

The Window

Newsletter of the Anglican-Lutheran Society

Number 45, Autumn 1995

England, Lithuania adopt Porvoo; Denmark declines

The Church of Denmark has not endorsed the Porvoo Declaration but both the Church of England and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania have approved the statement linking British and Irish Anglicans with Nordic and Baltic Lutherans.

Seven of the 12 churches (eight Lutheran and four Anglican) involved have now endorsed Porvoo.

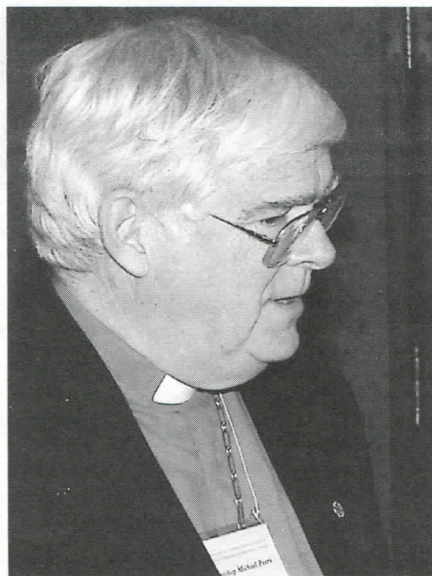
The bishops of the Church of Denmark, meeting August 28-29, said they could approve Porvoo only if it received "reasonable support" from church members. The ten bishops of this Lutheran church concluded that there was not sufficient support.

In spite of this, the Danish Lutheran church will continue to strengthen contacts with both the Anglican and Lutheran churches involved in Porvoo. Anglicans are welcome, without reservation, to participate in services and in the Eucharist in Danish churches. Anglican pastors can serve in the Danish church without reordination and Anglican bishops can be invited to take part in the consecration of Danish bishops.

The Church of England had voted overwhelmingly in favour of Porvoo at its General Synod in York on July 9. The final vote was: bishops 34-0; clergy 176-8; laity 169-15.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania gave overwhelming approval to the Porvoo Declaration, with 83 of 85 votes in the affirmative, at its synod on July 29-30. It also elected the Rt Rev Jonas Kalvanas, Jr., as its new bishop by a 52-25 vote. He succeeds his father who died last January 16.

The Church in Wales (Anglican) will vote on Porvoo in September; the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland in October; and both the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia will make their decisions in November.



The Most Rev Michael G Peers, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), spoke at the national convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) held July 12-16 in Winnipeg. The two churches now have closer ties, with lay members now able to move freely between the churches as they move toward full communion by 2001. The ACC and the ELCIC have been cooperating since 1989 through interim sharing of the Eucharist. CLAD (Canadian Lutheran/Anglican Dialogue) has said that "full communion is understood as a relationship between two distinct churches or communions in which each maintains its own autonomy while recognizing the catholicity and apostolicity of the other, and believing the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith." Archbishop Peers has asked the congregations of the two churches, in the coming year, to undertake one joint project and hold one communion service together. He also asked both bodies to develop structures for evaluating and improving the ministry of bishops.

Embarrassment of riches

Apologies for failing to include many interesting news items in this issue. A deluge of news came from all over and we simply ran out of space. We will hold all for the issue in December.

An eight-page newsletter would help solve this welcome problem, but it's a problem of costs. If we doubled our membership (we now have a most encouraging 107 paid-up members for 1995!), this would help. We also need some small grants from churches and organizations. Any ideas?

Estonian mass and Nordic hymns at special services

A Lutheran Choral Eucharist with the first UK performance of the "Estonian Mass for mixed choir, organ and drum, No.3" by Urmas Sisask will be held at the Lutheran Church of St Anne and St Agnes, Gresham Street, London EC2, on Saturday, October 28, at 4pm.

The Anglican-Lutheran Society is sponsoring this service as part of its celebrations of the Porvoo Agreement. A Nordic hymn service is planned for Westminster Abbey at 6.30pm on Sunday, November 12.

Peter Lea-Cox, Cantor at St Anne and St Agnes, will direct an Anglican-Lutheran Choir in the melodious mass by a 25-year-old Estonian composer who graduated from the Tallinn National Conservatory this year. Sisask composed it for the 1994 Estonian Song Festival in Tallinn. The first performance was at the Kaarli Kirik (Charles Church) in Tallinn in 1993. The choir will sing the work in Estonian on October 28.

The Estonian Lutheran Church in London is joining with the Anglican-Lutheran Society in arranging for the service. Estonian hymns will be sung, although most of the service will be in English. Refreshments will be served following the worship.

If you would like to sing in the choir at the Estonian Mass on October 28 or at the Nordic hymn service on November 12, please contact the Anglican-Lutheran Society (see back page for address and phone number).

