

The Window

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THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY

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of this issue focus on the decision taken by the Danish Church to sign up to the Porvoo Agreement, with personal reactions from a Dane in London and an Englishman in Copenhagen

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there are invitations to two great ecumenical gatherings - one in Tampa Florida and the other in Munich



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tells you all about our Annual General Meeting on 13th March. Do please try to be there.

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there is an account of a link between two deaneries - one German and the other British - that has flourished for 30 years

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offers a challenging story from the USA

THE CHURCH OF DENMARK JOINS THE PORVOO COMMUNION

John Arnold, Anglican Co-President of the Anglican Lutheran Society, participated in the conversations which led to the Porvoo Agreement, and in informal talks with the Church of Denmark last autumn.

'I bring glad tidings at Yule.' Every word in this greeting, which would be readily understood in Denmark, derives from Danish – a sign of the closeness not only linguistically but also historically and, indeed, ecclesiastically, between the inhabitants of Great Britain and their neighbours (another Danish word) across the North Sea. Now the Good News is that on 9th December 2009, just in time to welcome Archbishop Rowan Williams to the Copenhagen Summit, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark took the decision to become a signatory of the Porvoo Common Statement and Joint Declaration, which in 1996 brought into communion most of the Scandinavian, Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches with the British and Irish Anglican Churches.

The Common Statement and the Joint Declaration raised few problems for the Churches of Sweden, Finland and the Baltic States. All these churches derive their orders from the Church of Sweden which, like England in this respect, carried out the Reformation under a strong

centralised monarchy while keeping the diocesan and parochial structures of the mediaeval church intact and retaining, or in some cases regaining, the apostolic succession of bishops. Only in Latvia, facing acute internal problems, has the matter not yet been brought forward for decision.

It was a challenge to the Anglicans to accept a broader view of apostolic succession and of its applicability to the Churches of the Danish Reformation. Bishops of all these churches derived their orders from the German Reformer Johannes Bugenhagen who, though exercising a ministry of *episcopé* as Superintendent, was himself in priest's orders.

This had formerly proved a stumbling block for Anglicans; and Porvoo broke new ground by locating apostolic succession primarily in the succession of the people of God in faith and in a particular place, and also by taking a more positive view of the actions of Bugenhagen in the emergency situation in 1536



in ordaining Superintendents to fulfil an episcopal ministry in the vacant sees.

In the event, matters went smoothly in Iceland and Norway largely, as can be seen with hindsight, because of the availability of synodical decision-making. The Church of Denmark came to an interim solution as set out in a statement by the Danish bishops of 29 August 1995. The Porvoo Common Statement had been sent to parish councils, pastors, professors of theology and other interested individuals for an open hearing. The hearing did not produce evidence of widespread consent; indeed the initiative was seized from the start, and maintained throughout, by opponents. The Bishops were therefore not in a position to endorse the Statement.

However, they did not reject it either. They stated: 'We find no church dividing differences in the Lutheran and Anglican foundations of faith, and we rejoice that our churches have not previously maintained that such differences existed.'

The invitation remained open and ways were found to keep the Church of Denmark within the fellowship. Her existing friendly relations with the other Nordic Churches and, indeed, with the Anglican Churches have developed and flourished as has the Porvoo Communion itself.

We have been in an anomalous situation for the past fourteen years, for it was precisely to accommo-

date the churches of the Danish Reformation that the Agreement took the form it did. Indeed, the Declaration, taking the churches in alphabetical order, begins with the ringing words, 'We, the Church of Denmark,...'. If we had been dealing only with the churches of the Swedish Reformation a simple statement, like the Bonn Agreement of 1931 with the Old Catholic Churches, might have sufficed. We can be grateful to the Danes for causing us to develop a deeper doc-



trine of the ministry and to work out a sustainable view of 'episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church' - views, which are proving to be of interest to others, not least in the Roman Catholic Church.

During those years there has been the opportunity to clear up some misunderstandings and obstacles, to view favourably the actual development of the Porvoo fellowship, and to make a number of changes facilitating this happy outcome.

The first is the series of decisions by the Anglican churches regarding the ordination of women as priests and, eventually, as bishops.

The second is the action of the Church of Denmark in joining the Communion of Protestant churches in Europe (Leuenberg), which established the means of taking such a decision and also strengthened its Protestant credentials, which some had feared would be impaired by an alliance with Anglicans.

The third is the development by both the Anglican and the Lutheran Churches of other ecumenical relationships, in accordance with the explicit intention of the Porvoo Common Statement that the signatory churches would strengthen 'the links which each had with other churches at local, national and international level.'

Porvoo is not a new hybrid Anglo-Lutheran or Luthero-Anglican Church, but a fellowship or communion in which the Anglicans remain Anglican and the Lutherans Lutheran.

In practice, however, this agreement means that we now regard one another 'not as strangers and pilgrims, but as fellow members of the household of God' and treat one another as members and ministers of our own churches. This will be particularly important for St Alban's Church in Copenhagen and its congregation in Aarhus and for the Danish Church in London; but its effect, like the message of the angels, might well turn out to be of wider significance.

COMMITTEE MEMBER'S NEW ROLE

In July this year the Reverend Patrick Irwin will be leaving his present post as British Chaplain at SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) in Mons, Belgium, the Headquarters of Allied Command Operations (ACO), to become Anglican Chaplain at the Church of the Resurrection in Bucharest, Romania, which also serves Sophia in Bulgaria. Patrick, while maintaining his enthusiasm for Anglican-Lutheran matters and his role in our Society, is also looking forward to getting to know the Romanian Orthodox Church, and to his involvement in inter-Church structures in Eastern Europe.





DANES IN PORVOO

A personal response from The Rev Else Hviid of The Danish Church in London

To me it was an interesting experience to move from Denmark to

become pastor at The Danish Church in London. I moved from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, where I represented a majority church, to Britain where I now represent a minority church with no relationship to this country's majority Church, and therefore with no community with my Anglican colleagues - not formally at least.

The Porvoo statement had not been on my mind for many years, and it was brought to my mind again, and now as the explanation to my strange situation.

