



THOUSANDS MARK HISTORIC KIRCHENTAG 2003

Lutherans, Anglicans and more join in Berlin celebration

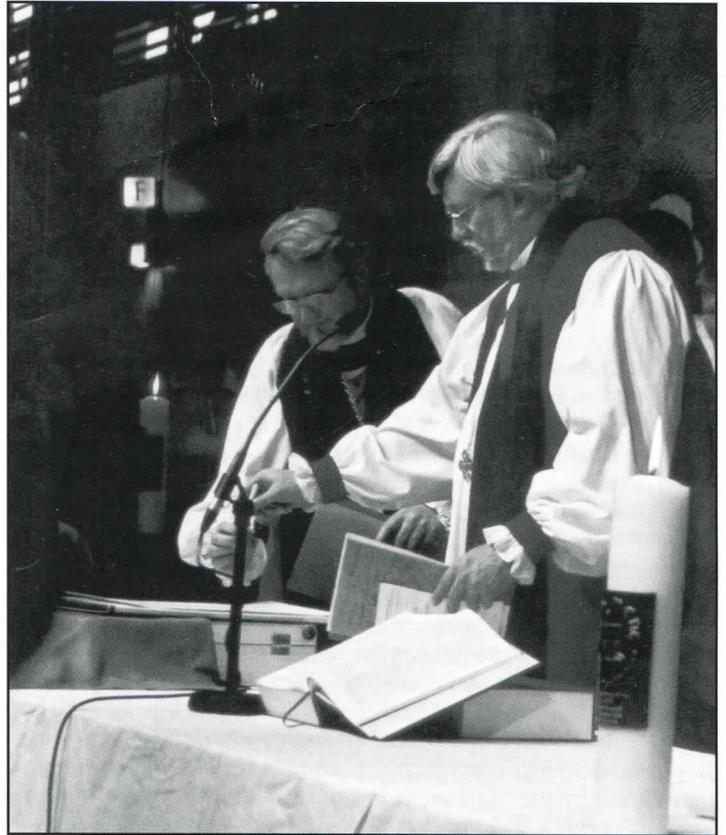
They came from all over Germany, Evangelical Church members and for the first time, German Roman Catholics as well. But others were also present in goodly numbers.

Anglican representation at the Ecumenical Kirchentag in Berlin was quite remarkable when one thinks of the numerical status of Anglicans and Episcopalians in Germany and indeed in Europe in general. The presence of Old Catholic Bishop Joachim Vobbe certainly helped bring a better understanding of the various relationships that are happening ecumenically throughout Europe with Anglicanism as well.

But at Kirchentag 2003 events "Anglican" were in abundance. Bishop Geoffrey Rowell of the Church of England Diocese in Europe and Bishop Pierre Whalon of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe took part in several services including an

Ascension Day gathering at the Old Catholic Parish Centre, and the Formal Signing of the Ecumenical Charter, witnessed by thousands in the great hall of the Kirchentag. There was a special Meissen Service in St George's Anglican Church at which Bishop Rowell was the principal celebrant and Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter of the Evangelische-Lutherischen Landeskirche Schaumburg-Lippe was the preacher. He chose as his subject, observing the feast of the Visitation of Mary, the influence of Mary in the Church today. (for text see p2-3).

The great hall exhibitions included those of the Anglican Episcopal Churches in Germany as well as link fellowships that were evident between the Diocese of London in its unique relationship with Berlin and also the Diocese of Hereford. Bishop Richard Chartres of London participated at several events throughout the Kirchentag, including the early morning



Bishop Geoffrey Rowell, Diocese in Europe and Bishop Pierre Whalon affix their "Anglican" assent to the Ecumenical Charter at Kirchentag. Photo: Anglican World

Ascension Day Communion Service in the Berliner Dom at which, with thousands in attendance, the Bishop is an honorary canon of that Cathedral. Bishop Rupert Hoare presided at a Lima Liturgy on Saturday.

