

# The Window

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**Our Recent Conference in Hungary**  
pages 1-12

**News of Partnerships**  
page 18

**Everywhere Churches are Getting Messy**  
page 15

**New Anglican Bishop in Europe**  
page 14



**More Murder Mysteries to Enjoy**  
page 17

**Ladies swapping Information in London**  
page 19

**Lutheran Vespers in Cornish Anglican Cathedral**  
pages 20

**And more besides**

## PORVOO COMMUNION GROWS

*Jenny Sjogreen reports on a momentous day for two smaller Lutheran Churches*

It was Friday 19th September, and the Porvoo Leaders' Meeting, which had started the day before, was nearing its end. It had been hosted by the Most Rev John Sentamu, Archbishop of York, at Bishopthorpe, his home in Yorkshire.

He and Bishop Helga Haugland Byfuglien, Presiding Bishop of the Church of Norway, had delivered Bible Studies on the theme *Towards Greater Unity and Closer Fellowship*. Archbishop Michael Jackson of the Church of Ireland and Bishop Peter Skov-Jakobsen, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark - the Co-Chairs of the Porvoo Communion of Churches - had also spoken on that theme.

They were gathered in Bishopthorpe Chapel for the closing Eucharist when the Most Rev



*Photo: Office of the Archbishop of York*

Antje Jackelén was the preacher and Archbishop Sentamu presided. In that most solemn setting Archbishop Elmars Ernsts Rozitis, leader of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (right), and Bishop Martin Lind of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain (left), signed the Porvoo Declaration, and their two Churches were welcomed as the newest members of the Porvoo Communion.

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ion is a close association of Anglican and Lutheran Churches. They are mostly in Northern and Western Europe, but also include the Anglican Lusitanian Church in Portugal. They have all signed an agreement to 'share a common life in mission and service'. They are committed to growing together as Churches in mission and service, and to praying for and with one another.

## NEW JOB FOR FORMER CO-MODERATOR



Among the first people to benefit from the Lutheran Church in Great Britain joining the Porvoo Community is our former Lutheran Co-Moderator, the Rt Rev Jana Jeruma-Grinberga. 'Life has taken a new turn, with a new ministry and new joys and challenges,' she writes. 'From 1st October I shall be the Chaplain at St Saviour's Anglican Church, Riga. This is a part-time appointment in a lovely church in the Old Town, with an equally lovely community worshipping there.'

She says that it will be a real blessing to be able to return to grassroots ministry, even though she knows that the shoes of the previous Chaplain, the Rev Dr Juris Calitis, will be very hard to fill. Please pray for Jana, and for the congregation at St Saviour's, as she begins her work there.

## SHARING OUR CONFERENCE : SETTING THE SCENE

There is no doubt about it, the Lajos Ordass Centre in Révfülöp, on the shore of Lake Balaton in Hungary, is a wonderful place for a conference like ours. The rooms are spacious and well-appointed with excellent en-suite facilities. The main conference room is light and very well equipped. There are plenty of small meeting places and a delightful small chapel that we set aside as a quiet place for private prayer. The dining



You might have read about it in the Conference Report on the Society's website. But it's things like these that bring people together and helped to make ours a very enjoyable and successful conference indeed.

Révfülöp, a natural meeting place for people in Central Europe, was an ideal venue for a conference focusing on the experience of Minority Churches. We were from 20 countries, and most of us

belonged to tiny minority congregations. Our keynote speakers all served us well. Their sessions were followed up with small group work which enabled people from different contexts to share their insights and experience.

The Conference Dinner was a grand affair. Our guests were the Most Rev Gyula Márfi, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Veszprém, the Rev Zoltan Tar, Chief Councillor of the Synodal Office of the Reformed Church in Hungary, the Rev Vilmos Fischl, Secretary of the Ecumenical Council, and the Mayor, Mr Géza Kondor. It was the occasion for thanking all who had worked hard to make the conference the success it was.

deal of congregational participation, and a wonderful sense of being together with the Lord. On Sunday evening there was a more informal worship session in the conference room when people could pray in small groups and join in singing Taizé and other worship songs.

We enjoyed times of recreation too. On the Saturday evening there was a 'Wine Tasting' at a local vineyard which turned into a riotous party! Some people did swim in the Lake, while others enjoyed walking and sampling the local cafés and ice cream parlours. We visited a local Lutheran congregation for Sunday morning Eucharist, and were offered most generous hospitality there before going on to Tihany Abbey where the community gave us lunch. We enjoyed a guided tour of the Abbey Church and learning a little of the life of the Benedictine community there.

If we had any complaint it would be about the weather on the

Sunday – torrential rain, flash floods, land slips and trees across roads – and the one anxious moment for 30 of us when a tyre on the coach taking us to the Centre from Budapest exploded on the motorway!

Worship formed the heart of the conference. Our chaplains, György Aradi (Lutheran) and Helen Harding (Anglican), had devised a pattern that was fairly formal, following the orders for Morning and Night Prayers, and the Eucharist, from both our traditions. Each service was carefully designed, and the excellent Worship Book was easy to follow, and included all the hymns and music. There was a great



Everyone enjoyed the wine-tasting on Saturday evening

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One of the small groups at work

## THE PATTERN OF PRESENTATIONS

Our conference organisers decided to try something new. During four of the sessions a Lutheran and an Anglican were asked to address the chosen topic. It was interesting to hear two different approaches, one after another. However, the feedback from conference members suggested that it made

each session rather intense and cut short the time for questions and discussion. This is something the Executive Committee will review when planning future conferences.

In the articles that follow our Editor, Dick Lewis, offers a brief impression of

each of the six sessions. He knows that such treatment fails to do them justice, but hopes that what he has written will encourage you to read the presentations in full. You can find them via the Home page of the ALS website, which you find at [www.anglican-lutheran-society.org](http://www.anglican-lutheran-society.org).

### SESSION I : WELCOME TO HUNGARY!

*Our conference opened with a presentation by Prof Tibor Fabiny, a Lutheran Lay Theologian and Literary Scholar, who had been heavily involved in helping to organise the whole event.*

'Wow!' exclaimed one of the younger participants at the conference. 'One thousand years of history in just forty minutes! That was awesome!'

She was reacting to Prof Fabiny's *tour de force*, a lecture, delivered at top speed, introducing the newly assembled conference to Hungary and to the Hungarian Church. It should have been much more leisurely, but the coach's burst tyre meant that we had lost the planned afternoon session, so Tibor kindly agreed to fill a shorter evening slot, and to provide a hand-out.

He shaped his talk around 'The Hungarian Dreams', as he described them. Again and again, through history, hopes had been raised and then dashed. He began with the ninth century migration of people from the Urals into the Carpathian Basin. As they moved westward, he recalled, the Christian population prayed, 'From the arrows of the Magyars, save us, O Lord.'

There had been disagreement over whether or not the Magyars should adopt the Christian religion. This was resolved when Pope Sylvester II offered the crown to Stephen, a pagan originally named Vajk, who at some stage in his life had been baptised. He became King and dedicated Hungary to the Virgin Mary. So Hungary became part of Christian Europe.

Then followed what Tibor described as 'the Turkish Nightmare'. Two factors contributed to the success of the Turkish invaders. The Reformation had weakened Catholic cohesion, and Protestants believed that Hungarian

Christians had been unfaithful, worshipping Baal, and that God had sent the Turks as 'a scourge of God' and a warning to the nation to repent.

Through the seventeenth century northern Hungary remained part of the Habsburg Catholic Empire, the central part was under the Muslim Turks until they were driven out in 1686, and the east enjoyed relative independence under Transylvanian Princes. In this eastern area the Lutheran Reformation flourished. However, Tibor's next set of dreamers were the Jesuits. They led a brutal campaign to re-Catholicize the whole region which resulted in war, the Transylvanians rebelling against them.

Next came the Enlightenment and religious toleration, and a new dream of national independence. But revolution failed again, and the Habsburgs remained in control. Religious concerns took a back seat to political ambition as the Austro-Hungarian Empire flourished for 50 years until 1920, when Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were carved out of Hungary.

World War II brought another nightmare. First Germany invaded in March 1944, then Russia 'liberated' on 4th April 1945. The Communist take-over was completed in 1948 and until 1989 Hungary was part of the Soviet Empire. The Churches reacted to this in different ways. The Roman Catholics tended towards resistance (Cardinal Mindszenty), the Calvinists saw the situation once again as God's judgement for past sin, whereas the Lutherans opted for defence of the Church

rather than resistance.

There was a 'moment of freedom' from 23rd

October to 4th November

1956 when Hungary tried but failed to throw off Soviet domination.

After that many church leaders became subservient to Soviet politics. Tibor said that false theologies were created like 'the Theology of Service' and 'the Theology of Diakonia'. However, in 1989 everything changed. The Soviet Empire collapsed and Hungary was declared a free republic.