I never considered different ways of being Christian church in different countries or cultures necessarily as being a threat to our unity, to believing in the same God, sharing the same creed and the same tradition. For a very long time Anglicans and Danish Lutherans shared views on working together and sharing belief and experience as expressed in the Porvoo statement. Now that the Danish Council of Interchurch Relations, on behalf of the Church, has signed the Agree-

ment, we can on both sides also fully acknowledge this.

It has also been an interesting experience to follow the reactions to the signing in Denmark and in the UK. On the day of the press release I was both surprised and touched, when I received three congratulations from Anglican colleagues and an invitation to preach in a nearby Anglican church.

In Denmark there is joy and satisfaction as well, especially among the bishops and among those theologians and pastors who have wanted this for many years and worked hard for it. But there is still, among many, a pronounced scepticism, reinforced by the fact that this time the bishops and the Council of Interchurch Relations took the decision without a preceding public debate. For most church people in Denmark it is an inalienable tradition that the congregations are being heard before big decisions are taken on behalf of the church.

The congregations play an im-

portant role in the Danish church structure; they choose their vicars and vote for their bishops. They maintain there is only one ministry of the church to which both the priesthood and the episcopate belong. And they recognize the admission on an equal basis of men and women, regardless of their sexuality, to both the priesthood and the episcopate.

While there is still concern among some Danish church people that their democracy and the equality are threatened, I'm not concerned at all, and I am looking forward to meeting my Anglican colleagues.



The interior of St Katherine's, the Danish Church in London

LET'S ALL GET CONNECTED

Laura Lincoln, our Society's National Coordinator in the USA issues an invitation to members everywhere to contact the International Lutheran Episcopal Society, which is what ALS is called in the States

I invite you, no matter what country you are from, to visit our website at <http://www.alsocietyusa.org>. Our members in the United States would love to attend the Society's European conferences so as to get to know you, but are prevented from doing so by the cost of making the journey. For someone living on the West Coast it is as far to cross the States as it is to fly from New York to London or Amsterdam.

But we would all very much like to be in touch so that we can get to know each other. One way of doing this is via the internet. Please get on line, go to our blog page and add your thoughts. Go to our photo album page and share pictures of your ministries. Connecting across the globe is so important in our reaching out to one another in the cause of Christian Unity and electronic communication is making it easier all the time. Try it!



St Albans Anglican Church, Copenhagen, and the Gefion Fountain

DANES IN PORVOO

A personal response from the Venerable Jonathan Lloyd. He is Chaplain at the Anglican Church in Copenhagen and also Archdeacon of Germany and Northern Europe in the Anglican Diocese of Europe.

stroyed by the British Navy. How history moves forward!

It is a great joy to be working in Denmark at this time, and I look forward to deepening our already close working relationships between St Alban's Anglican Church in Copenhagen and with the ELCD and learning from their rich history and tradition. We at St Alban's pay tribute to those who have worked so devotedly through the years to welcome ELCD as full Porvoo partners - in particular Dean John Arnold, Dr Paul Avis, Bishop Christopher Hill, Bishop David Hamid, Bishop Eric Normann Svendsen, Bishop Martin Wharton, Dr Jorgen Skov Sorensen, The Revd Ulla Monberg, Canon Mark Oakley, The Revd Jan Nilsson and many others behind the scenes.

I echo the words of Archbishop John Vikstrom: "Therefore we can with thanksgiving and joy place our increased and deeper communion at the service of reconciliation and hope."

On 28th November 1996 I was at Westminster Abbey as a member of General Synod representing the Diocese of Southwark, and remember the joy and significance of that great ecumenical Eucharist as the Porvoo Communion came into being. The sermon by Archbishop John Edvin Vikstrom of Turku and Finland ended with these words:

"The Porvoo Declaration aims at a deeper realisation of the unity that has already been bestowed upon us both as people and as Christians. It is also a promise of the perfect unity that we will one day celebrate before the throne of God. Therefore we can, with thanksgiving and joy, place our increased and deeper communion at the service of reconciliation and hope."

breakfast! Just days earlier the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark had announced its decision to join Porvoo, after a unanimous and unexpected vote taken by the Church's Council on International Relations.

At the end of the meal, Archbishop Rowan gave a brilliant unscripted talk on faith in the public square, exploring Christian faith in the modern world, and comparing Richard Hooker to NFS Grundtvig.

On the way out I pointed out to the Archbishop fragments of Admiral Horatio Nelson's canon balls that have been embedded in the Bishop's House since 1807, when the Cathedral of Our Lady (opposite the house) was de-

On 13th December 2009 I was at the Bishop's House in Copenhagen, as the newly-appointed Anglican Chaplain to the Kingdom of Denmark. The newly-elected Bishop of Copenhagen, Peter Skov-Jakobsen, hosted a formal lunch for The Archbishop of Canterbury and all 12 bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark. In true Danish style, we started the meal with a hymn by N F S Grundtvig and ended it with "O Come All Ye Faithful", with delicious herring in between. The lunch had taken on an unexpected sense of joy - in fact it had the air of an engagement



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, with the Bishops of the Danish Church

'THAT YOU MAY HAVE HOPE'

This is a fitting theme for this year's Ecumenical Kirchentag, which will take place from 12th – 16th May in Munich.

As Rupert Hoare explains, it not only promises to be an exciting and challenging ecumenical event in difficult times, it also offers our Society a splendid opportunity for recruiting new members. But he needs your help.

The first occasion on which the Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany came together for an ecumenical Kirchentag attracted 200,000 participants from 86 countries. That was in Berlin in 2003. The organisers are expecting similar participation this year, in the beautiful city and environment of Munich. The majority of the participants are young Christians, for whom the Kirchentag is a real inspiration.



Could YOU could come and help us? We would be delighted if you could.