St George's Anglican Church, Berlin is a lively congregation and indeed as part of the Kirchentag celebrations opened their church to an art exhibition on early British saints. The art work and the

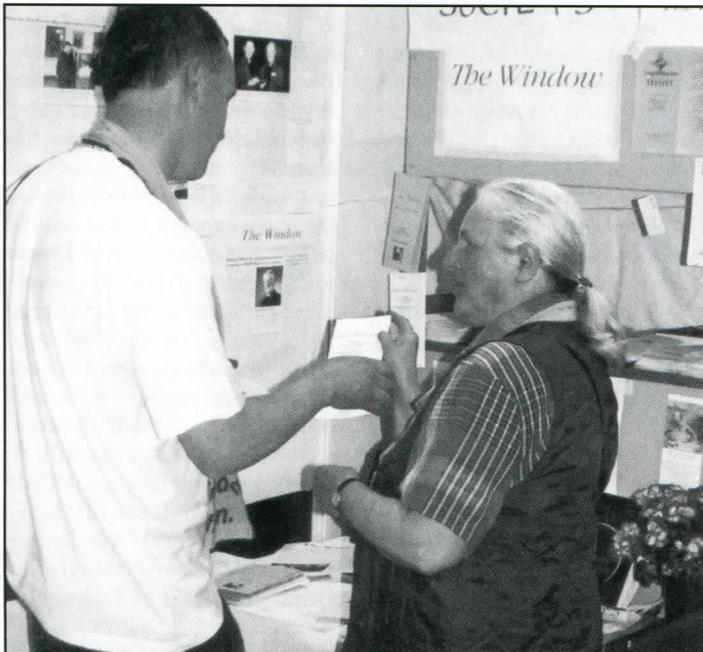
theme were both exquisitely presented. Also on exhibition was the Anglicanism and Western Christian Tradition exhibit that is on a world tour after its first unveiling in the Vatican. The British Embassy hosted the exhibition welcoming Kirchentag pilgrims each day to learn more of the history of the Anglican Communion.

We hope to print the address by Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter on the Meissen agreement in the post conference issue.

Australian Lutheran honoured by Queen

The Revd Lance Graham Steicke, an Austrian Lutheran pastor, has received the celebrated appointment of membership in the Order of Australia by Queen Elizabeth II, during the recent Birthday Honours. Pastor Steicke is the

president of the National Council of Churches and was former president of the Lutheran Church in Australia. The honour comes in recognition of Dr Steicke's determination to work ecumenically in the country.



Anglican Lutheran Society presence at Kirchentag 2003. Photo: Rosenthal/ALS

You shall be a Blessing

Sermon on Luke 1:39-49 by Bishop Jurgen Johannesdotter, at St George's Anglican Church, Feast of the Visitation, during the Ecumenical Kirchentag in Berlin, Germany, Meissen Eucharist

The motto of this ecumenical church convention. You shall be a blessing, reminds us that there is wealth in diversity, and that the ecumenical unity we envision can only be achieved when diversity is protected, making life richer and more beautiful. And we can share in this diversity and wealth by coming together in this Meissen Eucharist. We come from different places in Germany, Europe and the World, we come from different Churches, and yet we are united in our desire for unity in the Gospel.

It is a coincidence, in the most beautiful sense of the word, that the Church of England only recently appointed the 31st of May as a feast day commemorating the meeting of these two women, Mary and Elizabeth. What a happy meeting of two blessed women! How strange that we Protestants have such difficulties with Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus. There is a story about one of our bishops who died and stood before the face of God. Jesus comes down from God's right hand to the bishop and says, Welcome to Heaven, dear bishop. ~"I know that you have know my father, but I don't believe you are acquainted with my mother.

Who is this woman, and why do we have such difficulties with her? Or should I not say, why do we make such difficul-

ties for ourselves concerning her? Part of our problem, I believe. Is that she is a woman, and that we harbour the suspicion that she is Catholic. And such an identity poses a problem for us Protestants. It is, however, not possible to speak about the Incarnation of God without taking this woman into account. Then again it is not so important, what, if at all, we can make of this woman, but rather what God made of her.