The Churches have emerged from this with distinct agendas once more. The Roman Catholics seek to unite two orders of reality; the search for truth (cultural, political, philosophical, scientific) and the certainty of already knowing the fount of all truth, as Pope St John Paul II put it. The Reformed (Calvinists) see the followers of Jesus as being invited to transform the world – Christian philosophers, politicians and artists can make this world better. Lutherans stress the 'Two Kingdoms' theology – the world of Christ and the world of culture. Both are under the rule of God. The faithfulness of the Church and its institutions depends not on what we do for ourselves but on what the Holy Spirit does for us.

There was much, much more, so in addition to Tibor's hand-out we have made a recording of his actual presentation available on the website's Home page. It is well worth listening to.



## SESSION 2 : DIVIDED COMMUNITIES

*This session was about the role that Christian minorities (in Europe) might play in preventing or de-escalating conflicts within communities. Our speakers were Dr Praxedis Bouwman from the Netherlands, who chairs the Communications Committee of Lutheran Minority Churches in Europe (KALME), and the Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, Anglican Archbishop of Dublin.*

This session provided a very good example of how joint presentations can work really well. Praxedis began by asserting that the rights of Minorities must be protected. This was something recognised in all the great Declarations of the twentieth century, the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Community's Charter of Fundamental Rights. But, she said, there are two dangers in this approach. First, no clear criteria as to what defines a minority is provided and, whilst charters focus on protecting the rights of minority groups, none refers to the responsibilities these groups might have to the wider society. Second, efforts to protect minorities can have an unexpected effect. 'Groups can begin to think, "Look at all the efforts being made to protect us - we must be really badly off as a group!"' she told us.

It is a fact that minorities, including Christian and other religious minorities, tend to communicate best with their own inner group. When they do try to relate to larger groupings they are often defensive and adopt an 'underdog' mentality. This is something that KALME is trying to address, Praxedis told us. 'One of our areas of work has been looking for ways of not talking as if we are underdogs, groups that need protection, but communicating proactively, out of strength, saying "This is who we are, and this is what we have to offer, both to individuals and to society".'

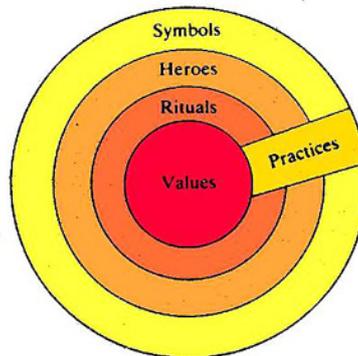
In his address, Michael Jackson took up this point. 'In Ireland,' he told us, 'a minority has begun to feel exceptionally sorry for itself and has started to look for exclusivity as the best expression of rights, rather than



exploring ways of best expressing its gifts.' It is easy to create a sense of self-indulgent victimhood. But acting courageously and engaging in dialogue with other communities is the creative, eschatological way of behaving. 'A little flock can actually become a critical changer of the landscape,' he said.

But how can minorities change from seeing themselves as 'underdogs' to recognising that they can be strong proactive players? There is very little literature on this subject, Praxedis told us, but she had found the work of Geert and Gert Jan Hofstede, two Dutch social psychologists, helpful.

They describe 'cultures' as having a core surrounded by different rings, she



told us. The core consists of the community's values. The rings around that core are about their practices and, from inside to outside, consist of rituals, heroes and symbols. Whilst the core values defining the community remain constant, the practices are more adaptable and can be modified and adjusted to enable relationships with other communities round about.

'No-one wants to see diversity removed. It can enrich, and be enriched by, the surrounding cultures,' she asserted. 'What is needed is real intercultural communication, and that means recognising other communities as different and yet equal.' When everyone is regarded as an equal partner it becomes easier to accept that there are differing views. Then understand-

ings of the issues will be both broadened and deepened.

Michael gave 'a shocking example' of how easily

people can disengage. Back in 2002, in the small parliament in Belfast, people were given four minutes to speak. 'A woman came to the lectern and she said the following: "I'm a French, Algerian atheist. I have no interest in your two communities and I belong to neither." And she sat down.' She had clearly defined herself but had effectively closed all lines of communication.

This, Michael said, takes us to the heart of our theme. All too often minorities fail to engage with the communities around them for fear of losing their identity. They are small and feel powerless and therefore threatened. 'The result is that they do not take those first steps that would enable them to engage with the trust which is out there which wants to reach out to them.' This was a point that Praxedis had made powerfully. 'Lutheran (Christian) minorities can be bridge builders in society and therefore play an important role in conflict prevention, and even conflict resolution,' she had told us.

She had introduced us to Calimero, a little cartoon chicken who first appeared on Italian television in 1963. The only black chick in a family of yellow chickens, he personifies minority. He remains very small, and wears half his egg shell on his head. It would be very easy for him to feel sorry for himself. "They are so big, and I am so



small!" he could be forgiven for thinking. But he is a courageous little chicken, always reaching out and trying to help others. In all his many adventures, rather than thinking, "It's unfair, they are big and I am small", he does his utmost to help, to link up with others, and to solve problems. Christian minorities should be like him!

'The core values held by Christian minorities, when they are expressed appropriately in practice, offer an alternative, contribute to society, and contribute to equality and human dignity in society,' she told us. 'Convinced of the uniqueness of human life, human biases and prejudices can be overcome. Unity in diversity should be the goal. Christian minorities have a huge responsibility to strive for this, always. And one of the most effective ways is by minorities forming alliances, as Lutherans have done by forming the Lutheran World Federation.'

Praxedis left us in no doubt that minorities can make a difference and influence others when they proceed systematically and patiently. 'The level of success depends on the clarity of their own core and how unanimously they project their values and their message,' she concluded.

Michael spoke of his long and painful involvement in Ireland (both Northern Ireland and the Republic). He sketched in the background to 'The Troubles', as they are called, for those who didn't know it – the Catholic/Protestant, Republican/Unionist divide that brought terrible violence to Belfast and to the border areas between 1966 and 1998. 'Although it may seem to be tremendously crude, it was in many real ways quite a sophisticated conflict,' he told us. You can read more about it in his paper.

That out of such outrage a measure of political accommodation should have been brought to life might seem miraculous. But it is the result of a series of small things. The power-sharing between Unionist and Republican in Northern Ireland in a Parliament devolved from London, for example. The State Visit of Queen Elizabeth II to the Republic of Ireland and the reciprocal visit of the President of Ireland to the UK. Little things like these are beginning to lead to an accommodation of opposites.

'Gradually people have changed the temperature and the pace of their political expectations as they see the most extraordinary of accommoda-

tions blossoming into public working friendships,' Michael told us.

He went on to give an illustration of the power of minorities to bring about change. During the Troubles, in 1976, two women, Mairead Maguire and Betsy Williams, were jointly given a Nobel Peace Prize. They made a stand against the manipulation by the Irish Republican Army of young people in their own Nationalist community. They wanted no more of it. They did not want the next generation polluted. 'So, there are people who appear and actually change the culture,' he said.

However, Michael ended his presentation by admitting that de-escalating conflict within divided communities will never be easy. In Ireland, and elsewhere, 'compromise' remains a tainted word. When the leaders on both sides of an argument find agreement, and start to create paths towards a peaceful resolution of their difficulties, it becomes very difficult to please those who occupy the middle ground and are feeling left out of the discussions, and the ultra-extremists on both sides who resent the fact that their former leaders have gone for something they see as nothing other than a soiled compromise.

## SESSION 3 : DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DIAKONIA

*Minority Churches are faced with challenges that seem daunting in comparison with their resources. Dr Annamária Buda, Head of the Department of Diakonia in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary, and Mrs Madeleine Holmes, Environmental Officer for the Anglican Diocese in Europe, described ways in which their Churches are trying to meet the challenges.*

Annamária focused her presentation on Hungary and the work being done by the Lutheran Church there. She began with a brief history of the Diaconal Movement in the Lutheran Church. It began at the Reformation, she said, when local congregations took responsibility for the care of widows, orphans and paupers. She told us that communities of Deaconesses had been prominent in the Movement in Hungary, and that they still are to this day.

She then focused on the work of Gábor Sztéhlo who, during World War II, with the *Good Shepherd Association*, rescued Jewish children. 'In Budapest he organized 32 houses and apartments as "hidden" homes,' she told us. There was a well-organized agenda that provided the children with basic care, de-

spite opposition from the Nazis and the Hungarian fascist Arrow Cross Party. In all, 1500 children and 500 adults were saved. In 1972 Sztéhlo was honoured by the State of Israel and declared "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem. He was also nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. After the war he continued his work, caring for the many orphans in Hungary, and other refugee children who joined them. New children's homes had to be created, and Sztéhlo founded Gaudiopolis (Örömváros) - it means "City of Joy" - a child-governed community that also had its own educational system. Towards the end of her presentation, Annamária did a comparison between Gaudiopolis and Summerhill, another child-governed institution in England. Gaudiopolis was

nationalised by the Hungarian State in 1950. Sztéhlo was offered the position of Director, but did not accept it. It closed in 1951 when, under the Communist régime, all civil associations were banned. However, religious groups were allowed to continue to care for the elderly and handicapped. They were not considered a threat to the



State, and they could not easily be trained in Communist ideology. So through the 1960s Gábor Sztéhlo continued to work for the Lutheran Church, organizing its diaconal work in ways that were very practical and free of ideology. The pattern he established continues in Hungary to this day.

