ways we can encounter Him and find communion with Him.

Fr D Stăniloae's intuitions became extremely relevant for this time when the faithful were not allowed to physically participate in the Liturgy or had limited access to church services. According to him, God's presence in history reveals His capacity to be above space and time and thus to fill up the entire space and time through His uncreated energies. This presence has two complementary meanings: He is in one place while simultaneously everywhere. His omnipresence represents the fundamental condition for our encounter with Him, as it allows all people, from all times and places, to encounter Him, even those who did not or do not have the possibility to physically participate in the Liturgy.

Of course, when we talk about the Liturgy, we are not simply referring to God's general presence in the world, but also to Christ's real and personal

presence, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit as, during the Liturgy, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Through this transformation and through communion, we experience the mystery of our encounter and union with Him.

Through His incarnation, cross and resurrection, Christ removed the three obstacles that stood between our union with God: the limited nature of the human being, sin and death. In the Eucharist, the Christian partakes in the maximum union between God and the human being, realised in the hypostasis of Christ who, after His ascension to heaven, became even more present in history than he was while still on this Earth, since now He is present everywhere and even in ourselves, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

That is why Eucharistic communion is related to the true being of the Church and cannot be substituted. As a place for our encounter with Christ, the entire Liturgy, from beginning to

end, starts with the preparation of the gifts and ends with communion, an epiphany, or a slow and gradual revealing of Christ's presence. Several aspects of His presence can be identified in the Liturgy, different types of presence, which correspond to different ways of encountering Him or finding communion with Him, all of them leading the faithful to full Eucharistic communion. Thus, by even sharing in the Liturgy, we progressively participate in communion with Christ, a process which is fulfilled in the Eucharist.

So, all those present in the Liturgy do partially partake in the communion of Christ, even though they do not



This painting depicts *Ecclesia Militans* and refers to the *Ecclesia Triumphans*, including those who lost their lives during the pandemic. The flames represent the prayers people offer all around the world despite restrictions regarding church attendance. The church buildings represent the different Christian traditions in Europe. Despite their dogmatic and other differences, they stand together in the time of pain, uncertainty, fear and death. The two symbols of the Eucharist stand as a hopeful remembrance of the eschatological nature of the Christian communion.

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2022: “WE SAW THE STAR IN THE EAST..”

The Middle East Council of Churches, based in Beirut, Lebanon, has produced worship resources to be used between 18th-25th January in the Northern Hemisphere and around Pentecost in the South. They are published in several languages by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Vatican.

The Middle East Council of Churches, based in Beirut, Lebanon, has been the convener for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022 drafting group. The WCC and the Vatican have now published the material. The reflections explore how Christians are called to be a sign to the world of God bringing about unity. Drawn from different cultures, races and languages, Christians share in a common search for Christ and a common desire to worship him.

Although churches and the people of Lebanon have been burdened by the daily consequences of a persistent political and economic crisis, and faced the tragedy of the August 2020 explosion in Beirut, which caused hundreds of deaths and left hundreds of thousands injured or homeless, Christians from different churches in Lebanon and neighbouring countries have found the spiritual force to come together and prepare the resources. They invite us to turn to the star in the East and worship together the Son of God incarnate.



There is an ecumenical opening prayer service, Biblical reflections and prayers for the eight days, along with other elements for worship.

One reflection notes that, in this fragile and uncertain world, we look for a light, a ray of hope from afar. “In the midst of evil, we long for goodness,” the reflection reads. “We look for the good within ourselves, but often we are so overwhelmed by our weakness that hope fails us. Our confidence rests in the God we worship.”

⇒ receive the Eucharist, for Fr D Stăniloae shows that Christ is present in the life of the Church in many ways. During the Liturgy, He is present in the readings from the Holy Scriptures, the sermon, the prayers read by the priests or the deacons, the chants or in the responses of the faithful, the dialogue between the priest and the faithful and then finally in the Eucharist.

To all these, we may add His presence in all the sacraments of the Church, in other church services, in the prayers and blessing offered by the priests, in the reading of the Holy Scriptures by the faithful and in their private prayers, in the writings of the saints or other books on Orthodox teachings, in the conversations they have about God and in their good deeds.

