

# THE WINDOW

Number 25

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## CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE NORDIC AND BALTIC LUTHERAN CHURCHES

From September 18th to 24th representatives from the Church of England and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches met at Emmaus Retreat Centre, London, England for the second Plenary Meeting of the official Conversations which began in August 1989. The meeting was chaired by the Right Reverend David Tustin, Bishop of Grimsby, and the Right Reverend Tore Furberg, Bishop of Visby, Sweden. Representatives from the Churches of Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden were joined by consultants and observers from the Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran Council of Great Britain and the Nordic Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The work of the Conversations was grounded in morning and evening prayer. The Bishop of Grimsby, the Rt Revd David Tustin, presided at the eucharist on the first day and the Bishop of Ely, the Rt Revd Stephen Sykes was the preacher. Bishop Tore Furberg presided at the closing eucharist when the preacher was the Reverend Dr Gerhard Pedersen. The delegation attended Southwark Cathedral on the Sunday morning and were received at Lambeth Palace, where there was a service in the Chapel.

A number of guests from the Nordic and Baltic Churches in London joined the delegation for a lunch, when the guest of honour was the Rt Revd Wilfred Wood, Bishop of Croydon, in whose episcopal area the meeting was taking place.

Messages and prayers of support for the work of the Conversations were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, and from the Rt Revd George Carey (a member of the Conversations) Archbishop Designate, and the

Most Revd Bertil Werkstrom, Archbishop of Uppsala, who wrote:

At this moment in the history of our churches we realise that the theological agreements and the practical implementation of these, which we expect as a result of your Conversations, will greatly improve the church relations across national borders in Northern Europe. Such results, I am convinced, will be of great importance not only for ourselves, but also for our societies and for the relationship between Anglicans and Lutherans in other parts of the world.

With this in mind, I take the liberty to remind you of the goal of unity which is laid before the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches... namely "to proclaim the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ and to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship in worship and common life in Christ, in order that the world might believe".

The meeting discussed in depth an interim draft of a Common Statement prepared in Tallinn, Estonia, in May, and made suggestions for revision. On the reporting back from sessions in which the Anglican and Lutheran delegates met separately, a breakthrough occurred, when the participants reached a new understanding of one another's past histories and present sensitivities both theological and psychological. In the light of this, and a shared recognition of a new kairos, the delegates expressed their intention to work for a text which "goes beyond the



Meissen Agreement", and which would include a substantial section on episcopacy using material from the Niagara Report.

A drafting group will meet in London in January 1991; its draft will be circulated to members of the Conversations for response in time for the next Plenary Meeting, which will be held in September 1991, probably in Denmark.

All agree that the progress made at this meeting of the Conversations marks an important step forward in relations between the Church of England and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches.

### SISTER NAOMI, SSM

The Treasurer of the Anglican-Lutheran Society, Sister Naomi SSM, died on 28th July in East Grinstead, Sussex. She had been suffering from cancer for some time.

Sister Naomi was professed in the Society of St Margaret in 1963; three years later she was sent to South Africa to work in a home for deprived children in Johannesburg. On her return to England she held various posts, and was appointed Assistant Superior of the Society of St Margaret in 1985. As well as serving on the Executive Committee of the Anglican-Lutheran Society since 1986, she had an active interest in Anglican-Orthodox relations.

In his address at the Requiem for Sr Naomi, Father Alan Grange SSJE said: 'We have faith and hope that Naomi now rests secure in the love of God. We have faith that he has delivered her from darkness into his glorious light. We believe that the hands which gave her vitality and so many other gifts will continue to fashion and transfigure her into the perfection of the image - God's image - in which she was created. And we believe that God, who called Naomi in his creative power... calls her still into ever deeper awareness of his beauty, mystery and love.'

We extend our condolences to all who, with us, mourn her loss. She will be greatly missed in the Society, to which she gave such faithful and cheerful service.