As Head of the Hungarian Lutheran Church's Department of Diakonia today, Annamária is responsible for a wide range of work. The ever increasing number of elderly folk in Hungary is a very real concern, and the Diakonal Department provides care homes, care schemes, home support and outreach schemes in the villages for them. Handicapped people also benefit from a care home and home visits, as well as their own workshop. There is a home for homeless people, two free meal kitchens, a drop-in centre and a night shelter. Accommodation is also provided for families in need, care is offered to people with addiction and dementia, and children are cared for in a nursery and through family support schemes.

Annamária clearly demonstrated that in Hungary the small Lutheran Church, with more than 5,500 clients and 1,500 co-workers, is making a valuable contribution through its diaconal service.

Madeleine (top right) introduced the Church of England's Diocese in Europe. 'We are a migrant Church,' she told us. 'We welcome not just Anglicans but anyone wanting to find a spiritual home, often for a fairly short period of time.' Numerically, the Diocese in Europe is very small. 'We are a minority church in Europe and because of that we have to practice our neighbourliness, our sharing with other denominations, and our sharing of witness and work in Christ's name,' she said.

The recent influx of refugees from the Middle East into Europe is presenting a real pastoral challenge, she told us. 'They are arriving in countries that have themselves been suffering through

economic crises over the past years and we, sitting in central Europe, are going to have to face the necessity of sharing what we have - and more. So how can we, minority churches, go about making a Christian witness when faced with these challenges, which seem so daunting?' she asked. 'Our best way of starting to impact the poverty, pain and struggle of those in need is to join forces with the main Churches of the country we are resident in,' she said.

She then described numerous projects of a diaconal nature being undertaken by Anglican congregations in partnership with their neighbours. Five years ago in Greece, for example, the Anglicans in Athens joined forces with the Orthodox Church. Together they started the 'Church in the Street' initiative. This established a 'soup kitchen' which gave out 1200 cooked meals daily to homeless, largely irregular migrants. Soon pastors from the African Pentecostal Churches joined the scheme. The Anglican Chaplaincy is



In France and Spain Anglicans have joined forces with the Catholic Church and under their umbrella help to provide breakfasts for school children, food banks and clothing banks, and to meet transport needs and do whatever they can help with. In Moscow the Chaplaincy runs a day school for orphans, and also has a daily food distribution scheme which during the harsh winter months is crucial. In Vienna Anglicans from Christ Church have offered to help a Lutheran parish with their soup kitchen for people newly released from prison. 'The volunteers from Christ Church are from Austria, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, South Africa and Sri Lanka ... all members of the Anglican congregation, which shows what a mixed bunch we all are!' she commented.



*What a mixed bunch! Volunteers from Christ Church, Vienna, helping in a soup kitchen run by their Lutheran neighbours*

only small in number but attracted significant sums of money to the project from sister chaplaincies throughout Europe as well as providing personnel. 'Five years later the programme continues, but now it increasingly serves destitute Greeks,' Madeleine reported. '18 months ago they were giving out 1,500 food parcels (boxes with dried and tinned foods) per month. Today they are giving out 10,000 and the figure increases - and this is only within the Athens region.'

And so she continued, with more examples from Italy, France and Turkey. Madeleine was clear that diaconal ministry is not something to be left to 'specialists' or 'experts' appointed by the Churches. It is something in which every member has a role to play. 'We are not called to nestle safely in the bosom of the Church family but to be out there in the world,' she said. 'My biggest ministry has been to those outside the Church at times of grieving, for example. It is a special and wondrous ministry to come alongside those in need.'



## SESSION 4 : INVOLVING THE LAITY

*Dr Roy Long (right), a Pastor in the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, and Dr Robin Greenwood (left), an Anglican priest and a Research Fellow at Durham University in the UK, gave the joint presentation.*



I approached this session with a sense of eager anticipation, writes our Editor. For much of the past forty years I've been trying to motivate and involve lay people in all aspects of Church life. And Roy Long got us off to a good start. 'Jesus refers to his disciples as a "little flock";' he reminded us. He did not promise they would become a bigger flock, but that the Father's kingdom would be theirs. The task of Jesus' disciples, whether they be small or large in numbers, is to be witnesses to that kingdom, as it was demonstrated in the ministry and teaching of Jesus,

Roy then treated us to a brief Bible Study. The Acts of the Apostles may have been romanticised, he said, but it does give us a tantalising glimpse of the life of the earliest Christian community in Jerusalem. They suffered all manner of stresses and strains because, though we might call them saints, they were very certainly sinners. They may have been a worshipping community but, like all the congregations that followed, they had to deal with the tensions that

arise whenever human beings gather together. There were squabbles and petty jealousies, such as how best to serve the Greek-speaking widows. They needed to be solved *organisationally*. Others, like what to do about Gentile converts, needed a *theological* solution. But Jesus had left them no blueprint for Church organisation and leadership. They had to work things out with fear and trembling, and with the help of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles and the disciples of Jesus were all lay people, so far as we are aware. They soon recognised that if the Gospel was to be preached to every nation, as Jesus had commissioned them to do, some degree of organisation was needed. He had given the Apostles authority to preach throughout the whole world and make disciples; they were to baptise and teach these new disciples all that Jesus had commanded them; and they could do this in the sure certainty that he would be with them always, even to the end of time.

But they could not do it effectively if they were always caught up in disputes.

The appointment of the seven Deacons to deal with the complaints of unfair treatment of the Greeks within the congregation is an early example of an organisational solution. It freed the Apostles for their specific tasks.

'What we need to notice here, though,' Roy continued, 'is that although the ministry of the deacons is not a teaching ministry, they do share in the common task of all believers in witnessing to the Gospel.' The first person to be martyred for the new faith is Stephen, one of 'the Seven', and another, Philip, preaches in Samaria and baptises an Ethiopian.

Roy then introduced us to a 21st century Lutheran congregation he knows well in Nottingham in the UK. It is a small, faithful group, meeting regularly and demonstrating the same characteristics as that early congregation in Jerusalem. The people gather, they listen to the apostolic message, they break bread and share wine together, they pray together and, above all else, they demonstrate that they belong together by supporting each other in good times and in bad. In short, they may be small, but they are a real Christian family.

People often suggest that a tiny congregation like this should be disbanded, Roy told us. But he disagrees. 'The members of the congregation do not want it; they have an identity they want to preserve,' he said. 'And, very importantly,' he went on, 'we should note that there are two things which are *not* marks of the Church: size and organisation.'

The Christian Church is, in short, a *commonwealth of gifts*, Roy suggested,



*The main conference room. Part of the audience listening to Roy's presentation*

where the community celebrates the gifts which are given to the community as a whole. 'Ordinary people become quite extraordinary because, like the first Christians in Jerusalem, they are a unique people who have been claimed by Jesus as his own; they are his disciples; they share in his priesthood.

Roy ended with a number of questions. One was this: Has the Church's ministry become over-professionalised, so that the gifts that have been given to non-ordained ministers are frequently overlooked or undervalued?

This was something that Robin Greenwood was able to address in his presentation. 'The Church has degenerated into a clerical hierarchy,' he said. He feels it needs to rediscover its character as an organic body of integral parts.

Robin visits many different congregations and is able to observe the kind of things that congregations regard as 'normal'. All too often, except for a small trusted inner group, the lay people seem to be regarded primarily as recipients of liturgy and ministry.

But, he pointed out, quoting Romans 12 verse 5, St Paul insists that we are not just individually part of Christ's body; we animate one another; we are one of another. 'A sustained fault is visible when the ordained act as the experts, aristocracy and even solo maintainers of the Church,' he said.

The growth of various forms of "Messy Church" [see the article on page 15] is part of a movement in which the laity are engaging more proactively in the mission of the Church. 'Families are able to make tentative steps into Church,' Robin told us, 'when the laity of the local church give time to offering welcome, food, conversation, and styles of learning and worship that consciously respect each person, inviting them into an open community network.'

We need a fresh understanding of the dynamics at work in any community. 'Any member of the Body, at different times, will be the minister and the one ministered to, sometimes guest and sometimes host,' he said. 'This is an expression of a corporate episkope, holding the Christ light for one another in the night-time of our fear.'

Robin outlined ways in which he gets people talking. His approach combines learning, liturgy, scripture and hospitality, and it is proving effective in getting the laity involved, and reveals an 'amazing capacity in the laity for growing as active contemplatives, disciples and missionaries.' His tips for facilitating such conversations can be found in his paper on the website.

Robin also expressed concern that the selection, training and ordination vows currently operating in the Church of England hardly touch on this dimension of public ministry. Fortunately there

are leaders who, recognizing this as a time of dissolution for failing systems, are beginning to trust the capacity of dedicated and aware lay people to self-organize, reflect on what they are discovering and choose to be part of a process of change.