During a lockdown or during the times when access to the Eucharist has been limited, all other ways of finding communion with God were and still are available. That is why an online gathering can be considered a community of faithful who gradually partake in the communion with

Christ and who prepare themselves, through prayer, reading of the Scriptures and good deeds, for the full communion they find only in the Eucharist. Thus, this community may be regarded as a Eucharistic community witnessing a progressive epiphany that will be fulfilled when they are able to participate in the actual Liturgy.

The virtual presence in the Liturgy that is broadcasted online cannot dissolve or nullify the communion, even though the faithful do not receive the Eucharist. Unfortunately, in the Romanian tradition (and in some others), it is not rare for the faithful to participate in the Liturgy without taking communion. The validity of the Eucharistic communion is confirmed by Fr D Stăniloae who explains the double role of the priest during the Liturgy as follows: Christ Himself works through the priest for the faithful, while the faithful, through the priest who takes communion, present their prayers and sacrifices directly to Christ. That being said, although the theoretical discussion on the validity of a Eucharist without the communion of the faithful is fascinating and challenging, we are well aware of the fact that such a Liturgy does not fulfil its purpose and

true reason for existing.

Still, all crises can create opportunities for those willing to see them. Inability to participate in the church services or to take communion can generate greater zeal in the faithful and raise deeper awareness of the importance and the value of the gift God imparts to their community in every Liturgy. Also, the inability to take part in the Liturgy can be converted into a different way of finding communion with Him, such as those mentioned above. As for the clergy who still have the acute memory of serving in an empty church, perhaps this can be transformed into an occasion for understanding the actual role and place of the laity and to find better, more consistent ways to involve the faithful more actively in the liturgical life of the Church.

Finally, both for the clergy and the laity, the crisis caused by COVID-19 which, in all likelihood, may be related to a careless and reckless attitude towards God's creation, may be an occasion to repent for the larger ecological crisis the planet is currently going through.

LUTHERANS AND CATHOLICS: COMMON VISION FOR JOINT SERVICE

“Standing together for the sake of the neighbour” (LWI)



The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and Caritas Internationalis (CI), the global confederation of Catholic aid and development agencies, have committed to increased cooperation and service to the world’s marginalized communities, alongside greater involvement of the two Churches.

During a meeting in Rome on 25th June last, the Director of LWF World Service and the Secretary General of the Caritas network affirmed that by strengthening their humanitarian work for justice, peace and dignity for all people, their commitment may also serve as a “catalyst that can shape our doctrinal dialogues.”

The “Common Vision,” jointly presented by World Service (WS) Director, Maria Immonen, and Caritas Secretary General, Aloysius John (pictured above), affirms that the two organisations “stand together for the sake of the neighbour – a call which is rooted in faith.” It stresses that “the projects of CI and WS go beyond humanitarian aid, for in them we discover the spiritual dimension of the work of service.” It affirms that “the aspiration to share, to establish justice and reconciliation with each other, leads us to discover the humanity in each of us as children of one creator.”

The meeting in Rome is a continuation of a process initiated in the Swedish cities of Lund and Malmö in 2016 during the joint commemoration of the Reformation. During those events, the LWF and Caritas signed a ‘Declaration of Intent’ to step up their shared commitment to joint witness and service.

The document notes that “The Common Prayer service in Lund Cathedral and the commitment signed in the Malmö Arena, was a movement from prayer to action, from a liturgy of thanksgiving, lament, confession and absolution, to an ecumenical commitment for all our neighbours, whoever they may be, wherever they may be.” A life of prayer, it adds, “always leads to a life of solidarity with the whole human family.”

Growing grass roots cooperation

Maria Immonen shared two examples of countries where local Caritas and World Service staff have stepped up fruitful cooperation since the Malmö event. In Nepal, she said, both organisations signed a country level agreement and began working to plan, train and explore avenues of shared engagement. This led to a joint project to install an urgently needed water supply for a village community, with World Service digging the well and Caritas providing the water tank.