The Executive Committee of the Anglican-Lutheran Society has appointed the Revd Stuart Currie, of Banbury, Oxfordshire, to succeed Sister Naomi as Treasurer.

### INDEX TO ABBREVIATIONS

LWI	Lutheran World Information	L	The Lutheran
ACC	Anglican Consultative Council	CT	Church Times
AMM	Anglican Media Mailing	etd	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

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## THE LUTHERAN ECUMENICAL TASK

by the Revd Gottfried Brakemeier,

president of the Lutheran World Federation

(This is excerpted from the provisional English translation of his address in German to the meeting in Geneva (18-27 June) of the LWF Executive Committee.)

The very nature of Christian communion is to be inclusive. It should be comprehensive, multifarious, open to others. We should not try to overcome the diversity of traditions and expressions of faith, but only the conflictual element in them. To do this, we need to constantly bear in mind our common foundations. It is all probably a matter of faith, although not only that. It is also a matter of love, of credibility and the power of witness, the effectiveness of service, a sign of newness in the midst of a torn world.

Let me list three aspects that are important to me:

(a) In our ecumenical endeavour what we have in common needs to be emphasised over against that which separates us. Our basis is decisive for the result. It makes a difference whether the interlocutor is seen from the beginning as a brother or sister rather than an opponent who needs to be vanquished with all possible means.

(b) The unity of the church requires doctrinal consensus even though it may differ in some aspects. For this reason, the ecumenical movement needs to continue to work theologically because otherwise church communion will remain superficial and fictitious.

Nevertheless, the search for doctrinal consensus must not happen in isolation. The church's unity will be built not only on an agreement in teaching: it will at the same time grow from a common missionary and diaconal task.

The churches need to come to an agreement on their vocation. We must reject the kind of ahistorical ecumenicity that believes it can skip over the past because of a common ecclesial front and commitment to the kingdom of God; we must also reject a non-contextual ecumenism that ignores the challenges of today's world and the churches' practices. The ecumenical movement needs the contextual framework in order to show the relevance and consensus in confession and teaching for its authenticity and depth.

(c) After a period of ecumenical enthusiasm, there looms today a kind of ecumenical depression. Neither one nor the other is good. Instead, we should obey a spirit of sobriety. This will joyfully register progress on the congregational level and in theological dialogues. The sterile polemics of times past have made room for more unity. In terms of theology and the awareness of practical necessities, there has been quite some rapprochement.

What is deficient are the institutional consequences. We need to pay increasing attention to the reception process. Has not the moment come to risk more cooperation in spite of many open difficulties? For unity to grow, common experiences are needed.

They include firstly common prayer and common service to the human being. Unity also grows out of experience in partnership. This needs to be given institutional room and hence should be promoted by the church leaderships. Communion should not be found only at the end of the ecumenical path but, with all necessary provisos, at the beginning and in the middle.

[EPS]

## ANGLICANS AND LUTHERANS WORK TOGETHER ON CATECHUMENATE

A group of US Anglican and Lutheran representatives is cooperating on materials for the catechumenate, a pattern by which people are initiated into the church or

led to a serious reaffirmation of faith. Wayne Schwab, a member of the national Anglican staff, calls the joint effort 'the most substantive ecumenical work in evangelism' he knows. [EPS]



## NEW ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP CHOSEN TO SUCCEED DR RUNCIE

The Bishop of Bath and Wells, George L. Carey, has been appointed the next Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr Carey, 54, will take over as spiritual head of the Church of England and of the world's 70 million Anglicans after January 31, 1991, when the present Archbishop, Dr Robert Runcie, retires.

The announcement of the choice of Dr Carey, the youngest Archbishop of Canterbury in recent history, was made three months earlier than expected. Dr Runcie announced the news that Queen Elizabeth II had appointed Dr Carey during the Anglican Consultative Council's meeting in July, calling the choice "imaginative".