'They need far more support from the wider Church than is recognized currently,' he warned. 'I have in mind those "lay persons" who would say, "I am an ordinary person, a member of my church. I am not a priest or bishop, and have no official role, but through my daily work and perhaps being involved in the church through doing particular jobs and acts of pastoral service, I could be seen as having a leadership role.'

'A vocation in ordinary life can be at least as complicated and demanding as being a traditionally recognized Church Leader,' Robin concluded. 'The Church community is responsible for the formation of laity, as dispersed Church, to take their place in business, politics, law, civil service, non-governmental organizations, and so on, serving God there and so, in a very real sense, exercising religious leadership.'

It was a very stimulating session. Both Roy Long and Robin Greenwood raised a range of issues for discussion in the small group meetings that followed and, we hope, in our congregations and workplaces back home.

## INTRODUCING ANGLICANISM TO OUR HUNGARIAN FRIENDS

Thirty people who had joined the Pre-Conference Tour of Budapest attended a book launch on the Thursday evening. 'Centuries of Anglican Christianity', edited by Tibor Fabiny and Alexander Faludy, had been commissioned by the Anglican-Lutheran Society and published by The Luther Publishing House and the Centre for Hermeneutical Research in Budapest. It introduces Hungarian readers to the Anglican Church, its traditions and theological and spiritual landscape. There is a useful glossary of terms and an extensive bibliography. Dr Istvan Szabo, Bishop of the Reformed Church in Hungary, thanked the Society for its informative and thought-provoking gift. He hoped that it would help strengthen the already good relationship between the Hungarian Lutheran and Reformed Churches. 'If our Lutheran colleagues are able to read and experience Calvin's theology through Anglican eyes,' he said, smiling broadly, 'they might get a better understanding of us, Hungarian Calvinists!'

The Gabrieli Choir, a Budapest-based chamber choir directed by Richard Sólyom that specializes in sacred music drawn from the Anglican Cathedral repertoire, performed for us. Then, after refreshments, they sang Anglican Evensong in the magnificent Fasori Lutheran Church for a congregation of more than 100 people.



Alex signing a copy of the book

## SESSION 5 : ECUMENISM - MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

*Dr Christiane Groeben, Lay President of the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy, and the Rt Rev Jorge Piña Cabral, Anglican Bishop of the Church in Lusitania, shared something of what it is like to be a minority Church in their predominantly Roman Catholic countries.*



'The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy is a very little flock,' Christiane began. 'It is also a very young one. But this cannot serve as an excuse to forego any responsibility in public life and ecumenical contexts. The question we have to face is: To what extent are we involved in ecumenical dialogue? What are our chances of being heard? Can we improve them?'

There have been Lutherans in Italy since 1650 when the first German speaking congregation was founded in Venice, she told us. But it was not until 1948 that the ELCI was formed and it was accepted by the Lutheran World Federation in 1949. You can read the story in her presentation on the website.

However, the turning point for Lutherans in Italy came in 1995 when agreement was reached between the ELCI and the Italian State and the Church became eligible for 'otto-per-mille', the contribution made by Italian tax payers to their nominated charity. 'ELCI could now finance its daily needs, above all its pastors, and also invest in projects to form new congregations,' Christiane told us. But the fact remains that only 0.01% of the population is Lutheran!

Clearly ecumenism is important in this context. If the voice of the Protestant minority is to be heard in an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country, it needs to be a united voice. So Christiane gave examples of how the Churches are working together. 'In 1967,' she told us, 'the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy was formed with the ELCI as one of the founding members.' Amongst its other activities The Federation has a press agency NEV (Notizie evangeliche), a Sunday Service on the radio ("Culto Evangelico") and a Television programme, "Protestantesimo".

'On the air since 1967, the Sunday Service has been the most followed religious programme on State Radio with an average of 1,300,000 listeners,' she was proud to inform us.

The ELCI works with the Waldensians. 'Together we share responsibility in two significant institutions, namely the Claudiana publishing house in Turin and the Melanchthon Study Centre in Rome,' she said. Claudiana publishes Protestant writings in Italian, and the Melanchthon Centre enables German students to study theology in the Waldensian Faculty and Catholic universities.

Increasingly, Roman Catholic churches are offering hospitality to Protestant congregations, and the Lutherans in Turin and Verona-Gardone meet in a Catholic church. The traditional barriers are slowly coming down. 'Today mixed-marriage couples are free to decide in which tradition to raise their children; the non-Catholic partner has only to confirm that he or she is aware of the obligations the Catholic partner has towards his or her Church,' we were told.

But one difficulty the ELCI faces is that it is all too often regarded as a "German outpost" in Italy. For example, the Church still relies on the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) for its pastors. 'We have to overcome this kind of prejudice by getting more involved in Italian social and Church-State related issues,' Christiane said. 'But we are few people and have to decide on our priorities very carefully.'

'Building up Christian Unity starts where two people share parts of their daily life,' she concluded, 'be it work,

family, grief, music, worries, joys, questions, Sunday service. Very often we think we know what the other person is thinking, but do they really think what we are thinking they think? Differences have to be recognized before they can be accepted – not destroyed.'

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'In the Synod that established the Lusitanian Church on March 8th, 1880, there were only six people present,' Bishop Jorge began. 'I am thrilled by their courage! Their aim was to spread throughout our nation a doctrine that is catholic and apostolic, in a Portuguese church, not in a Roman one.'

The Church's motto is, "Evangelical Truth and Apostolic Order", he told us, 'and it always sought to combine catholic faith with the evangelical spirit.' It has a history of forging links with other denominations, and is a full member of the Anglican Communion, the World Council of Churches and the Porvoo Community.

'The Lusitanian Church is often presented by the Portuguese media as a counterpoint to the Roman Catholic Church,' Jorge said. So it was expected to express its views on controversial church issues such as priests getting married, the ordination of women, the participation of the laity in Church life, and the remarriage of divorcees. Similarly, as an expression of Anglicanism in Portugal, it is sometimes asked to be the spokesman for contemporary developments in the Church of England and in Anglicanism in general in areas such as human sexuality and the ordination of women to the episcopate.

The Roman Catholic Church in Portugal does not see ecumenism as being integral to the Church's mission, we were told. It does not have an Episcopal Commission for Ecumenism, as is the case in other countries. Furthermore, the other denominations are very small so most Catholics do not have meaningful contact with them. 'We notice, therefore, that both the majority Church and also the minority Churches lack a conscious understanding of the sense of the ecumenical movement and of the importance of unity for the Church's Mission in today's world,' Jorge told us.

'I am of the opinion that in Portugal ecumenism with the Roman Catholic Church takes on greater significance at the local level than even at the national level,' Jorge reflected.

But things are slowly changing. Jorge traced a series of meetings and consultations that have taken place between Roman Catholic and other Church leaders, and these have had positive

outcomes, including the translation into Portuguese of significant ecumenical documents including the Ecumenical Letter to Europe and prayer material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, an annual celebration of prayer for unity involving leaders from the various Churches, a greater degree of joint participation by Churches in cultural initiatives, and holding meetings on Ecumenical topics.

Together with the Portuguese Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church of Portugal, the Lusitanian Church founded the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches in 1971.

This is the only body that has formal relationships with the Roman Catholic Church. But the history of religious intolerance in Portugal means that evangelicals are suspicious about the goals of the ecumenical movement, often accusing it of being too liberal and of weakening the evangelistic zeal that Churches should preserve. Evangelicals are also wary of the Catholic

Church's ecumenical involvement. They fear a "take-over".

One positive move has been the mutual recognition of Baptism practised by the Lusitanian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic Churches and the Orthodox Church of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. There was a public ceremony in the Lusitanian Church Cathedral last January when a document was signed. 'This is an expression of unity between the Churches and baptized Christians, and this event could serve to enhance the sense of the joint Mission to which the Churches are called,' commented Jorge.

'It seems to me,' Jorge concluded, 'that in a time when Churches throughout Europe increasingly become minorities in society as a whole, the centuries-old minority church experience becomes rich in lessons and experiences. I am certain that the way they have assumed the cross of Christ will more and more become a reference and an example for others.'

## SESSION 6 : LUTHERAN SPIRITUALITY IN CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE

*The Rev Anne Burghardt is Secretary for Ecumenical Relations at the Lutheran World Federation. Her presentation introduced the conference to some of the factors that have shaped the spiritual lives of the people living in Hungary and some other Central and Eastern European countries.*

Anne's presentation focused on some of the influences that shaped the spirituality of people in 14 Lutheran Churches in 12 countries, from Czech Republic in the west to Russia in the east, as well as from Estonia in the north to Croatia in the south: a large area in which there are around 1.5 million Lutherans. With the exception of Estonia and Latvia, most of the Lutheran churches of the region are minority churches, meaning that they live and act in predominantly Catholic or Orthodox countries.

