

# THE WINDOW

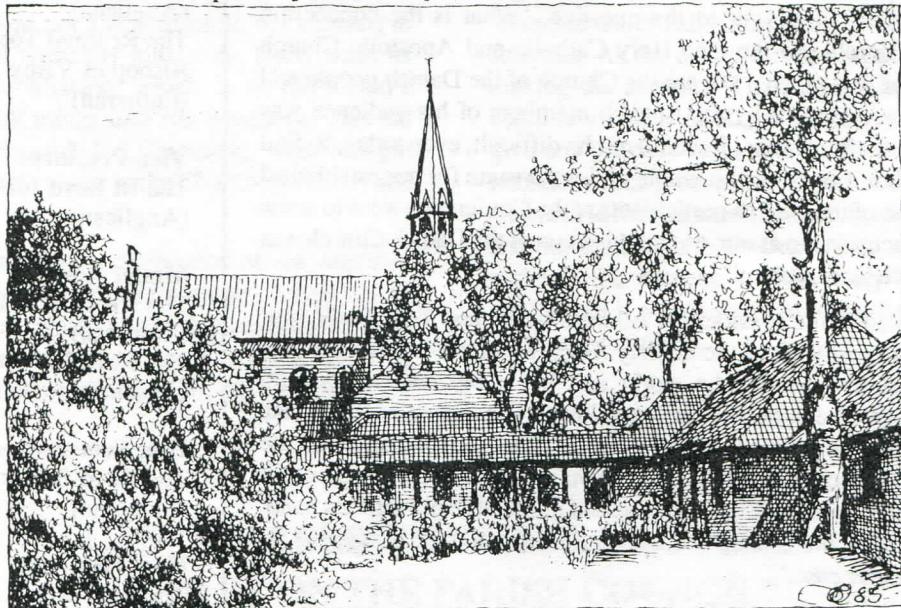
THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ANGLICAN - LUTHERAN SOCIETY

Number 37

Autumn 1993

## 1993 SOCIETY CONFERENCE AT LØGUMKLOSTER

*A report by Ian Phelps, Peacehaven, Sussex*



*Løgumkloster Kirke med forbindelse til og del af Refugiet vedbygning.*

The great Cistercian Abbey Church of Løgumkloster stands in the south of Denmark in a part of the country occupied by Germany from 1864 to 1920. The monastic buildings have long disappeared, but in recent times their site has been used to build the Refugium, a conference and educational centre of the Lutheran Church of Denmark. Here twenty-four members of the Anglican-Lutheran Society gathered from the first to the fourth of September for our 1993 Conference. For the six Anglicans it was perhaps a relief that the proceedings were not to be conducted in Danish, and one can only admire the Danes, Swedes and Germans for agreeing to speak in English throughout the two and a half days that we were together.

On the first evening we were welcomed by the Revd Niels Thomsen, Rector of the Praesthøjskolen, who gave us a tour of the historic castle built adjacent to the church after the dissolution of the monastery. Here the hospitable glass of wine, or two, encouraged theological dialogue and some of us had a late night after our discussions.

The next morning started with Lutheran prayers in the abbey chapter house, and after breakfast we were introduced to the

life and thought of the great Danish nineteenth century theologian, reformer, hymn writer and patriot, N.F.S. Grundtvig, by Dr Susanne Gregersen of the University of Århus. To understand something of the influence of this man is to understand the attitude of the Danish people to their national Church today.

This illuminating talk was followed by a talk on the ecumenical scene in Denmark today by Jorgen Thompson, Secretary of the Ecumenical Council. He was able to tell us that ninety per cent of the Danish people claim to belong to the Church of Denmark and consequently problems of church unity were not a priority for the Church. A Danish Council on Inter-Church Relations had been set up by Act of Parliament in 1989 in order to avoid the political tendencies observed in the ecumenical movement as a whole. Inter-church work in Denmark, therefore, tended to concentrate upon social work and the application of Christian ethics to problems of peace, the environment and global justice.

During this first afternoon we were given an extensive tour of the grounds around the monastery together with a detailed account of its history. As the church itself was in use for a

funeral, our tour of the interior had to be postponed until after we had attended the Lutheran evening service there. Although the singing of the hymns in Danish was beyond some of the English participants, it was nevertheless a moving experience to join in the offering of worship in this ancient place of prayer.