The Kirchentag's theme, *That You May Have Hope*, will be explored in four areas:

- **Acting Responsibly - being Christian in one world**
- **Living together - being Christian in an open society**
- **Seeking and Finding - being Christian alongside a variety of world-views**
- **Living our faith - being Christian in a variety of churches**

The organisers write: "You can assemble your own personal programme from the selection of around 3,000 events. It makes no difference whether you prefer attending discussions, gathering information, exchanging viewpoints and meeting other people or whether you are looking for reflection, prayer, meditation or counselling. Maybe you want to join in a celebration or listen to music - everything is possible at the 2nd Ecumenical Kirchentag. There will be an English guide to the programme to help you find events of interest to international visitors, including those where simultane-

ous translation into English is provided."

This year two special sessions are being included, entitled: "*Church in an age of challenge - learning from British experiences*". The first is called "*Church and Society Today*", with Prof Grace Davie, Bishop Colin Fletcher and Catherine Pepinster. The second: "*Church and other Faiths*", with Canon Andrew Wingate, Rev Jutta Mueller-Schnurr, Mr Andrew Sarle, and Mr Sughra Ahmed.

Although the numbers attending are huge, the whole atmosphere of the Kirchentag - the Christian friendliness so much in evidence, the worship and the debates about pressing issues - all make the occasion one of real inspiration and hope for everyone who takes part. It can be a great experience for each individual. Accommodation in people's homes will be provided for people from outside Germany."

Would readers of The Window who would like to find out more, especially those ready to volunteer to help with our stand, please be in touch with Rupert Hoare 0044 (0)1457 820375, rupert.gesinehoare@btinternet.com or with Frau Gudrun Kaper, kaper44@yahoo.de

More information can also be found on the Kirchentag's website:

www.oekt.de (add /english if needed)

Applications to take part need to be made by 8th March

But it is for older people too and, being ecumenical, people won't know or care which part of the Christian Church you come from! For once you can simply be a Christian! And you don't need to know German; there are translators, and lots is in English.

The Ecumenical Kirchentag is a unique opportunity for members to promote the Anglican-Lutheran Society, with its commitment to the visible unity of the whole church of Christ, beginning with Anglicans and Lutherans. So we will be there, along with thousands of other organisations, with our own 'Stand' in the 'Agora' (what was previously known as 'The Market of Possibilities').

We are looking for volunteers to help run the Stand. The more we have, the more we can take it in turns and the more time we shall all have to take part in some of the 3000 events that will be happening in the Kirchentag. So, if you are planning to visit Munich, what about it?

125 YEARS OF THE SWEDISH CHURCH IN LIVERPOOL

Readers of April 2009 edition of *The Window* will be well aware of the question marks hanging over the future of Gustaf Adolfs Kyrka, which for 125 years has been a centre for Nordic church work and witness in Liverpool and the north-west of England. Although these question marks are still around, there have been a number of exciting suggestions put forward that may yet see not only a continuation of the church's present work, but an expansion into new and exciting areas of ministry.

The church itself was packed to the doors on the first Sunday in Advent, 29 November, 2009, as a large congregation gathered together to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the consecration of the building. The service was led by Rev'd Göran Capron Lundqvist from the Swedish Church in London, who at present has the pastoral oversight of the Liverpool community. Also taking part in the service were Swedish and

Norwegian ministers who had served the community over the years, as well as local Anglican clergy. The Co-Moderator of the Anglican-Lutheran Society (and former Dean of Liverpool), Rupert Hoare, was present in the congregation with his wife, as was Roy Long, Secretary of the Society, who also represented the Lutheran Church in Great Britain.



Since the former Norwegian church closed its doors in the 1990s, Gustaf Adolfs Kyrka has served as a spiritual home, not only for the Swedes of Merseyside, but also for the Norwegian community, and for the large Finnish community. People from all the Nordic nations took part in the service, along with representatives of the German community and of the city and the county.

To coincide with the 125th anniversary, Dr Robert Lee, professor of History in the University of Liverpool, has written two commemorative books which describe the history of the church itself and of the wider Nordic community in Liverpool and the north-west. These are entitled *History and Heritage: the Scandinavian Seamen's Church in Liverpool*, and *From Scandinavia to Liverpool: a History of Merseyside's Nordic Community*.

Both books are available from the author at w.r.lee@liverpool.ac.uk

PATRICK HAMILTON : THE STEPHEN OF SCOTLAND

2010 marks the 450th Anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland. Roy Long reviews a biography of the first Scottish martyr

Did you know that the first martyr of the Scottish Reformation, Patrick Hamilton (1504-1528), was Lutheran in his theology? He was a Scottish aristocrat with royal connections who came under Luther's influence when his studies took him to the University of Marburg. He published a short theological work, similar in form to Luther's *Ninety-five Theses*, known as *Patrick's Places*. After returning to Scotland in 1527, he was arrested, tried, and summarily executed in St Andrew's on 29th February, 1528.

Sadly, if you want to find out more about Patrick Hamilton there are few good resources. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* has some passing references in a chapter called "The Martyrs of Scotland". There are brief references in

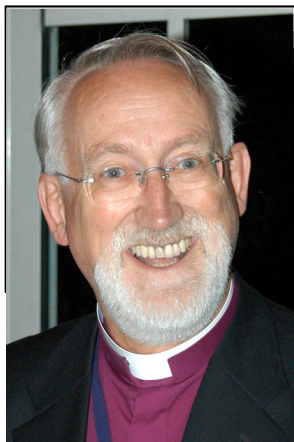
standard histories of the Church of Scotland, a biography from 1857, and an American Lutheran publication from 1918. So, my heart leapt at the news that there was to be a new biography of Hamilton in 2009. But it quickly fell back to earth with a bump when I actually read it.

Originally written in Portuguese by Joe Carvalho a Church of Scotland minister in Perthshire who was born in Brazil, this book turned out to be something of a disappointment. True, it gives a straightforward account of Hamilton's life and death. But it is marred by factual errors (for example, Margaret Tudor, widow of James IV, was **not** the mother of Mary I of England (p23) and the Margrave Philip was ruler of Hesse, not "Hess" (p72). There is no prop-

er bibliography or index, and the book is full of assertions which would have benefited from being backed up by factual evidence. I have not read the original Portuguese version, but the English translation seems to me rather stilted and over-literal.