In this splendid narrative Mary and Elizabeth meet each other. It is a tender, quiet story, far from the loud goings-on of our daily lives. It is also seemingly far from all the problems of the world, not only those we see and read about in the newspapers and on television, but also those we hear about from people among us here at this church convention.

Two expectant mothers meet, one older, one young. The younger mother comes to the older and greets her. There is something mysterious about this scene-painters have often tried to capture this. The story pronounces the significance of the child whose birth we celebrate at Christmas and whom we proclaim as Lord. At the same time the story presents Mary, the mother of Jesus, as an example of faith.

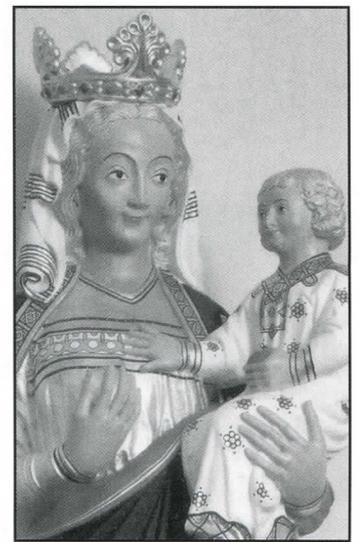
God's messenger has told Mary that Elizabeth, her elder kinswoman, is also pregnant, although it was said that Eliza-

beth was barren. But now she is expecting a child, the herald and forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist. Mary hurries over the mountains to find out if what was said of Elizabeth is true. For Mary, the meeting with Elizabeth is a sign which strengthens her faith. But in fact she doesn't require a sign. She believes God's promise. But still faith repeatedly wants to discover that God fulfils His promise.

Mary greets Elizabeth, but Elizabeth gives no simple reply. Both women speak with each other, but not in the way two expecting mothers would discuss their common experiences, hopes and questions. The story is told because of the children. Here Promise and Fulfillment meet. It is an unforgettable greeting, a greeting of two people coming together as bearers of Promise and Fulfillment of this Promise, of this Fulfillment. In his preface to the Christmas story, the evangelist Luke holds what happened there up to the light: This birth will show that God keeps his promise, and God is wholly faithful and true in every detail.

What brings these two women together-what connects them-is something completely new. The simple ties of friendship and kinship which bind them are pushed to the fringe - only God's new world order counts now. It creates an encounter, a sense of belonging which is indissoluble. No two people could be more dependent on each other than these two women. They came together, just as divine Promise and Fulfillment must also come together, lest the whole world collapse into the abyss.

What brings these two women together and what binds them is a miracle of God. The fact that the new order breaks into the old order, this is what makes these women symbols of the Church. Their encounter parallels the current state of the Church. Without God's miracle, humanity is just like the two women: the one young and inexperienced, the other old and barren. This is the impression humans make on



Statue of the Virgin Mary in Nikolaikirche (EKD), Spandau, Berlin, one of the principal churches of the Reformation events in 1539.