The Lutheran Reformation quickly extended to Eastern Europe in the sixteenth century. There were many Germans living and working there. It was partly due to the Lutheran command to preach the Gospel to everybody in their own mother tongue that led the Slovenes, Croats, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians to develop their

own written languages. 'In some Eastern European countries either Martin Luther's Small Catechism, or Catechisms influenced by him, were the first books to be printed in local languages,' Anne told us.

However, the Counter-Reformation in the seventeenth century in areas ruled by the Habsburgs led to a decline in Lutheran congregations. Anne cited the case of Hungary. Largely Protestant in the sixteenth century it was largely re-Catholicized and not until 1781 were Lutherans and Reformed Christians once again granted the right to form congregations. 'Even then, they did not have equal rights with Roman Catholics. This was only achieved in 1861,' she said.

This experience led to a certain anti-Roman Catholic sentiment among many Lutherans in those areas which



has a lasting effect to this day. 'They maintain a suspicion towards liturgical reforms which are considered too "high-church" and thus "Catholic" by

some people,' we were told. 'A kind of "grass-roots ecumenism" frequently developed between Lutherans and the Reformed which might account for the predominantly "low church" approach among the Lutherans in these regions.'

Anne then turned our attention to two other movements that profoundly affected Lutheran spirituality – Pietism and the Herrnhut Movement of Count Zinzendorff, both of which had a strong social impact in the 18th and 19th centuries. Zinzendorff stressed not so much the necessity of penitence but rather the personal love of Jesus as being the supreme teaching of the Scripture. It was something that appealed to the peasant classes. 'The movement was received very positively among ethnic Estonians and Latvians,' Anne told us, 'but caused fear of turmoil and changes in the established social order among the gentry and official Lutheran church representatives who were mostly of German origin.' This personal pietism was very influential during the communist era. 'Families that had been deeply rooted in the pietistic/Herrnhut traditions were more likely to stay in the church,' she said. But, Anne commented, Pietism

remains controversial, being seen by some as a distortion of the objectivism which is essential to the concept of salvation as it is spelled out in the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church.

After the First World War, many East European nations became independent. 'It became important for these newborn or re-born nations to revise their own history and the Church's role in it,' Anne explained. For many this led to a search for ways of being Lutheran but in their own "national way", in other words, looking for "non-German ways" of expressing their identity and spirituality. 'For some churches this meant getting closer to Swedish and Anglican churches instead of their previous German connections.'

But then came the devastating period following the Second World War. 'Churches in Central Eastern Europe had to face more or less explicitly hostile states that followed Marxist ideology,' Anne explained, 'and after a phase of physical destruction and forcing people into exile the communist states started a propaganda war against the Churches.' Lutheran

Churches bore the brunt of this, being associated with Germany. The Communist era could be designated as a period of "conservation". There was a suspicion of all ideologies which resulted in new theological movements such as liberation theology and feminist theology rarely being taken up. People began to look back to "the good old days" and many congregations retreated into a kind of "ghetto" mentality. This is still evident today. 'Whereas nowadays many people in Central Eastern European region would expect Church to take a stronger position in terms of (economic) justice in their societies,' Anne said, 'some churches still seem to feel uncomfortable about getting out into the open.'

One result of all this is that church life in Central Eastern Europe seems often to be somewhat inward-looking. Christian commitment can too easily be reduced to life within the church community. Then, worship and liturgy, and how it is done, gains special importance in the life of the churches and worship becomes for many church members the centre of their church life and the place from which they derive and focus their spiritual energy.

## FINAL SESSION : A PANEL DISCUSSION

*Bishop Tamás Fabiny, Archdeacon Christine Allsopp and the Rev Anne Burghardt formed the Panel, and the Rev Alex Faludy chaired this session which dealt with some questions raised by the small groups*

What IS a minority Church? Bishop Fabiny defined it as an historical fact. In some areas the Counter-Reformation had left many Reformed Churches small. Anne Burghardt reminded us that in Europe ANY Church can be a minority. 'In Estonia Christians form less than 30% of the total population,' she told us. Praxedis Bouwman said that, while she understands their use in a European setting, the terms 'minority and majority Churches' only exist in Europe.

Asked about her experience of being in the 'majority' Church of England, Christine Allsopp said that in many parishes, where the population is mainly Muslim, Anglicans can feel very small. One danger for majority Churches, she went on, is that they tend to have more clergy than others, so when there are ecumenical gatherings they 'speak with one voice' while other churches have just an individual spokesperson. The best things happen when every tradition recognises the strengths and gifts of the others and they work together.

Anne Burghardt referred back to what Praxedis Bouwman had said about 'Declarations and Statements safeguarding minorities but not defining responsibilities'. Minority groups had to work out what their contribution might be. Bishop Fabiny reminded us that context is everything. 'A Lutheran in a Lutheran family is part of a majority,' he said. 'But when you go out you be-



*Bishop Tamás Fabiny, Christine Allsopp, Alex Faludy (chair) & Anne Burghardt*

*Continued from previous page*

come a minority!' The important thing is where you find your roots. Minorities need to be brave. 'Church and society need a prophetic voice!'

The issue of involving the laity was problematic in many Churches. In Eastern Europe, under Communism, churches were isolated. Lay people were fearful that they might lose jobs or educational opportunities for their children. So they 'laid low' and expected everything of their clergy.

To much laughter, Christine Allsopp told of the rejoicing among a congregation when their Vicar left and at last they discovered how to use the timer on the heating system!

Jo Jan Vandenheede asked about the tension between the desire for a Church to express 'nationalism' and its belonging to a 'confessional heritage'. Randar Tasmuth told of a small group

of theologians in Estonia who speak 'not of national features of Church but national features of *theology*'. Anne Burghardt felt that so-called 'nationalism' was more to do with finding an authentic way for people to express confessional beliefs. Bishop Fabiny warned that problems arise if national ties become stronger than Christian ties.

Istvan Zalatnay asked, 'If we were offered the chance to be a majority, would we grasp it or not?' After all, much of the Bible was written from a minority perspective.

Most seemed agreed that 'confessing Christianity' was more important than 'Christianity as a cultural and moral environment'. Bishop Fabiny quipped that a former Hungarian Prime Minister had been heard to say, 'In Europe, even the Atheists are Christian!' He was referring to the fact that Christianity has touched and shaped almost every aspect of life.

Christine Allsopp applauded Roy Long who, in his presentation, had referred to the "marks of the Church". 'Growing the Church in depth as well as numbers is what we should be naturally doing,' she said.

Roy responded by quoting Luther: "I believe that I cannot in my own strength come to the Gospel". 'The real question,' he said, 'concerns the responsibility of the minority to the majority that is not Christian. We don't look to be big, but to share the Good News!'

The Panel Discussion was over all too quickly. The last word went to Fr Thomas Saville CR who congratulated Christiane Groeben and Bishop Jorge Pina Cabral on their presentations on ecumenism. 'Our theme has been "Fear not, little flock", he said. 'You have clearly shown that minority Churches are NOT afraid, and I speak as one from a majority Church [the Church of England] that IS afraid!'

## FRIENDSHIP FLOURISHES BETWEEN ALS MEMBERS

*Erich Rust, the Society's Treasurer, tells of two lovely days in the North of England when old and new friends met*

During the planning of a visit by Bärbel and Christoph Planck from Ulm in Germany to our home in Bushey, just north of London, UK (our friendship originated from the times both couples had spent in Namibia working in the Lutheran Church there) we thought of our mutual friendship with Gesine and Rupert Hoare, and wondered how we might include them in the Planck's visit to England.

The Plancks and the Hoares have been friends since the time, many years ago, when Gesine and Bärbel were training in Hamburg. Ever since they have maintained their contact through the different exchange programmes between the Church of England and the Protestant Church in Württemberg, the Churches in which Rupert and Christoph have been pastors.

My wife, Sigrun, and I had become friends with Gesine and Rupert through working together in the ALS, something to which we had been introduced through Gesine's and Bärbel's friendship.



*Sigrun Rust, Gesine & Rupert Hoare, Bärbel and Christoph Planck. Photo: Erich!*

So in the end we three couples spent two wonderful days together in Oldham this September, renewing our friendships and getting to know that town, its history and beautiful surroundings, whilst enjoying the wonderful hospitality of Gesine and Rupert.

[If you have a story to tell about ecumenical friendships, meetings or exchanges, the Editor would love to hear from you.]

## THE PEACE LIGHT FROM BETHLEHEM 2014

*Society member, Kirsten Scott, invites you to share in this Advent and Christmas peace initiative*

The "Peace Light from Bethlehem" campaign was started in 1986 by the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation. It was part of a charitable relief mission, "Light into Darkness", to help children in need. Since then, every Advent, an Austrian "peace child" has been chosen to travel to Bethlehem and light a lantern in the Grotto of the Nativity. This live flame is then flown to Austria in a protective container. On the third Saturday of Advent the flame is distributed at an international ecumenical service in Vienna to delegates from around Europe. The aim is to pass on the Light with its message of peace to as many people and institutions as possible, and encourage everyone to actively promote peace in their communities. During the Service of Distribution the "Peace Light Hymn" is sung to the famous tune of "Edelweiss" from *The Sound of Music*.