Our next lecture was on the Church of Denmark today and was given by Chresten Drejergaard of the Pastor's Union. He explained how the historical development of the Reformation in Denmark had created a 'Folk-Church' in which the Danish sovereign and Parliament constituted the authentic voice of the laity. The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs was responsible for ensuring that the church was faithful to God's Order in its spiritual life, and also the Sovereign's Order in its worldly affairs and the work of its church councils. He emphasised again that ninety per cent of the population belonged to the national Church and insisted that every Danish citizen had the right to be a member of the Church, while admitting that only three per cent of the population attended church regularly. 'There is a place for the small man with his small belief,' he said, and claimed 'Even atheists are members of the Church of Denmark.' The Danish Church was as wide as the political boundaries of the Danish State itself. In answer to the question, 'What is the connection between the Danish Church and the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church worldwide?' the answer was given, 'We are the Church of the Danish people and that is enough.' Any surprise felt by the English members of his audience was tempered by the sobering thought that it would not be difficult, even today, to find members of the Church of England who would claim the same for our established Church. However, some of the Danish participants at the Conference went to some length afterwards in discussion to assure us that this view of the Danish Church was by no means universally acceptable.

The evening was devoted to the Presidential Address by Bishop Tore Furberg of Uppsala, one of the Co-Presidents of the Society. He gave a light-hearted account of his ministry in various parts of the world and his many encounters with Anglicans. He also revealed that he had been appointed as assistant bishop to the Anglican Bishop in the Philippines where he was given pastoral care of the Anglican priests. He delighted us with the story of his recent encounter with a girl evangelist at a crowded refreshment bar who pressed a folded paper into his hand. When he opened the paper, the Bishop was encouraged to read the message, 'To Jesus, no one is a hopeless case.'

On Friday morning our devotions consisted of Anglican Mattins in the chapter house. Our first talk was from Dr John Arnold, Dean of Durham, who gave a brilliant and witty account of the progress of Anglican-Lutheran relationships, concentrating especially on the progress made since the Meissen Agreement, which had led to the Porvoo Statement. This is to be the subject of a debate in the General Synod of the Church of England in the autumn. He took us through the most important parts of both of these documents, emphasising that the Porvoo Statement involved all the European Anglican Churches and all the Scandinavian Lutheran Churches. As these are all episcopal, there was strong hope of a confederation of northern European churches in which ministries would be mutually recognised, the eventual hope being of full communion within an agreed historic apostolic succession. The Statement also contained the seminal suggestion that the phrase 'Corporate priesthood of the whole people of God' was a more fruitful concept than the familiar but misleading expression, 'Priesthood of all believers'.

#### INDEX TO ABBREVIATIONS

LWI	Lutheran World Information	L	The Lutheran
ACC	Anglican Consultative Council	CT	Church Times
AMM	Anglican Media Mailing	ed	edited
EPS	Ecumenical Press Service	ppd	paraphrased

**The Window** is sent quarterly to Members and Associate groups of the Anglican-Lutheran Society. Information about the Society and membership applications are available from the Secretary.

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#### THE WINDOW

##### Editorial Office

Anglican-Lutheran Society  
30 Thanet Street  
LONDON WC1H 9QH

##### Editors

The Revd Tom Bruch  
Ms Gillian Court

A discussion session carried us on to lunch, after which a coach trip had been organised for those who wished to see something of Jutland. After a long drive through the flat countryside we came to Brons, where the large and ancient church contained two sixteenth century mural paintings. Since these included both popes and reformers their meaning has been the subject of much speculation, but perhaps the most acceptable interpretation is that they show the true light of the Gospel being revealed to popes and bishops by none other than Martin Luther himself. Our coach then deposited us on a dyke which keeps the North Sea out of Jutland (called the West Sea by the Danes), and we had a three kilometre walk to the modern sluices and pumping station where we regained our transport.

Our evening lecture was given by the Society Co-Moderator and Conference Organiser, the Revd Dr Jonathan Draper. His theme was 'The Call to a New Community' and he reminded us that Church Unity was not a goal in itself, but a means to the end of bringing all humanity into unity. Unity finds its home in the Christian Mission, which is to fulfil God's intention of bringing all things into His Kingdom. This led him back to the work of N.F.S. Grundtvig, who brought together Christianity and culture in the Church, the State, and the School.