Her second example was Venezuela where “needs are growing exponentially” as a result of the political and eco-

nomics crisis. World Service and Caritas Venezuela have been working together on needs assessment across various regions of the country despite COVID-19 restrictions, she said. Their findings highlighted the disproportionate effect of the crisis on women, children and older adults leading to a deterioration in their health and psychosocial wellbeing. Recommendations include strengthening community support networks and in particular support for at-risk women, young people and children.

Aloysius John shared examples of ecumenical cooperation in Africa and the Pacific region where bishops have come together to speak with “a common voice” for justice and human dignity.” In Zambia, Catholic and Lutheran bishops have joined with other Christian leaders to meet candidates ahead of key presidential elections to share the “thirst for justice” of their communities. The Catholic bishops in the Pacific have called for a broad ecumenical reflection on Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si*, noting the important implications and challenges it raises for all people in their region.

Strong signal to local churches

Lutheran Bishop Henrik Stubkjær, chair of the LWF’s Committee for World Service, commented: ‘It is vital to show our constituencies that we can work together for the poor and marginalised. It sends a strong signal to the local churches that we are united in Christ and are building on the achievements of Malmö. But we want to go further and become even more concrete in our witness of hope to the world.’

Reflecting on how to further advance the spiritual dimension of dialogue and action at both grass roots and leadership level, Caritas and LWF are proposing to establish a steering committee to bring bishops together and support their collaboration in different regions of the world. They are also highlighting the need for stepped up advocacy on vaccine equity in the post-pandemic period, and increased participation of women in leadership and decision-making roles.

The “Common Vision” also expresses the hope that this increased commitment to joint witness and service can be a “parable of communion”, following the example of the first disciples who “shared everything they had [so that] nobody was left alone” (Acts 4: 32-34).

Caritas and the LWF are called to “bring a word of hope” to an increasingly fragmented world, the document concludes. As they witness and work for dignity, justice, human rights and sustainability, it says, “the meaning of ecumenism itself is expanded and deepened.”



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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BRAZIL: SOLAR PANELS TO PRODUCE POWER FOR PASTORAL WORK

By generating solar power, a congregation of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB) in the city of Pelotas has reduced its environmental impact and will generate funds for its pastoral work. (LWI)

Care for creation and pastoral work go hand in hand

The *Comunidade São Lucas de Pelotas* in the south of Brazil is stepping up its care for creation by making it an integral part of its pastoral programme. The installation of solar panels on the parish hall roof in early July was a step in this direction. The Rev Gleidson Ademir Fritsche, one of the Pastors at São Lucas, explains: 'What motivated us was to care for God's creation by using clean energy from an unlimited source. The solar system is also sustainable – its cost and environmental impact are much lower than energy from hydroelectric plants in our vicinity.' Last, but not least, the project serves to 'arouse curiosity, inspire and motivate more people, institutions, and communities to plan similar actions,' says the Rev Beatriz Regina Haacke, who also serves at São Lucas. 'It might even encourage people to join the congregation.'

Positive effects for creation and congregation

The congregation's investment into the solar project amounted to about 8,200 Euro. 'Our calculations, taking into account running costs and other expenses, show that the system will amortize in about five years,' Pastor Fritsche says. The lifespan of the solar panels is projected at 35 years. In that period, it will have saved the congregation substantial amounts that can now be used to finance pastoral work.

The solar system supplies the power needed for all the congregation's buildings: the parish hall, church, secretary's office, rooms for children's worship and confirmation classes, residences for pastors and interns, and also the cemetery. On top of that, the electrical energy produced even exceeds the current consumption by 25 percent. The system comprises twenty-eight panels forming the letters IECLB. 'Measuring 6.5x19 metres, it is probably the biggest IECLB acronym ever,' says Pastor Fritsche, smiling. 'Without the wonderful contributions of our members and the professional work done by the solar company, we would not have achieved this goal.'



As a next step to becoming a sustainable congregation, the church leaders at São Lucas envisage using an electric car for the pastoral work, replacing the current gasoline-driven one.