A highly successful Nordic hymn service was held at St Leonard's Anglican Church, Streatham, London, on September 17. More than 90 people came to sing traditional hymns from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland.

We are grateful for financial support from the Swedish Church in London and the Norwegian Church in London for these Nordic musical events. We also need additional support.

Anglican woman priest visits Church of Sweden

The Rev Angela Berners-Wilson, one of the first women to be priested by the Church of England, is Senior Anglican Chaplain at the University of Bristol. She is writing a book on women priests and visited the Church of Sweden last spring. She reports:

After doing research into women priests in the Church of England and in New Zealand, I went to Sweden for a fascinating 17 days meeting Lutheran women priests and women pastors in the Mission Covenant Church in Uppsala, Stockholm and Umeå. I also attended a conference for women Lutheran priests from all over Sweden. I interviewed 23 women priests, six Mission Covenant Church female pastors and the Advisor on Women's Issues in Church and Society. I also interviewed the Bishop of Uppsala's assistant, who is a woman priest. (This is a very senior job in the Church of Sweden, which you would not realize from the title. It is equivalent to an archdeacon in Anglican terms.)

I had the great privilege of meeting with the Rev Margrit Sahlin, the first of three women to be ordained by the Lutherans in Sweden. The Church of Sweden is heavily subsidised by the state and, because nearly 90 percent of Swedes pay a church tax to the Lutheran Church, they enjoy far better resources, opulent church buildings and many more clergy on full stipends than we have in the Church of England (per head of population).

Clergy on a 40-hour week

I was amazed to find that most clergy have two days off each week, and contracts stipulating that they work only a 40-hour week. I was told by a priest in Stockholm that, if the job required more hours, another priest would be employed! Many priests do, I am sure, work far longer hours than the statutory maximum. When I think of my own 50-60 hour average week, with only one day off, the Swedish situation seems very different.

In cities in Sweden, the vicar's job is of more importance than here. They are in overall charge of "district churches" besides their own, with clergy colleagues, called co-ministers, running the smaller churches. In some instances, male co-ministers will not receive the sacrament from their female vicar or female co-ministers. This is in a church that officially no

longer ordains men who say they will not accept female priestly orders. In Stockholm, over 50 percent of clergy are women, whilst in some of the southern dioceses such as Göteborg and Växjö, women priests are barely tolerated by most high church male colleagues who have their own "High Church Synod" which meets apart from the rest of the Swedish Church.

Stories "made my hair stand on end"

Some of the stories I heard from women priests, in strict confidence, made my hair stand on end. The fact that some male priests in Sweden will not receive the sacrament from their female colleagues, even those within the same clerical team, makes me very glad that, in England, despite the underlying sadness of this compromise, there is the possibility for a parish to declare that it does not want a woman priest. At least then everyone knows where they stand and women priests will not be in such parishes. Within deaneries it is still possible to be genuine friends with and respect clerical colleagues with different views on this contentious issue, treating each other like the Christian brothers and sisters that we are.

It is depressing to find that, 35 years after the first women were ordained in the Lutheran church in Sweden, there is still such bad feeling towards them in some dioceses. In addition, there is still no woman bishop, although there is nothing in Swedish ecclesiastical law to prevent one being appointed. There is a woman dean in Stockholm.

For some people in the church, not accepting women clergy is as much a protest at the state's seeming meddling in internal church affairs as it is about being anti-women clergy. Many of the women I spoke with fear that, when the church-state relationship changes at the end of this century, life will get worse for them as there will be no more state monitoring of employment practices, equal opportunities, etc. Others see the recent rise in opposition to women clergy as simply the last gasp of the old, traditionalist brigade. Time will tell which view is right.

Another problem in the Swedish church concerns deacons. (Not the same as deacons in the Church of England. They are part of a separate

order, with separate training. Swedish priests do not have a year as deacons before being ordained priests). Many deacons are female and have traditionally done pastoral and social work. Many women priests tend to be keener on pastoral rather than administrative work. This causes some resentment, especially among the older women deacons who still prefer to be called deaconesses. A senior male Mission Covenant Church prison chaplain told how internal Lutheran squabbles over women can make ecumenical relationships difficult. In prison chaplaincy it is vital to present a united front to prisoners, yet some evangelical groups of prison visitors refuse to take part in services where a woman priest is leading worship.

Anglicans can learn from Sweden

In England we can learn from the situation in Sweden, ensuring that the complete ostracism of some female clergy by some male clergy does not happen. The time that it took for the Ordination of Women Measure to be passed by our General Synod and parliament means that no-one can accuse us of having "jumped the gun". The generous provisions made for dissenters must also contribute to a better atmosphere within the Church of England. Having said that, I do have to admit that the whole concept of "Flying Bishops" seemed quite inconceivable to women priests in both Sweden and New Zealand.