However, despite all that, I can still recommend the book, if only because there is nothing else immediately available, and because it does contain (pp.87-106) the gist of the text of *Patrick's Places*. So, read with care and discretion, and learn a little of the Lutheran influence on the early days of the Reformation in Scotland.

Joe Carvalho, *Patrick Hamilton: The Stephen of Scotland*, Dundee, AD Publications, 2009. No ISBN. Order online www.pwamm.com



Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter

ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY 2010 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** **“MAKING MEISSEN WORK”**

SATURDAY 13th MARCH 10.30am
at Christus Kirche, the German Evangelical Church,
19 Montpelier Place, Knightsbridge, London SW7 1HL



Bishop Nick Baines

and the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (Protestant Church in Germany) which was signed in 1991, represented a major breakthrough in relations between one branch of Anglicanism and the Lutheran, Reformed, and Union churches in Germany. Over the past two decades the participating churches have been involved in a number of initiatives at church, diocesan and parish level, aimed at the practical implementation of the Agreement.

This year's Annual General Meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran Society on Saturday 13th March 2010 will focus on the Agreement and these different initiatives - all of which have been aimed at making Meissen work.

The Society is very fortunate to have as its main speakers two churchmen who have been very active over the past few years as Co-Chairmen of the Meissen Commission: Nick Baines, Bishop of Croydon, well known as a speaker and author, and Jürgen Johannesdotter, former Bishop of the Landeskirche of Schaumburg-Lippe, who is one of the Presidents of the ALS. The AGM will begin, as usual, with a short formal business meeting, after which Dean John Arnold will introduce the topic for the day by giving a short historical introduction. After this, both guest speakers will make individual presentations and answer questions from the floor. In the afternoon there will be a more general discussion led by a panel which will include Bishop Baines and Bishop Johannesdotter, together with Rev Dr Leslie Nathaniel, from the Council for Christian Unity of the Church of England, and Rev John Yule, Vicar of Fen Drayton, Cam-

bridgeshire who, together with his wife, has been very active in developing relations between the Diocese of Ely and the North Elbian Lutheran Church in Germany. There will, of course, be refreshments and lunch, and the concluding worship will be led by the pastors of the German-speaking congregation, Anne-Kathrin and Wolfgang Kruse.

Tea and coffee will be served from 10am and there will be a buffet lunch at 12.30pm. There will be a registration fee of £7 for members and £10 for non-members, which will be collected on the day. Members and friends who are planning to attend should register with Mrs Helen Harding, from whom full details are available. She can be contacted on 01923-672240, or by email : helen@ccwatford.u-net.com

CHRISTUS KIRCHE GERMAN **CHURCH IN LONDON**

The venue for this year's Annual General Meeting is in itself a very interesting and historical building. It will take place at Christus Kirche, the German Evangelical Church in Montpelier Place in Knightsbridge.

The present church building dates from 1904, but the congregation itself can trace its history back over 300 years. It was established in 1700 in the Chapel Royal of St James' Palace at the request of Prince George, the Danish husband of the future Queen Anne.

The church itself stands above a hall, and over the years since the Second World War it has been a home, not only to the German-speaking congregation, but also to Christ the King Polish Lutheran Congregation, and, from time to time, to the Icelandic Congregation as well. It is well worth visiting, and the AGM is the perfect excuse!





A TALE OF TWIN CITIES

The Rev Dr Keith Archer describes a 30 year partnership between the communities of Salford in England and Lünen in Germany

Once upon a time, a pastor in the German town of Lünen invited the Deanery of Salford to a special event in his parish. The town-twinning between Lünen and Salford was 15 years old; was it not time, he asked, for the Churches to step on board? We in Salford tried to ignore him, but Dieter would not be ignored. He wrote and wrote - until one day in 1980 four people, including me, set out from Salford in an old Ford car. We did not get to heaven, but we did get to the eastern edge of the Ruhrgebiet, where Lünen sits astride the River Lippe. We didn't know what to expect, but the hospitality, the friendship and the chance briefly to stand in other people's shoes, got us hooked. From this tentative beginning there soon grew a formal partnership between Salford Deanery and the *Kirchenkreis Lünen*.

That was 30 years ago. Of the four who drove to Lünen two are dead - so, sadly, is Dieter, whose insistence was so crucial - and one now lives in France. That leaves me. But though I have been the partnership's *persona* in Salford from the beginning, my opposite number in Lünen is the fourth person in that role. Partnerships *can* survive beyond the first generation.

We quickly agreed that there should be one visit per year in alternating directions. But we realised it would be fatal to repeat the same pattern each time. Our activities must be varied enough to attract people from different backgrounds and age-groups. Over the

years several different styles emerged. There were fact-finding and getting-to-know-you visits - an essential first step, but not to be repeated indefinitely. There were youth exchanges which needed funding, and because European Union funding rules became so complex and demanding we ran out of adults able and willing to lead them. There were 'extravaganzas' - big group visits linked to special occasions. The biggest were the Salford visit to the Ruhrgebiet Kirchentag in 1991 (55 people, including a troupe of country dancers, a cricket team, some fish & chip fryers and two barrels of Boddingtons [beer!-Ed]) and the Lünen visit to Salford's Millennium Festival in 2000 (47 people, including a brass band, a gospel choir, some jugglers and some *Zwiebelkuchen* makers). There have been family holidays: young families with children living together as a community, with people from the partner-town joining them as day visitors. There has been one 'special' - a joint pilgrimage to Iona in 2008 - and many theme-focused visits.

On the English side this variety has made it possible to attract to the partnership a wide range of people, fairly typical of those involved in church life in inner Salford. The Germans are socially less inclusive, mainly because of language. German-speaking Salfordians are rare birds so the Germans mostly bear the language burden. Set-piece discussions are normally translated, but English is the

main language for socializing, and Germans who feel less than confident in it tend to exclude themselves. On the Salford side, too, there has been more spread ecumenically. Methodists, United Reformed Church, Roman Catholics and evangelicals have been involved here, but only Catholics on the German side, reflecting England's more complex ecumenical scene.