The last morning began with a celebration of the Anglican Eucharist by the Dean of Durham in the abbey chapter house. After breakfast we were treated to a highly concentrated talk delivered at a stimulating, not to say breathless, pace by Professor Michael Root of the L.W.F.. He reviewed the

progress of ecumenical work in general and of the Anglican-Lutheran relationship within this perspective, asking what Anglicans and Lutherans together have to offer the worldwide Church. What is evangelical catholicism? Is there such a thing as a conservative reformation? Why is it that if both Anglicans and Lutherans think of themselves as 'bridge churches', neither of them has actually built any bridges? He concluded with a reminder that the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by Faith and the Anglican commitment to Church Order and Tradition must be seen as parallel strands. We have a strong commitment to preach the Christian Gospel and to maintain the integrity to resist individualism in ecumenical endeavour.

After the break the last session of the Conference was devoted to a discussion. This was dominated by the desire of the expert theologians present to fire their big guns for the last time, and expressions like 'tacile succession', 'parallel jurisdiction', 'communion or full communion' flew around the room like shrapnel. As the dust cleared, a sniper claimed a last hit by making the remark, 'The Danes would be happy to be in communion with the Anglican Church, but would not wish to give any primacy of honour to the See of Canterbury.' The laughter which greeted this remark seemed to be a happy note on which to finish a most stimulating and enjoyable conference, and our thanks go to Dr Draper and all who worked hard to make it the success it indubitably was. But at our next conference it would be good to have more support from our Anglican members.

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## CAN ONE BELIEVE IN REINCARNATION AND BE ON THE PARISH COUNCIL?

Doubts have been raised in Denmark about whether a Lutheran deacon who believes in reincarnation can also serve on his local parish council. The chairperson of the board of the Aarhus-based Centre for Dialogue, Johannes Aagaard, has called for action to be taken against the deacon and another church member who are both members of the parish council of St. Andreas' Church in Copenhagen.

Aagaard stated the demand in an open letter to the church affairs minister, A.O. Anderson, and to the Bishop of Copenhagen, Erik Norman Svendsen. The news service of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD) reported that the deacon belongs to the 'Towards the Light' movement, which denies the Christian faith, while the other parish councillor is a member of the scientology movement.

In his letter, Aagaard referred to the legal provision according to which membership of the Danish Lutheran church is terminated if, for example, a member joins another religious community or is rebaptised. Since belief in reincarnation is

contrary to the Christian doctrine of resurrection, such belief must be regarded as irreconcilable with membership in a parish council, even though neither 'Towards the Light' nor scientology is a religious community, Aagaard said.

The church affairs minister declared he will not intervene in the matter. Andersen said that 'If one is good enough to be a member of the Church of Denmark, one is good enough to be elected to a parish council.' He also referred to a 1992 ministerial proclamation which leaves it to the parish pastor to decide whether a church membership has effectively ceased.

The ELCD information service cited a recently published study conducted in 1992, which found that only 20 percent of Denmark's Lutherans believe in resurrection, whereas 14 percent believe in reincarnation. Among regular churchgoers the figures are 62 percent and 10 percent respectively. But among young people aged 18-30 years, 18 percent believe in reincarnation and only 15 percent in resurrection.

[LWI]

## ANGLICANS IN THE U.K.: THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

### Scotland

The General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church voted in June to alter the Church's canons so as to permit the priesting of women. An amended canon will be voted on in a year's time, and the church's first women priests could be ordained in 1994.

As the Scottish Episcopal Church is disestablished, it does not need to go to Parliament for approval.

The Scottish proposals contain no financial compensation for clergy who might feel compelled to resign. But the Scottish bishops have undertaken to support a number of safeguards: no bishop to be compelled to ordain or license a woman against his conscience; no candidate for ordination or episcopacy to be disqualified because of opinions in the matter; no congregation or individual to be required to accept a woman's sacramental ministrations.

[CT (ed) 18 & 25 June]

### Wales

The Church in Wales is making a further move towards a decision on women priests. The six Welsh dioceses have begun to elect the new members of the Church's Governing Body. It will vote next April at the final stage of the Bill to Enable Women to be Ordained as Priests, when the bill will require a two-thirds majority in all three Houses.

[CT 10 September]

### England

The majority of the 30 members of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament believe it would be damaging to the Church to postpone the introduction of women priests. The view is given in a committee's report to both Houses of Parliament on its consideration of the legislation to allow the ordination of women to the priesthood.