Austrian Scouts were invited to use their international contacts to act as couriers. To begin with, only continental European and Middle Eastern Scout & Guide Associations were involved. Then, in 1996, the naked flame crossed the Channel to Britain for the first time. Today, about 500 Scouts and Guides from all over Europe receive the flame in Vienna each year with the words, "We gladly receive the light as a sign of our willingness to be channels of peace through our words and actions," and they take it back to their own countries.

In November 2000, when it looked as if the Light would not be able to leave war-torn Bethlehem, faith won through. A young Palestinian Scout collected the Light and carried it to the border. There, it was received by twin Israeli Scouts who were flown from Tel Aviv to Linz, Austria, where the Austrian peace child was waiting. Never before had the words 'Shalom' and 'Salaam Alekum' meant so much, coming from each side of a war zone. Then in 2001, after the attacks on the World Trade Centre, English Scouts conveyed the flame to their American brothers and sisters who took it to Ground Zero.

Over the years the Peace Light from Bethlehem has been received by individuals, places of worship, schools, hospitals, care homes, prisons, civic institutions, and places of cultural,



historical or political significance. It has been presented to the European Parliament and many European Leaders, American and Russian Presidents, two Popes, King Hussein of Jordan, and to UN troops serving in theatres of war. Several cathedrals in England now make the passing of the flame an integral part of their Christmas services. Every year it spreads its message of Peace further.

It is appropriate that Scouts and Guides should be its bearers. In his last message to Leaders in the Scouting Movement during the dark days of World War II, shortly before his death, Robert Baden-Powell said: "You Scouters and Guiders are not only doing a great work for your neighbours' children but are also helping in practical fashion to bring to pass God's Kingdom of Peace and Goodwill upon Earth. So, from my heart, I wish you God-speed in your effort." He was the son of an Anglican clergyman, Baden Powell, and peace and international friendship have always been two of the cornerstones of the movement.

My Scout Group on the South Coast of England has been acting as couriers of the light since 2009. They have carried it through thigh-high icy flood-waters over many miles.



They have held a 24-hour vigil guarding the flame in gale-force winds, managed to transport it to Wales, and braved temperatures below freezing to deliver the flame at our local Carol Service. We have even kept it going from mid-December until Candlemas. From humble beginnings with a single flame passed from one Scout to another it has grown, so now all Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in our town use the flame to light Altar candles, Advent wreaths or Sanctuary lights.

The Peace Light from Bethlehem is an ideal way to capture the spirit of Christmas, and involve young people in the church's youth work. The ALS with its international network seems an ideal vehicle to take up the idea.

For more information and for information on how to get involved, please visit <http://www.peacelight.org.uk/>, or <http://www.friedenslicht.de/friedenslicht>, or any of your national scouting websites, or simply send me a message at [frankandkirsten@waitrose.com](mailto:frankandkirsten@waitrose.com)



## NEW DIOCESAN BISHOP FOR EUROPEAN ANGLICANS

The new Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe is the Rt Rev Dr Robert Innes. Until his consecration on 20th July 2014, he was Senior Chaplain and Chancellor of the Pro-Cathedral of Holy Trinity, Brussels, Belgium. He is 54 years old and is married to Helen. They have three daughters and a son.

Dr Innes is an engineering graduate of Cambridge University. He took up his former post in Brussels in 2005, and was additionally appointed a Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen in 2012. He will continue to be based in Brussels and will work closely with the Diocesan Office in London.

It seemed timely that news of his appointment came on the twentieth anniversary of the opening of Eurostar! The Bishop says, 'It links Britain and mainland Europe in a very physical way. My job as a bishop will be to build links and bridges – between England and the continent and between the different parts of our huge European diocese.' Bishop Innes says that ecumenical relationships will figure highly on his agenda, and we are delighted that he has become a member of the Anglican-Lutheran Society.

## LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CHILE ORDAINS FIRST WOMAN PASTOR

The Lutheran Church in Chile (ILCH) has ordained the Rev Hanna Schramm as its first woman pastor in an historic move that means all Lutheran World Federation (LWF) churches in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region now embrace women ministers. 'The ordination of a female pastor in the ILCH is of relevance for the entire communion of Churches in the LWF,' said the Rev Patricia Cuyatti, Department for Mission and Development area secretary for LAC. 'It invites us to engage women from different backgrounds to explore ministry from their life experiences and contribute in witnessing the relevance of living liberated by God's grace to serve.'

Pastor Schramm was born in Dresden, Germany, and studied theology in Leipzig before completing a two-year vicariate in Chile. She was ordained last month in the Church of the Redeemer in Santiago de Chile by Bishop Siegfried Sanders of the ILCH. 'I want to express gratitude for the journey that made possible the ordination of the first female pastor in our church,' said Bishop Sanders. 'We thank Hanna Schramm for her courage, sensitivity and courtesy during her vicariate, which made people appreciate her service. We realised that many people

who had doubts and reservations regarding the service of a female pastor have been changed by Hanna's ministry. For the ILCH, this means a change of mind, openness, and a more inclusive theology. The ILCH has moved to another time, to the reality of today.'

The LWF's Gender Justice Policy, approved by the Council in 2013, underlines the global communion of Churches' commitment to the empowerment of women and gender

equality both within the LWF and wider society.

Pastor Schramm hopes that her ordination will encourage women in Chile to study theology and join the ministry. 'The fact that a woman has come along and has been ordained and accepted as a minister is certainly a great contribution towards encouraging more young women to be interested in this calling. They can see that this possibility is now open to them as well,' she said.



Hannah Schramm about to receive her stole at her ordination

Photo Leonardo Pérez

## 'MESSY CHURCH' IN DENMARK

*Danish churches follow the English in experimenting with 'Church Playgrounds'*



'Messy Church' began ten years ago in Cowplain, a village not far from Portsmouth in the south of England. Members of the congregation there were frustrated. They had a beautiful church building, but were hardly reaching any children with God's story. Within the congregation there were a number of creative people, so they decided to try to do something that would appeal to all ages. They were keen that people should not see Christianity as something you grow out of when you're 11 years old!

One of them was Lucy Moore. She was working for the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) at the time. They had all kinds of practical resources she could draw on, and today 'Messy Church' has become a core ministry of BRF. It has spread like wildfire, across denominations and across the world. In England there is now a network of 2,000 'Messy Churches'. Last Easter in Durham, 'Messy Cathedral' at-



tracted some 450 children for a Messy Family Fun Week, and St Albans Cathedral provided a similar experience at Pentecost. Today 'Messy Churches' can be found in Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Eire, Germany, Grenada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Falklands and the USA.

And 'Messy Church' has also hit Denmark, where a number of churches are trying it out. In the picture above you can see a mini-golf course, set up right in front of the altar in St

Clement's Church, Randers, and children are fishing for cardboard fish - in the font! Pasta is being served in the adjoining church hall. There is a mini-bowling alley between the pews, and at the back of the church youngsters are creating 'tongues of fire' ready for the 10-minute drama of Pentecost that will end the two hours of 'Messy Church'.

'Messy Church' has four characteristics. First, people can come and go as they wish. They don't have to arrive at the beginning or stay to the end if they don't want to. Second, there are play activities, usually focused in some way around a theme, that keep everyone, adults and children, involved. Third, some form of shared meal is provided. Fourth, there is always worship, which can either be formal or informal.

At St Clement's they have translated 'Messy Church' into a phrase that means 'Church Playground'. At their first 'Church Playground', aimed at parents and small children, 60 people attended. Ten leaders, all wearing identikit yellow safety vests and 'Church Playground' badges, supervised the activities which included a treasure hunt round the church, the mini-golf, paper plane-making, mini-bowling, sound Bingo round the organ and piano, making 'tongues of fire' from a small stick and some orange and yellow ribbons, icing cupcakes to celebrate Pentecost and hand-painting to make the 'tongues of fire' at Pentecost. Adults and children bustled their way from one activity to another, and then back again for another try.

When it was all over, leader Helle Strange said, 'It was an unqualified success. 60 people attending made a good start, and most of them stayed for the whole two hours. We also met people from the parish whom we hadn't seen before, and there were others who came from outside the parish who thought it was a great idea. Our minor worry about playing mini-golf in front of the altar was brushed aside by one of our pastors. "This too is about preaching the word," she said, and that about sums it up. You should have heard the children trying out the organ with our organist, and seen how they re-enacted the Whitsun story with their 'tongues of fire', and a new children's hymn written specially for the occasion called "Let's Dance Whitsun In!"'

You can find out more about 'Messy Church' in your part of the world at [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk), and a book, 'Messy Church Theology: Exploring the Significance of Messy Church for the Wider Church', edited by George Lings and published by BRF, October 2013, brings together essays and case studies from a wide range of contributors examining the growth of 'Messy Church' and discussing questions of sustainability, discipleship, all-age church, sacramental, interdenominational, ecumenical and international possibilities, and considers what the future of 'Messy Church' might be.