Despite the differences, both sides report similar outcomes: above all widened horizons and deepened faith. This appears to happen through the discovery of commonality. For individuals whose circumstances, culture and history are different, the chemistry of guest and host seems to stimulate people to look for commonality. In fact, throughout the 30 years only once did I witness a situation where difference led to conflict. It was at the time when the Church of England was struggling towards its de-



The group enjoying their joint pilgrimage to Iona in 2008

cision on the ordination of women. Our hosts' Church, the *Westfälische Landeskirche*, refused to ordain women until the supply of men dried up late in World War II; so when an English male priest expressed opposition to it on the grounds of the ontological character of priesthood, they dismissed

his argument as a cover for power politics. The result was a tense agreement to disagree. Horizons do become widened, but only if we are willing to accept that reality and truth exist beyond the bounds of our existing horizons.

This is why the themes that have worked best in our theme-focused programmes have been ones which pose questions rather than compare answers. 'Nationality and Identity' was a great success, for example. So was our latest programme: 'The Church and Young People in Today's Globalized World'.

Interestingly, both of these have pushed us towards contacts with Muslims, both here and in Germany, since their presence is now an inescapable feature of the European scene. This has been enjoyable and enlightening - but it makes some people in both Salford and Lünen uneasy.

There must be limits to what a partnership of this kind can do, and maybe we are bumping against them here. More specialized arrangements are needed to look more deeply into some of the issues that emerge - and through friendships formed by the partnership one such possibility developed.

When I led a group visit from Manchester Diocese/Greater Manchester Churches Together to the European institutions in Brussels in 1993, it seemed a most natural thing to suggest to my friend Dieter (then a *Superintendent* in Dortmund) that he and some colleagues should join us. He did, and there followed a series of joint studies on European Union themes between 1995 and 2004 with first Dieter and then, after his untimely death, a colleague. This work was intensive, and led to some minor publications - and ultimately to some very close collaboration with Muslims. But that is another story...

YOU ARE WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS : WHAT WITNESS WILL THE WORLD RECEIVE?

The USA National Workshop on Christian Unity will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Tampa, Florida, April 19-22.. Our Society will be represented. Would YOU like to join in?

The National Workshop is a wonderful event with hundreds of ecumenically-minded people from across the United States meeting to share ideas and enthusiasm! The Hyatt Regency Hotel is a magnificent venue which prides itself on the service offered to its guests.

The International Lutheran Episcopalian Society (the Anglican-Lutheran Society in the USA) will have a table there, and our little group will be meeting together periodically throughout the conference. All US members are invited and it would be wonderful if some from Europe and elsewhere could join Rupert Hoare, our Anglican Co-Moderator, there so that the Society could be seen to be genuinely international in character.

Costs are: Registration: \$175 (\$150 before March 15) : Hotel Lodging: \$129/night + tax : Cultural Event: \$45 (Florida Aquarium)

Registration information will be available soon at www.nwcu.org

Scheduled Speakers include:

Mon : The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church

Tue : Archbishop Wilton Gregory, Archdiocese of Atlanta, Chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Committee, Roman Catholic

Wed : Bible Study on *The Generation of the Eucharist in the New Testament* by the Rev Dr Bruce Chilton, Bernard Iddings Bell Professor of Religion at Bard College, and Rector of the Church of St John the Evangelist

Wed : Plenary on Local Reception - The Rev. Dr. William Rusch, The Divinity School, Yale University, and New York Theological Seminary

Thur : Closing Luncheon Speaker - The Rev. Dr. Thomas Best, former Director, Faith and Order Commission, World Council of Churches

To help you in your planning ahead, the conference begins in the late afternoon on Monday (an optional workshop for new attendees is early afternoon) and closes with lunch on Thursday (approximately 1pm).

The Tampa airport is only about 8 miles from the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Transportation to/from the airport can be arranged with the hotel for \$13 per person (<http://tamparegency.hyatt.com/hyatt/hotels/index.jsp>).



CALLED TO COMMON MISSION AND ROAD BUMPS ALONG THE WAY

by The Rev Canon Joseph Y. Seville,
Canon to the Ordinary, and Ecumenical Officer, in the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania

Called to Common Mission (CCM) has been one of the most significant accomplishments in seeking unity in the one Body of Christ. In the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, CCM has born fruit in a number of ways. Both Episcopal and Lutheran clergy are serving as interims or long term pastors in several congregations, there are joint worship services, and a long term joint outreach ministry to children at risk has been established in up-town Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Episcopal Diocese used the Lower Susquehanna Synod's *Camp Luther* as the setting for its summer junior high program.

All of these efforts are an affirmation of *Called to Common Mission*. They reflect what it means to be in full communion with one another - how our two churches recognize in the other a part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

While CCM envisioned each church maintaining its autonomy, it also called for regular consultation and communication with the other in matters pertaining to each church's life that would strengthen the fellowship and enable common witness, life and service (from the Cold Ash Report -1983).

Exactly how this is carried out fully is something which remains to be seen.

An example of how this was **not** carried out may be found in the presence of one "off shoot" congregation from the Episcopal Church meeting in an ELCA congregation. **All Saints Anglican Church** currently meets in St. John's Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

All Saints Anglican Church had its

origins 30 years ago when three parishioners from St. James, Lancaster and one from St. John's, Lancaster left the Episcopal Church over the introduction of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Through the assistance of a retired former Episcopal priest, who also was upset over Prayer Book revision, the group began to meet in a local Lutheran Church in Lancaster.

At the beginning, when the arrangement was formalized, it was the local parish council of the Lutheran Church that set the terms. Since CCM was not in force, and because it was seen as a matter of simply offering space for another congregation to worship, no consultation was regarded as needed with the Synod office or Lutheran Bishop.

Initially, All Saints was served by a former Episcopal priest. Over time, the small congregation decided that it wanted to include music in its worship and the Lutheran congregation's council indicated that if they were to have an organist, it would need to be their organist, who happened to be the husband of one of the members of All Saints. This same organist is the son of a Lutheran pastor. Even-

tually, the founding priest retired from All Saints and a new priest needed to be obtained. The congregation then encouraged the organist to study for ordination which he did. Upon retiring as organist for the Lutheran parish he was ordained into the breakaway church. He now serves the congregation as its priest.