The importance of keeping up contacts with women clergy in other churches around the world, for mutual support and sharing of experiences, was felt to be of invaluable worth by all the women priests and pastors I met. The dialogue must continue. I am indebted to the many fine women colleagues who generously gave me time, hospitality and opened their hearts to me. I give special thanks to Christina Schenning, Ulla Albert and Unni Franck.

Congratulations Dr Podmore

Congratulations to Dr Colin Podmore, Assistant Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity, Church of England, who was awarded a D.Phil from Oxford University in July. His thesis was "The Role of the Moravian Church in England, 1738-1760."



The Church Choir of the Kimpton Parish in Hertfordshire, England (Anglican) rehearsed in the Schönermark Church, Germany (Lutheran) for a concert they gave during a summer visit to four rural congregations in Brandenburg, northeast of Berlin. This is typical of the increasing number of individuals and groups from Anglican and Lutheran churches who are visiting each other as a result of the Meissen Agreement and the Porvoo Declaration.

English village church choir visits Germany

Valerie Phillips, recently elected to the Anglican-Lutheran Society Committee as the Anglican lay member, writes about her English parish's links with rural parishes in Germany. She is both a lay reader in the Kimpton Parish of the Anglican Church and a member of the German Lutheran congregation in St Alban's.

Anglican-Lutheran links are strong in the village of Kimpton, Hertfordshire, England (population about 2,000). Porvoo and Meissen are not strange, distant concepts to this parish church. Kimpton is linked with the rural parishes of Schönermark, Biesenbrow, Grünow and Frauenhagen in the former East Germany. These villages are in Brandenburg, northeast of Berlin, near the Polish border.

Last summer a group from Germany came to Kimpton. A highlight of the visit was a bilingual Eucharist at which Pastor Horst Fichtmüller read the Gospel in German and distributed the bread at Communion, having learned his first English words: "The body of Christ."

This summer fourteen members of Kimpton's church choir travelled to their twin parishes. The group felt some trepidation at the thought of staying in private homes in a former Communist country, with no word of language in common. It proved a wonderful experience for everybody. The warmth of the welcome was quite overwhelming and included parties, receptions, a trip by both on the Oder-Havel canal system through the ship-lift (120ft drop), and a horse-drawn

charabanc ride through the countryside. The choir gave a concert in church and sang three services (matins and evensong slotted into a Lutheran liturgy). Included was a candle-lit midnight service.

Back in Kimpton, the choir members are still buzzing with enthusiasm about their trip and are planning fundraising activities for the twin parishes. Twin trees have been planted in the churchyards to symbolize our growing together. Both the Kimpton and Schönermark churches have stained glass windows designed and made by Dorothee, the daughter of Pastor Fichtmüller. The design represents light, movement and growth springing from brokenness, an apt metaphor for the coming together of nation and denomination in one small village.

New book by Österlin on Anglo-Nordic relations

Prof. Lars Österlin's important new book, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile, A thousand years of Anglo-Nordic relations*, was published by Canterbury Press, Norwich, UK, on September 15. In his foreword, Stephen Sykes, Anglican Bishop of Ely, England, says this book "provides essential reading for all who will now want to enter more wholeheartedly into the opportunities opened up by the Porvoo Common Declaration."

The Anglican-Lutheran Society has

US Anglicans, Lutherans look to "full communion"

Anglicans and Lutherans in the USA are looking forward to 1997 when two large church bodies will be asked to endorse a Concordat of Agreement to bring them into "full communion."

The 2.4 million member Episcopal Church in the USA and the 5.2 million member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) have been in dialogue for ten years. Now they have entered the process of "reception" before the historic vote next year. Reception is the process by which ecumenical documents get into the faith and life of the churches. Congregations are asked to study the documents and prepare for this major move towards unity. (The Anglican-Lutheran Society sells these books. Write or phone for information.)

The year 1997 will see the ELCA voting on three major ecumenical issues: full communion with the Episcopal Church; full communion with three Reformed Churches (Presbyterian Church USA, Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ); and the "lifting" of the 16th century condemnations on justification between the ELCA - and other Lutheran churches - and the Roman Catholic Church.

Other anniversaries in 1997 include the 450th of the decrees of the Council of Trent on justification; the 70th of the Faith and Order Movement of the World Council of Churches; the 50th of the Lutheran World Federation; and the 10th of the ELCA, which was formed by a union of several Lutheran churches.

copies for sale at UK£11.95 plus £1.40 postage and packing; for US\$25, which includes postage and packing to North America; and the equivalent in sterling of £11.95 plus £2 postage to other countries in Europe. Please make cheques payable to the Anglican-Lutheran Society and send them to the office at 27 Prentis Road, London SW16 1QB, UK.