"It is evident that there is now a clear majority in favour of women priests among those who sit on the representative bodies of the Church of England," says the report.

A minority of the committee, while acknowledging the value of the Manchester statements (by the House of Bishops in June), felt very strongly that embodying them in an Act of Synod would not give sufficient reassurance to dissentients within the Church, the report continues.

[CT (ed) 6 August]

Six peers (members of the House of Lords) and five MPs from the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament have appealed to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for a guarantee that those opposed to women priests will have a continuing place in the Church of England. They are the 11 who voted against the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure when the Committee approved it in July.

A reply the same day from the Archbishops says: "The House of Bishops has recommended an Act of Synod because it will carry great moral weight and take immediate effect, whereas further legislation would require several years to pass through Synod and, since it would be subject to amendment, there could be no certainty about the outcome. As for appointments at all levels of the Church, there will be no bar on candidates who take one view or the other on the ordination of women priests, though the Church must of course in each case continue to choose the best person for the job as a whole."

[CT (ed) 1 October]

The Archbishop of Canterbury has asked Dr Eames, the Primate of All Ireland, to reconvene the Eames Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate for a final meeting. It will be held in London from 13 to 17 December.

English bishops are known to expect to begin priesting women from next May, if parliamentary and synodical formalities are completed in time. It is rare for anyone to be made a bishop after less than 10 or 15 years' service as a priest. In England, making women bishops would need fresh legislation.

[CT (ed) 3 September]

## NEW LUTHERAN RELIGIOUS ORDERS

The Order of St. Mary the Virgin (of the Confession of Augsburg) - a religious community for men - was recently founded in the United States. The order, which also has members in France and Sweden, seeks to 'actively promote a renewal of Marial devotion in the churches of the Augsburg Confession.'

[LWI]

## THEY KNEW THE LANGUAGE

*Gordon Roe, Bishop of Huntingdon, on the Germans who lately came to Lambeth*

"In the centre of the city of Meissen," said Bishop Klaus Engelhardt in London recently, "there is a beautiful, ancient cathedral which people admire, which they visit, not quite knowing what they are looking for, and of which they are a bit nervous. Next to it is a building site which is all chaos and change. The Church is something like both of them."

Dr Engelhardt, Bishop of Baden and Chairman of the Council of the EKD, the Protestant Churches in Germany, was paying his first official visit to England, as a guest of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the General Synod. The visit is part of the process which follows the signing of the Meissen Agreement between the Church of England and the EKD. It commits both Churches to the search for full visible unity. Already many dioceses are twinned with partner churches in Germany, but this was the first time that leaders of the two Churches have engaged in serious conversations.

The Archbishop of Canterbury received the delegations at Lambeth Palace and spent the rest of the day discussing with them questions of mission and evangelism. It was evident that similar problems were facing them both. Because of the system of church tax in Germany, the Churches there were more aware than we in England are of significant numbers of people leaving the Church.

Questions of Church and state and the role of the Churches in the European Community occupied us for a day, with the Archbishop of York. What became increasingly clear was that although our two churches had, because of our histories, a different relationship with the state, both were woven into the fabric of society and felt a responsibility for it. The fact that Germany is so much more wholeheartedly a part of

Europe than England is, caused us, the English representatives, to be much more aware of our need to deepen relationships with Germany at all levels.

Two other days were devoted to particular problems facing society and Church. The state of marriage and the family is causing concern in both countries. The German Churches are finding it particularly difficult to come to an agreed view of homosexual relationships, especially among the clergy. The provisional nature of the current teaching in both our Churches makes it important that in the future we should consider these questions jointly. And of course, our current situation concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood raised many questions which interest the Germans. They have for some time taken the view that it was right to ordain women as pastors, and now also to make them bishops. But in their view, once the decision had been taken, it is a decision for the whole Church and all must accept it, or leave.

At the end of the meetings, members of the delegations visited the dioceses of London, Chelmsford, Worcester and Ely for the weekend. As they went, Bishop Engelhardt looked round ruefully at his black suited bishops, and said that in more ways than one the Anglicans, with their purple shirts, brought colour to the proceedings. For our part, we noticed that when English was being spoken, only one member of the delegation needed the help of Mrs Donata Coleman, our interpreter; but when the talk was in German, there was a general dive for the headphones. I fancy we shall soon see some purple shirts in Germany, and it would be good if we had a boom in German lessons here.