Another interesting development is that All Saints moved because the original Lutheran congregation where they were meeting merged with another Lutheran church in Lancaster. With closure of the Lutheran congregation All Saints moved as well, this time to St. John's, Lutheran Church, Lancaster. Again, the formal arrangement was made between All Saints and St. John's parish council, and the synod office was not notified.

Such an arrangement raises a number of questions for both traditions to consider: What is the best way for either tradition to handle those who have left their own tradition to form another congregation? Is there any obligation on the synod to the diocese or the diocese to synod? Just how much of such ruptures in the other's tradition do we need to be aware?



St John's Lutheran Church, Lancaster, PA

One could say that currently there is a "don't ask, don't tell" attitude. If a local pastor or priest is approached by an off-shoot congregation, it is not required that the synod or diocesan office be notified. In the case of All Saints, since what was being sought was simply a place to worship and

nothing more, this appeared a reasonable approach to take.

However, in light of the stated purpose of *Called to Common Mission* should something more be expected in the way of an obligation for both the local pastor to inform his/her bishop so that some support might be offered to the clergy affected by the departures? Should such matters really only concern the local parish council/vestry? Also, is there any way for the receiving congregation to be of help beyond simply offering a space for worship? That is, can the church where the break away group worships in some way help to be a reconciler?

This may well be simply whistling in the dark for, more often than not, once a group splits this way the last thing they seem to want is any kind of reconciliation with the church of origin. But at least the question needs to be raised to challenge everyone with the question of what do we fundamentally believe about being one in Christ?

The divisions that ruptured the Episcopal Church over the last thirty plus years are only the latest examples of how difficult it is to have everyone stay at the one Table. Recent decisions within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America will undoubtedly present similar issues for individual Lutherans deciding to go their own way. However, as the Episcopal Church has preceded the ELCA with some of its controversial decisions, it is unlikely that a similar request to a local Episcopal congregation would be asked by one such Lutheran group. What *Called to Common Mission* does for both traditions, though, is to challenge our two Churches to explore different ways in which our common witness, life and service might show the world around us the Good News of Jesus Christ upon which we all depend.

SHARING MISSION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC

The Rev Dr Richard Hill is a Pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) Metro New York Synod, where he co-ordinates the 'Total Ministry Program', performing a role similar to that of a diocesan missionary in the UK. In November 2009 he came to visit the diocese of Newcastle and gave two presentations to clergy and lay leaders in the diocese on evangelism and managing change within the church. ALS member Alex Faludy spoke to him after one of the talks.



Dr Richard Hill (left) with Dr Robin Greenwood in the Chapel of Church House Newcastle

AF: What are the aims of your stay here in the UK?

RH: Aside from visiting Newcastle I attended a conference in Northampton too. However there are other good reasons for coming. Over the years I've noticed that England sometimes experiences new trends before we do in the States. It can be helpful to know what's coming, and we can learn a lot from your experience!

AF: What sort of things had you in mind?

RH: Well the interface between Islamic communities and the rest of society is something you grappled consciously with first. I'm also interested to learn how the ventures like 'Fresh Expressions' and 'Collaborative Ministry' programs turned out after a number of years. Through 'Total Ministry' in the Metro New York Synod we're now encouraging our congregations to think and plan along similar lines - and pool resources in the way your deaneries are beginning to in some places

AF: Have the mission challenges facing Lutherans in America changed during your ministry?

RH: We can no longer rely on the pews being continually refreshed by new arrivals from Europe. Today ministry among Latino communities is high on the agenda and that means increasing awareness of their language and culture

among Pastors. We also have ethnic-specific ministries that are worshipping in over 20 languages every week. We also have to learn to be flexible in our structures as these communities experience a lot of flux and mobility.

AF: Has the 'Called to Common Mission' agreement actually made an impact in mission term?

RH: Sadly on the whole I think not, certainly not in my part of the country; although I hear a few good local projects exist elsewhere.

AF: Why is this?

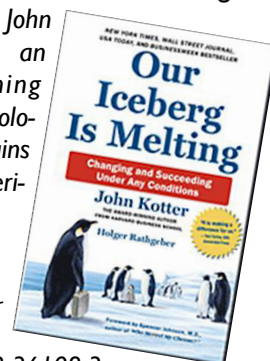
RH: Well the Episcopal Church has a fair number of internal problems right now, but there are also checks on our side. ELCA isn't monochrome: it was formed in 1988 through the union of three different Lutheran church groupings. Some ELCA members are less happy than others about what *Called to Common Mission* might imply for our own sense of identity in future. Many pastors and churches are strongly congregational in their approach to ministry and resist what they see as efforts to impose hierarchical systems on them.

AF: Finally, do you know a fun way to get congregations to think about change?

Yes, get them to read *Our Iceberg is Melting* by John Kotter*. It's an award winning book about a colony of penguins faced with a serious challenge!

* St. Martin's Press, September 2006

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THE VISION BEFORE US

The Report of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations 2000-2008, published by the Anglican Communion Office 2009

(ISBN 978-9558261-6-0, 256pp) records the Commission's work of maintaining an overview of the Anglican Communion's engagement with Christians of other traditions, and of giving encouragement and advice to the ecumenical activities of the Communion and the Provinces. Described by the Rt Revd Gregory Cameron, Bishop of St Asaph, and former Anglican Director of Ecumenical Affairs, as 'a chocolate box of delights', the book contains all the Resolutions of the Commission, along with its statements, papers, advice and other key texts. Our Anglican Co-Moderator, **Bishop Rupert Hoare**, commends it to members for study and offers this, the first of three reflections of a personal nature.

The Vision Before Us

Compiled and Edited by
Sarah Rowland Jones



The visionary title of this volume raises high expectations about the future course of ecumenical relations from the Anglican point of view. Indeed, if you are prepared to work through the technical language of the official sections of this report, there is much to find here which is hopeful for the future. Discussion arising from Anglican-Lutheran ecumenical documents feature quite prominently in the book. It can give us a fairly up-to-date account of where the Anglican Communion is ecumenically at an official level in 2010, and I would therefore like to offer some reflections on the material it presents, here and in the next issue of *The Window*, in an effort to further what are known as 'the processes of Reception.'