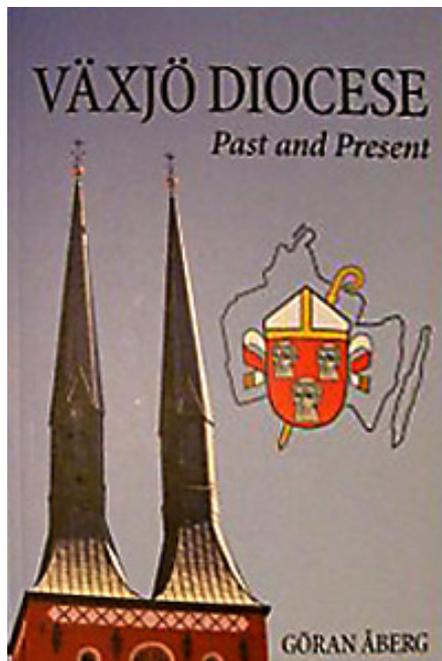
## VAXJO DIOCESE PAST AND PRESENT

*This history of a Swedish Lutheran diocese by Goran Aberg has been translated into English by Michael Nunn and is reviewed by Dr John Arnold (Vaxjo Stiftshistoriska Sallskap 2013 206pp np ISBN 978-91-86144-29-6)*

Since the signing of the Porvoo Agreement in 1996 the British Anglican Churches have been in communion with the Scandinavian, Nordic and Baltic Churches. Ecclesiastical diplomats and theologians have done their job. They have set up the easel and stretched the canvas; but only the people of God at local level can paint the picture and turn theory into reality through personal friendship and fellowship. We need to get to know one another better. One of the best ways of doing this is by twinings between parishes and dioceses. Oxford in England and Vaxjo in Sweden have been in the forefront at diocesan level since 2003; and the appearance of this work of Swedish diocesan history in English is both the fruit of that relationship and a means of strengthening it.

Originally published in Swedish in 2007 it has been fluently translated by Michael Nunn, who also gives useful explanations of untranslatable words and phrases. It shows some signs of its origins as a text book for examinations for the priesthood and the diaconate, ordinands in the Church of Sweden being expected to know the history of their diocese. This is one of many points where Anglican readers may pause and ask if we have something to learn, in this case from the seriousness and thoroughness of Lutheran preparation, not only for confirmation but also for ordination.

Much of the detailed local information with its lists of persons and places may be skipped with a good conscience; but the main thread of history, from the mission of the English monk Sigfrid



in the eleventh century to the present day, is full of interest and of surprising similarities and some dissimilarities with our own island story. For example, the Reformation was carried out under a strong centralising monarchy with considerable elements of continuity, not least in the preservation of diocesan and parochial structures and the historic ministry. Sweden, however, was spared the attentions of iconoclasts; and it is worth visiting, if only to see what English churches looked like in the Middle Ages. The diocese owes its present shape to amalgamation with the neighbouring diocese of Kalmar in 1915, as a result of the rationalisation of structures at national level and the knock-on effect of the creation of the diocese of Lulea in the north, leaving locals feeling bruised. And, at a time when the substitutionary theory of the

atonement was regularly taught in the church, evangelical and revivalist movements reacted against that, not the other way round.

A constant strand in the story is the way in which the church reacted to what we would call non-conformity, much of which took the form of movements, rather than of separate Churches. There are heartening tales of rapprochement at local level now within the wider ecumenical context. Bishops Tottie of Kalmar and Brillioth of Vaxjo (the historian of the Oxford Movement) played prominent parts in the development of friendly relations with Anglicans. The author is generous in his appraisal of what the Church in Sweden has learned from the Church of England, especially in the renewal of worship. We, in turn, have much to learn from the Church of Sweden, not least about how to re-negotiate the relationship of a national church with the state and how to incorporate women in a renewed episcopate.

Ecumenical and liturgical revival has been accompanied by a renewed relationship with the creative arts, especially hymnody. One of the most popular hymns at international gatherings comes from Vaxjo: *Many are the light-beams*, with its eminently singable tune, based like so many of the new Scandinavian hymns on folk rather than pop music. There would be no better way of celebrating the good news of healthy inter-church relationships, such as the exemplary one between Oxford and Vaxjo, than by including it in our hymnals and singing it together to the praise of God.

## WEAVING LITURGY AND MISSION TOGETHER

More than 200 Lutherans and Anglicans in Canada held a National Worship Conference in Edmonton last July. The theme was 'Weaving Strands: Liturgy for Living', and Anglican Archbishop Fred Hiltz said he enjoyed discussions about the role of visual signs, symbols and touch in liturgy. 'We tend to be very wordy as Anglicans and Lutherans in our liturgy ... there's a real place for sign and symbol and allow-

ing them to speak to the people.' The opening Eucharist provided an example. A liturgical dancer took long ribbons of cloth to people in the congregation. As the offertory hymn was being sung, she literally wove the three of them into one chord, and when she finished she picked it up and laid it across the front of the altar. 'It was absolutely amazing!' exclaimed the Archbishop.

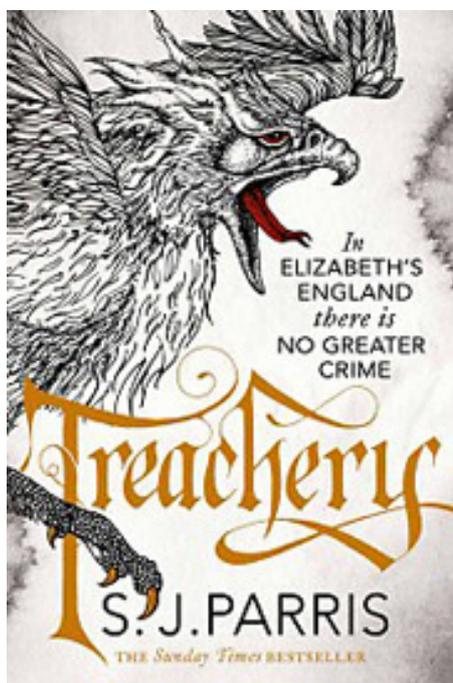
## WATCH OUT C.J. SANSOM - MORE MURDER MYSTERIES IN TUDOR TIMES!

*Jo Jan Vandenheede recommends two more sets of exciting and well researched novels.*



Heretic – Philosopher – Spy! That is how the main character of a compelling and murderous series of Tudor mystery novels is described. His name is Giordano Bruno, and he once was a Dominican monk in Italy, but now is one of Francis Walsingham's top informants and sleuths.

From the very first scene in which we encounter him – on the privy of the monastery, secretly reading Erasmus – this character, based on a real 16th century scholar, will draw you in. Bruno is alive; he is a lively character, a real-life personality with all his ups and down, flaws and attractions, not to mention contradictions.



S.J.Parris (notice the initials sales pitch there!) has created a man that you will want to meet, a man of science and philosophy, but not some bookish nerd unaware of life and all of life's trappings – including the ladies. Bruno is loyal, smart and optimistic, someone you would trust your life to. But often he also means trouble: for example, he must be the only character in literature to be excommunicated both by the Catholics and the Calvinists (incidentally, the real Bruno was also repudiated by the Lutherans!).

Parris's novels, *Heresy*, *Prophecy*, *Sacrilege* and *Treachery*, wonderfully describe Elizabethan England, and believably set the scenes for murder, political strife and religious conspiracy; these really are stories begging to be translated onto the screen (big or small). They are published by HarperCollins.

A second series worth checking out, are those of Rory Clements' murder plots, *Martyr*, *Revenger*, *Prince*, *Traitor*, *The Heretics*, *The Queen's Man*, all set around John Shakespeare (yes, brother of Will), a single father, an all-round nice guy and a spy for Robert Cecil. They are published by Hodder & Stoughton.

As I read the exploits of John Shakespeare I get the feeling that this is what it might have been like if C.J.Sansom's character, the sidekick Jack, had been in charge. It's all less poetic, less descriptive, but also with less courtroom drama than the Shardlake novels.

## MORE ABOUT SCANDINAVIAN THEOLOGICAL INTERACTION

*Society member Dr John Toy responds to an article in the last issue of The Window*

It was good to have Professor Anders Bäckström's article on the Anglo-Scandinavian Pastoral Conferences. May I offer a note on what went before the 1970s?

In the 1930s the Anglo-Scandinavian Theological Conferences were started, every two years, alternately in Scandinavia and England. There were about eight theologians from each side of the North Sea, meeting informally (no minutes or reports), one subject each time.

Gustaf Aulen was one of the founding fathers, and Leslie Hunter and then Geoffrey Lampe the main regulars on the English side. After a pause during the Second World War they started again in the late 1940s and continued all

through the 50s and 60s and ran simultaneously with the Pastoral Conferences for a time.