The Window will publish a full review of this book in the next issue, to be published in mid-December.

Unity and Compassion: Rusama writes on Bell

Following our review, in the Summer 1995 issue, of Edwin Robertson's book on Bishop Bell, Andreas Fischer has rediscovered an earlier book, published in 1986 in Finland (in English), by Dr Jaakko Rusama, a Lutheran pastor who is director of the Finnish Institute in London. Here is a review by Mr Fischer of "Unity and Compassion: Moral issues in the life and thought of George K A Bell".

George K A Bell (1883-1958), Anglican Bishop of Chichester from 1929 to 1958, was one of the most respected figures in the Church of England. According to William Temple, "he has done more than any other among us to foster the relationships between the Church of England and the churches of the Continent." Dr Jaakko Rusama, a Finnish Lutheran pastor who is former General Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Church of Finland, says "It was a challenge, indeed an ecumenical adventure for me, a Lutheran, to undertake this study."

His excellent book gives a lucid account of George Bell's understanding of Christian ethics, showing his crucial role not only in advocating "deeper and more realistic involvement in matters of international common concern," but in recognizing that such practical steps towards Christian unity could pave the way to deliberations on doctrinal questions.

Deeply influenced by Randall Davidson (1848-1930), Archbishop of Canterbury, and also by Nathan Söderblom (1866-1939), Archbishop of Uppsala, Bell's involvement within the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work in the German church struggle was a visible sign of "his concept of international responsibility and his firm belief in the universal Christian Church."

"Contextuality was Bell's method of dealing with moral issues," says Rusama, explaining that Bell's context was a secular society, and that he was one of the few to feel that a world full of modern technology could bring dangers as well as benefits to mankind.

Unity and Compassion is of interest to the present situation because it reminds us of the link between European culture or even Western civilization and Christian tradition. It shows - giving the example of George Bell - what justice and forgiveness

mean as applied to the international order, and that such common action on moral issues could be a very up-to-date way towards Christian unity in today's Europe. This is an idea which was common to the Anglican Bell and the Lutheran Söderblom. For Bell, honest effort to apply Christian ethics to situations in life never waned, and it is this attitude which Rusama's study communicates so well.

Unity and Compassion: Moral issues in the life and thought of George K A Bell by Jaakko Rusama. Published in 1986 by The Finnish Society for Missiology and Ecumenics, Helsinki. The Anglican-Lutheran Society will have copies available for UK£6 (US\$10), including postage. Send orders to 27 Prentis Road, London SW16 1QB, England. Make cheques payable in UK pounds or US dollars to the Anglican-Lutheran Society.

Bell lecture on December 6

A lecture on "Bishop Bell and the German churches" will be given by Dr Andrew Chandler at the annual general meeting of the Church of England Record Society at Lambeth Palace, London, on Wednesday, December 6, at 4pm. Tea will be served at 3.30pm.

Non-members are invited to attend but, for security reasons, you must contact Miss Melanie Barber, Lambeth Palace Library, London SE1 3JU at least one week before the meeting. Miss Barber is executive secretary of the Society.

The Church of England Record Society was founded in 1991 to promote interest in and knowledge of the history of the Church of England.

Bonhoeffer theme Nov 4

Workshops on Dietrich Bonhoeffer are planned for the annual assembly of the Oxfordshire Ecumenical Council to be held Saturday, November 4, from 10am to 4pm at Westminster College, North Hinksey, Oxford.

The Rev Keith Clements, Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, will give the keynote speech on "The Cost of Discipleship." Six workshops on themes related to Bonhoeffer, who was martyred 50 years ago, will follow. Admission for the day is £5 and you are invited to bring your lunch. Phone 01793-783118. All are welcome.



With many new members in the Anglican-Lutheran Society, it seems appropriate to continue to introduce those with special responsibilities. Gillian Court (above), co-editor of *The Window*, is Executive Secretary for the Churches Commission on Overseas Students, London. She is a lay member of the Anglican Church who read theology at Leeds University, and received an M.Litt from Birmingham University for a thesis on Bonhoeffer. She was one of the first members of the Movement for the Ordination of Women and is active in the anti-vivisection movement, a Friend of Doctors in Britain against Animal Experiments. She has worked as a publisher's editor and in a laboratory with a medical research team.

ALS announces AGM

The next annual general meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran Society will be held on Saturday, March 16, 1996, from 10.30am to 3pm at the Swedish Church, 6 Harcourt Street, London W1. Watch for further details.

Next issue due December 13

The next issue of *The Window* will be sent out December 13. Please send material by December 1. Thank you.

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THE WINDOW

Editors

The Rev Ronald T Englund

Ms Gillian Court

Editorial Office

27 Prentis Road

London SW16 1QB, England

Phone and fax: 0181 769 2677