The book was first a Report summarising the work done by the Commission on Ecumenical Relations 2000-2008, directed towards those in authority responsible for advising its successor body; hence the jargon and the plethora of acronyms incomprehensible to all except the very inner circle of specialists in Anglican Communion affairs.

Here's a test: do you know what ACC-14, or IASCEC, or IASCUFO, or ICAOTD, or IARCCUM, to mention but a few, are? I had to remind myself what 'the Instruments of Communion' are; and I should have known, as they go back to the Lambeth Conference of 1998; they are actually groups of people in authority, rather than

some kind of impersonal unifying mechanisms. The Archbishop of Canterbury, poor man, is 'an Instrument of Communion'. But it is worth ploughing through the jargon and the acronyms (there's an excellent glossary of all of them at the back), in order to get at the substance of the book. For the clergy (and they were all clergy) that made up this Commission (if you've reached this stage you will realise that its acronym was IASCEC) did a great deal of work, which is recorded in these pages, and published as a book, in order to make it available to all of us.

The readability of the book has been greatly enhanced by the introduction, commentary and notes that one member of the Commission has written, to bring coherence to all the Commission's deliberations. She is the Rev Sarah Rowland Jones, and she has done a superb job in bringing the Commission's deliberations alive and making them personal. She reminds us of the obvious point that the Commission's members were people, with different life-stories, different events befalling them as the Commission's life proceeded; pain, grief, bereavement as well as joy being shared by a group with sharply differing views and backgrounds, nevertheless working and worshipping together as fellow pilgrims on the Way. She recounts how she herself got to know another member of the Commission, eventually they married, then he fell ill, lost his battle with cancer, and she was wid-

owed. He was Bishop Justus Marcus, a gentle, humorous and sensitive South African; she was a priest in the Church in Wales. I had had the privilege of working with him in the Anglican-Methodist International Commission, at an earlier stage, and Gesine and I had shared in their wedding in Wrexham.

The Commission had wisely entrusted the writing up of their deliberations to her. It is a first step, one might say, in a process of Reception by the wider Church of the work being done in our name in matters ecumenical. A first step, but only a first step! She makes the point that ideally the book should be in the hands of all those in theological training; but says this would be beyond present resources. I'm reminded of Professor Mitzi Budde's remark at our Conference last year in Turku, that the ordinands she taught were better versed in the controversies and divisions of the 16th century than in the ecumenical endeavours to overcome them in the 20th. That won't do! The reconciliation, the healing, the serious endeavour to set things out afresh in ways that get over the controversies of the past, as well as the actual steps that have been taken in the last 30 or 40 years towards the visible unity of the Church need to be made known and celebrated, and certainly not only by clergy.

So, now I turn to the process of 'Reception', as the Commission understood it.

'Reception' is crucial. (In passing, surely a voluntary Society such as the ALS should have a part to play in this process, and should, along with other such bodies, be encouraged by the professionals to play their part). The Report has a Chapter on the subject, and Sarah refers to it at the outset. The text to which reference is made is Romans 15.7: "Receive one another, therefore, as Christ received you." Maybe "receive" is rather a weak translation of the Greek, could even be rather grudging, though of course it is deepened immeasurably by comparing our receiving one another to Christ's receiving us. The New Revised Standard Version has "welcome" which gets the mood a bit better. But the great Greek dictionary, Liddell and Scott, has: "take to oneself as one's helper or partner". At the level of one Christian individual, Christian group - or even Church - to another, that gets it splendidly.

This verse reflects very well what the process of Reception came to mean in the work of this Commis-

sion. In contrast to the understanding of the term I used to have, and indeed to the use of the term in the Introduction to this book, where Reception has to do primarily with the whole Church at every level receiving the ecumenical agreements that have been made and making them their own (if they can), the Commission has seen itself tasked to discern whether particular ecumenical developments can be received by the Anglican Communion as consistent both with other ecumenical agreements and with Anglican doctrine and ecclesiology.

This task is prior to the kind of reception processes I was describing above; it is almost a kind of vetting of developments to see whether they are acceptable to the Communion as a whole, prior to their being "sent down" for reception by the rest of the Church. It may well be, in view of the strains that this last decade has brought within the Anglican family of churches and also externally with our ecumenical partners, that it was inevitable that

this Commission should have been landed with this role. However, it reinforces the problem with which I began these reflections, that the work of the "ecumenical professionals" is even further removed from the life and thinking of the local church, and so the task of actual reception in the wider sense is made all the greater.

The Report comments on the Indaba Reflections of the 2008 Lambeth Conference to the effect that more "bottom up" ecumenism should be fostered. Certainly what comes out from this Report seems very "top down", if there is much "downwards" in it at all. Having said that, it is illuminating to read how this particular Commission has had to live with, and wrestle with, the tensions that have arisen within the Anglican family, and in their repercussions for relations with our ecumenical partners.

In the next issue of *The Window*, I shall conclude with some comments on the Commission's handling of what it terms "Holy Order".

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH : ST PAUL'S APPROACH

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity last year Pope Benedict addressed a general audience on this theme, as Fr Phillip Swingle, Roman Catholic Observer on the Executive Committee, reports.

St Paul devoted much of his writing to the question of how a person can be justified in the sight of God. Paul was 'blameless as to righteousness under the Law' before his memorable encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus. But after that he began to consider all the gains of his previous religious experience as 'rubbish' in the face of the sublime nature of his knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Writing to the Philippians Paul explained that he had abandoned any attempt to justify himself in terms of Law and moved to 'a justice based on faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.' All are sinners, incapable of justifying themselves. Yet they are graciously justified as a gift 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'

Martin Luther interpreted Paul as saying that justification is 'by faith alone.' But, the Pope pointed out, in the correspondence with the Christians in Corinth, Paul made it clear that freedom from the requirements of the Law did not mean freedom from moral law. Paul was referring to freedom from the ritualistic requirements of the Hebrew Law, something which preserved the religious identity of the Jewish people. He taught that 'the God of Israel, the only true God, has become the God of all peoples.' Thus, people justify themselves before God by identifying themselves with Christ. "Being just simply means being with Christ, being in Christ; that is all," the Pope said.