Dr Carey comes from the mainstream evangelical wing of the church, which is more traditional in its approach to the Bible. He is, however, in favour of the ordination of women. When he once upset opponents of women's ordination in his diocese by asking them to consider whether they had a future in a church with women priests, he was accused of trying to persecute the traditionalists out of the church.

At the news conference following his appointment, Dr Carey denied that the choice was a compromise. While he admitted he was "quite surprised" to be chosen, he said he hoped it was on the basis of what he had to offer.



Born in East London, the son of a hospital porter, Dr Carey left school at age 15. "Sadly, all too often the church seems light years away from many people, people like the ones I grew up with," he told reporters. He added that one of his priorities will be the environment and what he calls "green discipleship".

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) sent Dr Carey a telegram on July 26 congratulating him on his appointment. The message, signed by LWF Assistant General Secretary for Ecumenical Affairs, Dr Eugene L. Brand, said that Lutherans treasure their "increasingly close relationship with the Anglican Communion." [LWF]

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## MEISSEN DECLARATION:

### ANGLICANS AND E K D TO COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY

The Church of England is approaching closer communion and cooperation with the German Protestant Churches following the unanimous acceptance of the "Meissen Declaration" by its General Synod.

In a General Synod debate, which lasted several hours, most speakers emphasised the varied contacts and numerous partnerships which already existed between churches and congregations in England and Germany. Of particular significance, in the view of the EKD, was Church of England - German Protestant cooperation in the process of European unification, a concept toward which the British churches also took a positive attitude.

Over the past few years, 25 territorial churches in Germany, as well as the leadership bodies of the EKD and the GDR Federation of Protestant Churches, have given their approval to the declaration drawn up in Meissen in 1988. In the declaration, the C of E and Protestants in Germany officially acknowledge each other as churches, along with their sacraments and offices, for the first time since the Reformation in the 16th century, and commit themselves to closer communion and a common task.

The ceremonial inauguration of the "Meissen Declaration" is expected to take place in two services on Jan 29 and Feb 2, 1991 in Westminster Abbey, London, and the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Berlin. [LWI]



## ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

### ELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN

The Revd Canon Colin Craston, the Vice Chairman of ACC, was elected the new Chairman at the eighth meeting of the Council, held in Cardiff, Wales, in July. He succeeds the Ven Yong Ping Chung. Canon Craston has served as Vice-Chairman of the Council since 1986. He said that he had come to the meeting to serve the present Chairman and his successor. He did not expect to be nominated because he felt that a Chairman of ACC should come from outside the UK. But he agreed to stand when some Council members expressed the need for continuity in Anglican Communion affairs at a time when there would be a new ACC President.

Canon Craston said he is impatient with English insularity wherever it occurred. 'I feel that sometimes the Church of England feels it owns the Communion and yet at other times it disowns it'. When interviewed after his election, he said he believed the ACC had a vital role in the

Communion. He hopes that the ACC together with the Primates' Meeting and the Lambeth Conference will hold the Anglican family together. 'We have a contribution to the world Church. If we don't hold together, our credibility is undermined. Other world communions need to talk with the family, not just individual Provinces. Our common mission requires us to be together'. Canon Craston believes that the 'bonds of affection' which hold the Anglican Communion together need to be strengthened. He does not want an appellate tribunal, nor is he sure about how to strengthen these bonds but he would like the Common Declaration presented to the ACC-8 meeting to be studied around the Communion.

Canon Craston has served on the Anglican Consultative Council since 1981 and has a broad knowledge of the Anglican Communion.

[Anglican Information]

### PROSPECTS FOR 'FULL COMMUNION' IN U.S.A.

An almost-completed ecumenical document could, if approved by the Episcopal Church in the USA, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provide the basis for full communion between the two traditions.

Meeting from June 17th to 20th in New Orleans, Lutheran and Episcopalian theologians moved closer to agreement in doctrine and the mutual recognition of ordained ministries, including the office of bishop.