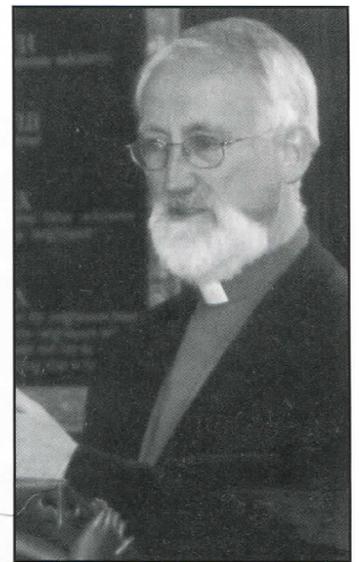
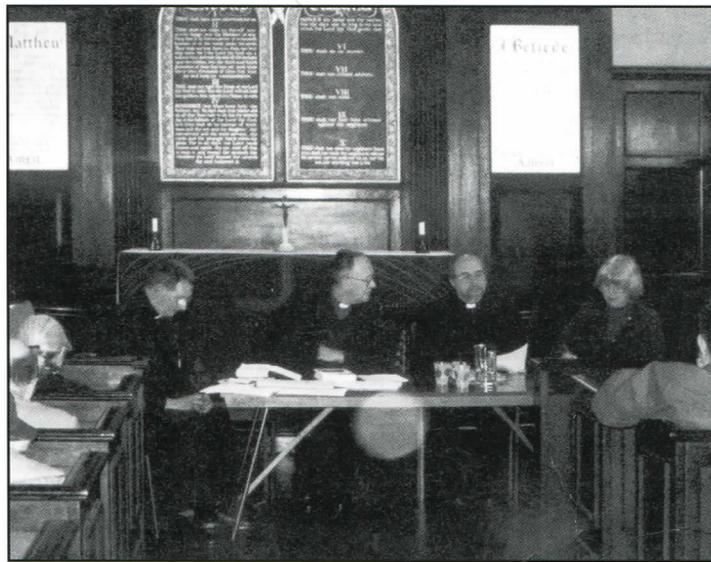
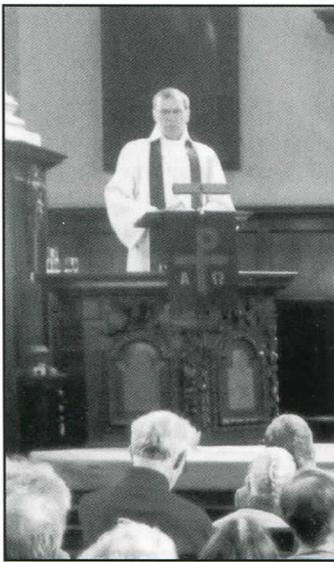
their Creator. They are, through their own fault, either too foolish or too immature for this life, and for that reason ruin everything God fashioned and deemed good. Or humanity is as though paralyzed, incapable of doing new things. Out of the human world-unripe and unfruitful - is born the new world, through God's miracle.

Both women believe what God promises. What they experience, both before and during this meeting, are signs, helpful signs of faith. Faith is above all humble and knows its weakness. It doesn't demand more signs than God chooses to deliver. Zechariah did just this, and this was a sign of his doubt, and in turn he received a sign which can also be perceived as a punishment: he lost the power of speech.

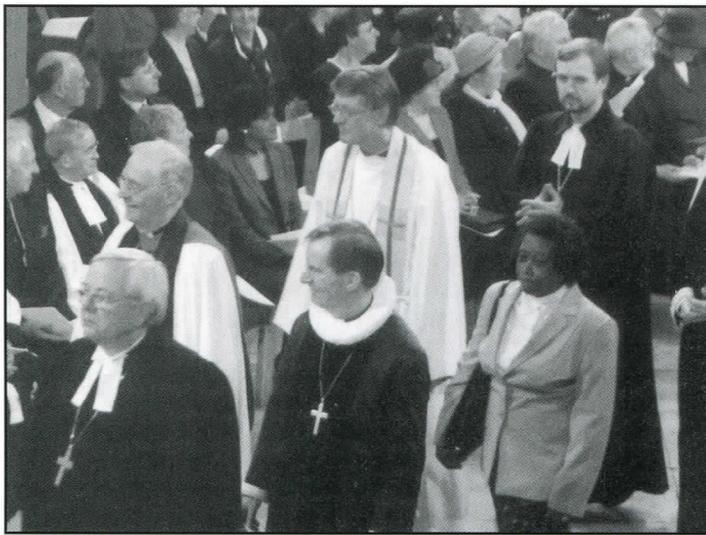
Mary didn't demand a sign. But when it is given to her, she doesn't rebuke it, but accepts it gratefully for the strengthening of her faith. What Mary does in travelling over the mountains to Elizabeth is no different from what we do when we come to table of the Lord and celebrate the Eucharist. The Holy Sacrament in our midst, the open Bible, are also signs. They indicate those places where we can strengthen our faith day by day. It is true what God promised to Mary and Elizabeth, to God's people then as well as now, to God's Church, and to us today who have come together to assure ourselves of God's presence in Holy Communion: 'Come, for all is prepared. Taste and see how gracious the Lord is.'



The Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America the Rt Revd Mark Hanson, with a representative delegation, made a visit to Rome, Geneva and London. Archbishop Rowan Williams hosted a lunch in their honour in Westminster. Photo: Rosenthal Anglican World



Above left: The Rt Rev Erik Vikström, Lutheran Bishop of Porvoo (Borgå), Finland, preached at the Luther's Deutsche Messe during the AGM. Above centre: The annual meeting at St Anne's Lutheran Church, London. Above right: Bishop Jürgen addresses the AGM. Photos: Rosenthal ALS
Below: Lutheran participants in the Enthronement of Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in February. Photo: Anglican World



Canadians Take the Lead

Your order of service takes on a new dimension if you follow the lead of the Waterloo Declaration and begin on a practical level. Each week the cover photo will alternate between an Anglican and a Lutheran congregation in these attractive leaflets, blank inside. Each photo will offer a glimpse into the life of that congregation along the broad themes of the church at-worship, work, play and mission.

The series is based on the revised common lectionary. To facilitate planning, worship and lay readers, they include the NRSV text of all three lessons plus the Psalm. The 3 year series will be printed in full color with a liturgical color bar along the bottom, and designed to fold in 1/2 or 1/3's.

Bill Bulger, originator of the idea, has been an ordained

Lutheran Pastor for 30 years and is presently serving Grace Lutheran Church, Hinton, Canada. For the past 9 years Bill has been licensed by the Edmonton Diocese of the Anglican Church in Canada to serve as rector to St. Francis of Assisi Anglican Church, Hinton, Alberta.

Bill also served for 5 years on the Joint Lutheran/Anglican working group that brought ELCIC and the ACC the Waterloo Document, "Called to Full Communion".

Bill is an amateur photographer who continues to use an old fully manual Pentax 35mm SLR.

Bill's goal in the 2004 series of bulletins is to capture present in images the timeless and always new message of the Gospel.

Maybe a good idea for other regions as well. See <http://www.churchbulletins.int.er.ab.ca/index.html>.

WHY BOTHER?

My introduction to the work of the Anglican Lutheran Society has been a baptism of fire. Firstly, taking over this fine newsletter from its beloved editor and then venturing into an arena still new to me in some ways, and old in others, has been a challenge and exciting

Second, it is all about people, those who seek to do the will of Christ who prayed that all might be one. I might say that traditions as congenial as Anglican Lutheran need not sweat blood and tears as others might do. Anglican Lutheran discussions on all levels, whether in my office on an international with Canon Gregory Cameron, or on the local level, need to be strengthened, as the chaos of today's world is not served well by a chaotic church.

But active is what I have found with the ALS. The forthcoming events in the magnificent surroundings of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral over Holy Cross weekend in September, as well as the excitement of my first Kirchentag (Berlin), where Anglicans made a good showing to say the least, to the AGM and its hopes and promises, all point to some concrete efforts to live as a united faith community while honouring our own experiences.

My only personal credentials are Lutheran maternal Swedish (very high!) grandparents, and the aid of a Lutheran piano teacher that dragged me from the dreags of "lesser hymnody" to the splendour of J S Bach and those whose manuscripts always included SOLI DEO GLORIA. Finding Christ again in the sacramental life of the Episcopal Church, I rejoice that all the Christian traditions, all having a unique blessing to share, if we can be bold and brave to, like the ALS, take time to explore and enjoy each other. I have the privilege of holding USA and UK passports, I have learned to appreciate what good things both nations have to offer, including a Christian heritage.

There was a bit of Anglican jealousy when I was invited by Pastor Bruch to visit the superb facility and elegant chapel at the Lutheran Centre in London.

So why bother? Well, for me, whose life's work is to communicate the work of the world-wide Anglican Communion, The Window and ALS allow me to step beyond myself and to pledge never to be too complacent, that is until labels fall and mission and work begin, and the world once again knows that those who follow Christ are people of unity and purpose, not division and schism.