Then, when I was Chaplain of Ely Theological College, I ran a series of three visits to Scandinavia in 1962-4 and arranged part of the 1965 one when I was Chaplain of Gothenburg. Lars Österlin was my main collaborator in arranging these visits. Over the four years we visited Århus, Copenhagen, Lund, Stockholm, Sigtuna, Uppsala and Oslo, and we always met leading church people in each place. The students were drawn from a wide variety of colleges, which included many with rather fixed ideas of the Anglican scene. It was marvellous to see their reactions to churches which did not fit these ideas at all!



## LINK BLOSSOMS BETWEEN HALIFAX, UK, AND AACHEN, GERMANY

Canon Hilary Barber, Vicar of Halifax Minster, tells the story.

It was at the end of World War Two that the city of Aachen lay in ruins. Most of its buildings had either been destroyed or severely damaged, including the Cathedral Church (above), where Kings and Queens of Germany had had their coronations in the seat of Charlemagne for over a thousand years. It was one of the first cities to be occupied by American and British forces at the end of the war, geographically on the boarder of both Belgium and the Netherlands. The story of Aachen echoes that of Coventry and Dresden, with humanitarian aid overcoming the feelings of anger and bitterness, and the hand of friendship which has helped Europe hold together for over 60 years.

Many children in Aachen had been left homeless and orphaned, schools and homes had been destroyed and the ability to rebuild a broken nation lay in tatters. The British Government was keen to help communities rebuild their lives, and to offer support in creating new democratic organisations, and opportunities for Germans to visit England and *vice versa* were made possible. In 1949 a group from Aachen came to visit Halifax to see how the local authority was organised and how they could rebuild their schools and Education department. For some 65 years Halifax and Aachen have shared their experiences of living in God's world, celebrating their goals and achievements, and sharing times of challenge and hardship.

In recent years the Christian community has seen a renewed sense of friendship, inspired by the rededication of the ancient Halifax Parish Church as Halifax Minster in 2009. The Meissen

Agreement encourages ongoing conversations between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church of Germany, and an exchange between the congregation from Aachen and Halifax Minster has been ongoing ever since.

Each year the German Government awards the Charlemagne Prize (*Internationaler Karlspreis zu Aachen*) to a politician who has contributed to the stability of Europe. The award is made each year on Ascension Day, beginning with High Mass in the Roman Catholic Cathedral, followed by a procession to the *Rathause*, Charlemagne's Palace, with past recipients in attendance. I had the joy of accompanying the Mayor of Caldedale to Aachen as one of a delegation representing both Church and State in 2010, when Donald Tusk, the Prime Minister of Poland, received the award the week after his President and many others had been killed in an aeroplane accident. I went again in 2013 when the President of Lithuania, Dalia Gybauskaitė, was the worthy recipient, having brought democracy to her nation and membership of the European Union.

In 2011 The Church of the Rhineland brought a Pastoral Convention of 20 Clergy to visit England. The programme included exploring the works of Martin Bucer in Cambridge, Church and State in London, Dietrich Bonhoeffer at the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and a celebration of the Meissen Agreement in Halifax Minster.

Then, in 2012

I was invited to visit the Diocese of Aachen and, as well as a preaching programme, attended the ordination of a new Pastor deep in the Eifel National Park. Here I read not only the Gospel in English but was invited by the Bishop to lay hands on the newly ordained minister. Whilst in the Aachen Diocese I had the opportunity to visit *Vogelsang* where, between 1934 and 1941 the élite of the Nazi Party, up to a thousand men at a time, were indoctrinated into the culture of the Third Reich. Today it stands as a place of education and reconciliation. Before I left, I was joined by Lutheran colleagues in praying the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, which years before, wearing my Cross of Nails, I had prayed in the ruins of that mediaeval Church destroyed by the German Air Force on the night of 14 November 1940 in the Moonlight Sonata bombing raid.

Just recently, in 2014, Choristers from Halifax Minster made the pilgrimage to the Aachen region. The programme included the Cathedrals of Aachen and Cologne, the Churches of St Nicholas in Aachen, the Parish Church of Solberg, and the Anglican Church in Cologne. Some of our people were visiting Germany for the first time, and relationships between the Church of England and the Lutheran Church in the Rhineland blossomed. The Mayor of Aachen hosted a civic reception and Church and Civic relationships were

*(Continued at bottom of next page)*



## ANGLICAN & LUTHERAN WOMEN EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Sally Barnes describes how, last June, a group of Lutheran and Anglican women, ordained and lay, met together over lunch in London. (A full account of the meeting is available from [Sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com](mailto:Sally.barnes3@btopenworld.com))

This was an opportunity to share all kinds of experiences. First, Bishop Jana Jeruma-Grinberga took us through the Lutheran World Federation's Gender Justice Policy.

It was adopted in 2013 and is described as 'a milestone on the road to justice for all'. Ten principles are set out to encourage men and women to promote, uphold and apply gender justice at every level of Church and secular life. Firmly based on scripture, it shows how God created men and women equal, and how Jesus welcomed everyone to the table, women and men, rich and poor. Baptism makes us a community of equals, and at the Eucharist all are called, regardless of gender, to serve at the one, inclusive table. The leadership of the Churches should embody these insights. You can download the Policy document, which includes practical suggestions as to how congregations can work things out, by Googling 'LWF Gender Justice Policy'. The Anglican women found this all very interesting.



(Continued from previous page)

renewed. As the visit took place there was civil unrest in the Ukraine. As we visited the tri-border of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, and recalled the fear in the UK surrounding immigration and control of borders, I gave thanks to God for the open borders of the Protestant church across Europe and for the unity we share in Christ.

Plans are advanced for both a Church

and Civic delegation from Germany to attend Remembrance Weekend in Halifax in this anniversary year of the First World War. The Mayor, representatives of the Lutheran Diocesan Synod, the Member of Parliament for Aachen, and representatives of the German Armed Forces from the Garrisons around Aachen, supported by the German Embassy in England, are all going to meet in Halifax as we take the next step on the journey of peace and hope in a vulnerable world, and at



Next, Dr Margot Kässmann (former Bishop of Hanover, former Presiding Bishop of German Protestant Churches, pictured here) talked of the progress of ordained women in Germany, including her own experience of becoming a Bishop. We were interested to hear that 7% of LWF Churches do **not** ordain women, and that one-third of the people ordained in Germany are women, but two-thirds of those women are just part-time. It was interesting, but sad, to be told that when Dr Margot herself was voted Bishop of Hanover, and later Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Church in German, the Russian Orthodox Church cut its link with the Church in Germany.

The Rev Anne Stevens, vice-chair of WATCH (Women and the Church), explained to our Lutheran colleagues the significance of the Church of England's General Synod's forthcoming debate on women bishops [happily approved in July], and the Rev Kat Campion-Spall spoke about the Transformation Group, which includes former Archbishop Rowan Williams and a number of women theologians, that has been formed to look into the future of the Church with women playing a full role. I took the opportunity to describe the work of the ALS, its conferences and informal links that make it such an effective way of keeping people from both our traditions in touch.

There were round-the-table-discussions so that people could compare experiences of being lay and ordained women in our two Churches. It was a very productive meeting and we hope we might do something similar another time.

a time when there are voices who would like to take England out of Europe altogether. It will be a first for Halifax, to have Colour Parties from both English and German Armed Forces together, and on such a poignant day in the life of the nation. Some people may not like it, but the Spirit calls us to take risks for the sake of the Gospel and the peace of the world. Bonhoeffer would remind us of costly discipleship being at the heart of the call to follow Christ.

**The Window**

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

[www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.uk](http://www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.uk)

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The Anglican-Lutheran Society

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# LUTHERAN VESPERS IN A CORNISH CATHEDRAL

*The Very Rev Tom Bruch, Dean of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, reports.*



On 29th June, 2014, in Truro Cathedral, a service of Lutheran Vespers was held that incorporated music by Bach. The choir and orchestra performed cantatas 117 (Sei Lob und Ehr dem höchsten Gut) and 192 (Nun danket alle Gott), with other music including 'Jauchzet dem Herren' by Schütz. The liturgy was based on the services that took place during Bach's time at St Thomas' Church in Leipzig.

The preacher was the Rt Rev Martin Lind, Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain (pictured above), and the liturgy was led jointly by the Rev Canon Perran Gay, Precentor and Head of Worship at Truro Cathedral, and by myself. Worshipers filled the nave of the cathedral to take part in this very special occasion.

The idea for the service grew out of a Lutheran Eucharist that took place at the cathedral in June, 2013. That involved Lutherans from several national traditions, as well as participants from the cathedral and local churches, and included a reading of the Gospel in the Cornish language. The Cathedral in Truro is linked with Strängnäs Diocese in the Church of Sweden and is always keen to develop its relationship with Lutherans.

Similar 'Bach Vespers' have been conducted regularly at St Anne's Lutheran Church in London for many years. A former Cantor at St Anne's, Peter Lea-Cox, worked with the cathedral's Organist and Director of Music, Christopher Gray, to prepare the service.