[CT]

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## ANGLICANS APPOINT NEW BISHOP FOR DIOCESE OF EUROPE

The Anglican bishop of Horsham, John William Hind, has been appointed the new Bishop of the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe. The Diocese of Europe is the only diocese in the Church of England which is outside England. Bishop Hind, 48, succeeds John Satterthwaite, who retired on September 30th. He has been Bishop of Horsham since 1991.

Bishop Hind is no stranger to the churches of Europe. While he was principal at Chichester Theological College, he

forged links with the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches in Bavaria, Germany. He has worked on a number of ecumenical bodies, including a working party which led to the Meissen agreement between the Church of England and the German protestant churches; the working party on relations between the Anglican, Nordic and Baltic churches; and he is co-chairperson of a group on relations between the Church of England and the French Lutheran and Reformed churches.

[LWI]

## EFFORTS TO EASE RACIAL STRIFE IN LONDON

The politics of violence hate and division "wastes young lives" and is "a tragic distraction" from the real and serious problems of the East End of London, the Bishop of Stepney, the Rt Revd Richard Chartres, said after a fortnight of increased racial tension there. He was speaking alongside politicians at a meeting organised by the Bangladeshi Welfare Association. He leads a number of clergy trying to help local communities after the unrest set off recently by an assault on a young Asian man in Spitalfields, and worsened by the election of a member of the right-wing British National Party (BNP) to Tower Hamlets Council.

The crisis had revealed that there was "no obvious forum where community leaders, the police and others can talk about emergencies as well as the long-term problems," said the Bishop.

On by-election day, a lunchtime prayer vigil was held on the Isle of Dogs, in the parish church. It attracted 60 people, including ministers belonging to every local denomination.

A leaflet was distributed that read: "The BNP say they are going to do well in this election. For God's sake, don't let them." The Vicar, the Revd Nick Holtam, said: "On Sunday morning I got people to write down what they were feeling about the election. They wrote 'tearful', 'angry' and 'ashamed'. The accepted mythology is that most of the affordable rented housing around here has gone to Bengali immigrants rather than Islanders. That doesn't tie in with the facts as I understand them, but it's how it is perceived. One of the things churches can do is to get the facts out, so that the mythologies are challenged. We also need to meet Bengali people and get to know them."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, said in a statement "I am dismayed that a racist political party should have won a local by-election in East London. The evil politics of race solve no problems."

[CT (ed) 24 September]

## LUTHERAN-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE DOCUMENT REVEALS 'LARGE MEASURE OF CONSENSUS'

A major document recently approved by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission, which deals with the church in relation to the doctrine of justification, reveals a large measure of consensus on the topics it discusses while not attempting to paper over differences that still remain. Significant, however, is whether the churches will judge these remaining differences as necessarily church dividing, or whether they will assign them to the realm of legitimate diversity, observed Eugene Brand, assistant general secretary for ecumenical affairs in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

At their September 5th - 11th meeting in Würzburg, Germany, the members of the joint commission voted unanimously to approve the document, 'Church and Justification: Understanding the Church in Light of the Doctrine of Justification', on which they had worked since 1986. The meeting was the eighth and final meeting of the third phase in the dialogue, which is jointly sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the LWF.

At the conclusion of the document's foreword, the co-chairpersons of the commission state: 'In submitting its work, the Joint Commission asks that it be seen together with second

phase documents, "The Eucharist" and "The Ministry of the Church" as well as "Ways to Community" and "Facing Unity: Models, Forms and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship". Furthermore it asks whether, taken together, these documents constitute the sufficient consensus necessary for our churches to embark upon further concrete steps toward visible unity which are increasingly urgent.'

The document consists of five chapters: Justification and the Church; The Abiding Origin of the Church; The Church of the Triune God; The Church as Recipient and Mediator of Salvation; The Mission and Consummation of the Church. Sources most frequently cited are the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions and the documents of the Second Vatican Council. The approved text is in German. An authorised English translation is being prepared. Because of the considerable editorial work still required, publication is not anticipated until 1994.

The stated goal of the Catholic-Lutheran international dialogue which last year celebrated its 25th anniversary is 'visible unity'. Further work toward that goal will be undertaken in a fourth phase of dialogue anticipated to begin in 1995.

[LWI]

THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY  
30 THANET STREET  
LONDON WC1H 9QH