The newsletter is yours, thus what you bring to it makes its worth all the more important and will be the strength to open the window so the spirit can move freely, and Christ's praise, whether in Anglican Chant or Lutheran Chorale, can be heard as true songs of joy.

James M Rosenthal
Editor



Bishop of London Richard Chartres preaching on Ascension morning at the Berliner Dom. Photo: Rosenthal/ALS

Right: The Bishop of Uppsala, Sweden, administers Communion at the Episcopal Cathedral in Spain during the Partners in Mission Consultation for Europe. Photo: Anglican World

Episcopalians Invade Lutheran Territory

The triennial General Convention of the Episcopal Church will gather in the 1000's in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the great USA Lutheran capital. Lutheran congregations such as Olivet, Central and Mt Olivet, require traffic police to control the coming and going of parishioners to services on the hour on Sun-

days. The Lutheran influence in Minnesota is major and this great state is home of Lake Wobegon and the Lutheran tales told by Garrison Keillor. If you are not familiar with these legends, heard on radio, ask the editor!

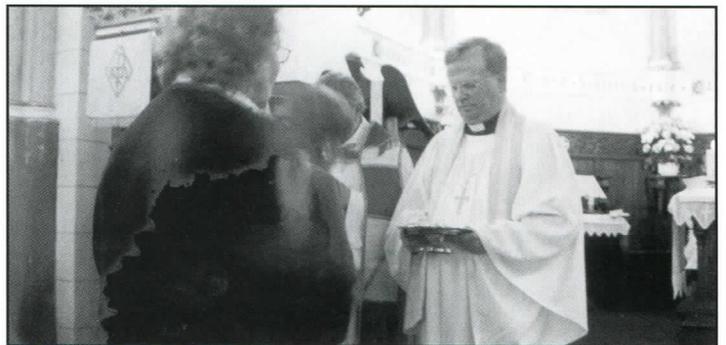
For the computer friendly try <http://phc.mpr.org/>.

The Prairie Home Companion.

Swedish Lutherans visit English parish

Thirteen people from Nossebro, Sweden were guests at members' homes at their link parish of Burbage and Aston Flamville over Pentecost weekend. The visit included a pilgrimage to Gloucester Cathedral the Swedish priest assisted in a service, with the choir of St Catherine's Church, singing the service. The Swedish Lutherans

taught their Anglican friends a hymn in Swedish, sung at the Pentecost Eucharist. The vicar of the host parish, Canon David Jennings, said that the visit was a great success. He said, "Everyone had a great time in Gloucester and were particularly intrigued to see where Harry Potter was filmed." (from *News and Views, Leicester Diocese*).



FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Remember those involved in the International Anglican-Lutheran Dialogue; Pray for the pastor and people of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem; for the meeting of the Lutheran World Federation in Canada in July; for the Liverpool Conference; pray for those who we name before God, especially Valerie Philips.

THANKS AND PRAISE to Helen Harding for her help in the secretariat.

WORTH READING

Discovering Common Mission, Lutherans and Episcopalians Together; Robert Boak Slocum and Don S Armentrout, Eds.
ISBN 0-89869-393-4 \$24.95
Church Publishing New York, USA

REGISTER NOW!

Annual Conference of the Anglican Lutheran Society

September 12-15, 2003

Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century with a focus on Liverpool's experience will be the theme of the weekend hosted by the Rt Revd Rupert Hoare, Dean of Liverpool and Anglican President of the Anglican Lutheran Society.

The Conference will begin on Friday September 12 and will conclude with lunch on Monday 15 September. Registration on Friday 2-4 pm

The cost of the weekend including room and board and all local excursions will be £230 US\$380 or Euro440.

For more information contact Bishop Rupert Hoare by phone +44 (0)151 702 7220 or by

E-mail: dean@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

Please enrol as soon as possible.

Everyone who joins in Christ's prayer and desire for the unity of the church is welcome

The Anglican Lutheran Society

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The President of the Lutheran World Federation

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