After revision at a January 3rd - 6th meeting in Delray Beach, Fla., the report of the U.S. Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue will be sent to the sponsoring bodies for study, evaluation and action. Such an agreement would require approval by top decision-making bodies of both churches, as well as constitutional changes.

In a prepared statement, the dialogue co-chairs, Bishop William Weinbauer, Ashville, NC., retired leader of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, and Dr Paul Erickson of Wheaton, Ill., retired Illinois Synod bishop of the former Lutheran Church in America, said: "Steps in

closer relations and communion between Lutherans and Episcopalians are taken because of the previous discoveries that we share a common faith and seek to express a common mission. As Lutherans and Episcopalians hear and respond to the gospel, so they will strive to manifest a visible unity - a unity that we are calling 'full communion!'."

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, although a dialogue participant, will not be part of the move towards closer fellowship.

ELCA Bishop Herbert W Chilstrom revealed some details of the uncompleted work and lent his support to it in an interview with a newspaper, published on July 11th.

He said that under the proposal the ELCA would elect bishops for life instead of for four-year terms, noting that he could accept that momentous change. ELCA "sister churches", such as the Lutheran Salvadorean Synod and some Lutheran churches in Africa and Europe, already elected bishops for life, he noted.



Although Bishop Chilstrom said full communion could come by 1995, other officials have said it is unlikely that so weighty a proposal could be worked through that quickly.

Dr William Rusch, ELCA ecumenical officer, said, "Although some might regard the bishop's remarks as somewhat untimely, I welcome the serious attention that he has given to the dialogue and his word of encouragement. Obviously, when the dialogue completes its report, it will need to be weighed seriously by the sponsoring churches."

Bishop Chilstrom's remarks appeared to over-step an embargo against the premature release of the document. His comments, although surprising, did not appear to dampen the enthusiasm of Episcopal Church leaders.

Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said he was "delighted" at the dialogue's progress. "I look forward to the next phases of working out the agreement. Even more, I look forward to strengthened mutual ministry with the ELCA," he said. Noting that he and Bishop Chilstrom plan to visit Lutheran churches in Scandinavia in December, he called the trip "a symbol of the sort of cooperation" he envisions.

Dr J Robert Wright, a historian at General Seminary, New York, and a consultant to the Episcopal dialogue team, called Bishop Chilstrom's comments "positive and helpful." The only problem with the interview, he said, was "the difficulty with saying anything in public at this point." He added, "The details have not been finalised, and it is possible that significant changes in the document will yet be made."



The Anglican-Lutheran Society was established in 1984 with the following aims:

- To encourage a wider interest in and knowledge of our respective traditions and contemporary developments within them;
- To develop opportunities for common worship, study, friendship and witness;
- To pray for the unity of the Church, and especially between Anglicans and Lutherans.

ELCA officials have emphasised the sensitive nature of the dialogue, especially since the ELCA is engaged in a thorough study of ministry.

Although the dialogue has not yet made public its definition of "full communion," the team points to a 1983 description by an international Lutheran - Anglican (Episcopal) working group. The "Cold Ash Report", named for the English town where it was completed, says that communion includes these elements:

\* The churches are interdependent, but each church maintains its autonomy.

\* Each believes the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith.

\* Members of one body may receive the sacraments from the other.

\* Clergy of one body may exercise liturgical functions in a congregation of the other when invited to do so.

\* On invitation, bishops of one church may take part in consecrations of bishops in the other church.

\* Churches in the same area share common worship, study, witness, evangelism and social action.

US Episcopalians and Lutherans have carried on three series of dialogues, beginning in 1967. In 1982 the Episcopal Church and three predecessor bodies of the ELCA agreed to enter into "interim sharing of the eucharist."

At the same time they authorised a third series of dialogues, asking that the group discuss "any other outstanding questions that must be resolved before full communion... can be established."

Specifically, the group was asked to consider "implication of the gospel, historic episcopate, and the ordering of ministry (bishops, priests and deacons) in the total context of apostolicity."

[The Lutheran]

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