The *sola fide* approach taken by Luther is correct, the Pope concluded, "if it is not placed in opposition to charity, to love." Faith means communion with Christ, which implies following God's law of love. Faith inevitably produces works, the Pope said. "Faith is looking at Christ, conforming to Christ. And the form of Christ's life was love."



SET FREE FOR FREEDOM : EAST GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCHES AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF 1989

Dr Johannes Zachhuber, Reader in Theology at Trinity College, Oxford reflects on the nature of the churches' involvement in the 'Velvet Revolution'.

While public recollection of the events in 1989/90 has been intense in recent months, the contribution of the East German Protestants to the democratic movement of that period has found little attention in this country. And where it is remembered, it is often doubted that it provides unmitigated reason for pride or celebration; its more enthusiastic assessment in the immediate aftermath of those events is believed to have been disproved by further developments.

Revelations about links between the churches and the Stasi do appear to have undermined their reputation as an institution untainted by collaboration with the communist regime, and the continuing and dramatic decline in religious affiliation in East Germany seems to testify to the failure of the churches in the heartland of Lutheranism to connect spiritually with the majority of their people.

The idea of a 'Protestant Revolution' is indeed inaccurate as a description of the East German transformation in 1989, and it is necessary to observe that, unlike their Catholic counterparts in Poland, the Protestant churches in East Germany could not draw on the undiminished and faithful loyalty of the population at large. Secularisation had started early in these parts of Germany, and the communist

rulers were quick to notice that the near-universal church membership that still existed after the war was in reality a house of cards that would collapse under fairly moderate pressure.

East Germany in the 1980s was a country in which religion did not play a role any longer for the majority of the population. Yet this fact does not diminish the role these same churches played in the peaceful revolution of 1989; in fact it makes it all the more remarkable. In East Germany, more than in other communist countries, the communists had been willing to

Thus when it became clear that social and political changes were afoot but lacked even the most elementary institutional support in a country without free parties, trade unions, or in fact without any independent civic organisations, the churches in their majority were willing to provide precisely this space for as long as it was needed.

This close alignment between the political transformation and the churches, of course, would not last - it was not meant to. Once new political organisations had been formed, it was appropriate for them to take the lead in democratic debate about the future development of the country. The churches stepped in for one brief historical *kairos* only, but it is arguable that without their willingness to do so subsequent developments, from the fall of the Berlin Wall to the unification of Germany and, in a way, of Europe, would not have been possible.

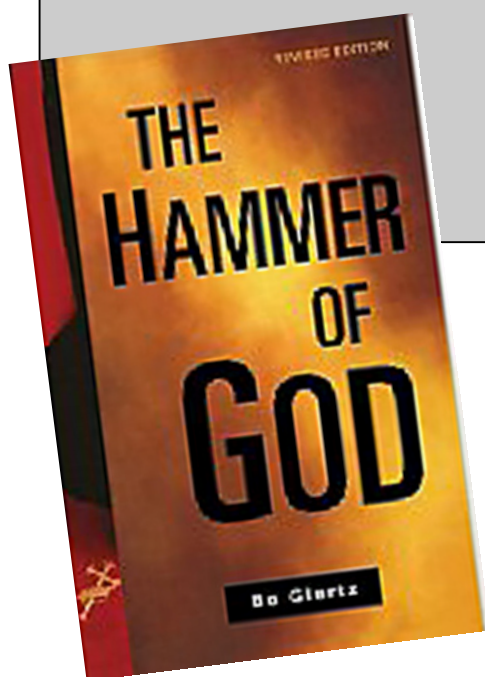


A peaceful prayer protest meeting in October 1989

concede to the churches a measure of independence, and in the latter half of the 1980s the Protestants were increasingly minded to test its limits.

This in itself is significant, given the long tradition of authoritarian subservience in German Lutheranism, a heritage that made itself felt even at that time. Exposure to ecumenical debates, however, convinced many that the gospel message could not be detached from political emancipation and liberation.

Were they right, however, to offer this support? Were they not merely used as an outlet for political wishes and desires in a population tired of its totalitarian regime? It is important to remember that the churches became centres of the revolution in October and November 1989 by offering prayer services. Demonstrations would often start from those events, but the churches themselves were not used for political rallies. Open prayers of intercession naturally took on a political dimension, but they remained embedded in a spiritual frame of litur-



SWEDISH NOVEL FILLED WITH DEEP SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS

Roy Long considers this book essential reading for all ministers and theological students

Theological novels are few and far between because, somehow, few writers can successfully combine telling a good story with communicating sound theology. Bo Giertz is one of the few successful practitioners in this genre, but he is, unfortunately, almost unknown in the English-speaking world. Now, one of the few of his books that has been translated into English, *The Hammer of God*, is easily available again in paperback, and it is highly recommended for anyone who wants an easy way into understanding some fundamentals of Lutheran theology.

Bo Giertz (1905-1998) was brought up in a free-thinking, liberal Swedish family with a strong scientific bent,

but he ended up studying Theology, served as a parish priest in western Sweden, and went on to become a distinguished theologian and, from 1949 to 1970, was Bishop of Göteborg (Gothenburg). He was a prolific writer and speaker, and in an article ten years ago in *Kyrkans Tidning*, the official Church of Sweden weekly newspaper, he was named as the man who had made the greatest impact on the church in Sweden during the twentieth century.

The Hammer of God was first published in English in a shortened version in 1960 (for some reason, the very last chapter was omitted), and now it has been re-published in a revised version together with the final chapter. The novel (which is, in reality, three self-contained short stories) gives glimpses into the life of a rural parish in western Sweden at different periods in the past two hundred years – the first decade of the 19th century, the late 1870s, and the end of the 1930s. It deals with some important issues – church and state, revival movements in the Church, Christianity and morality – but, above all, it deals with the fundamental under-

standing of the relationship between Law and Gospel which is such a basic feature of Lutheranism. These topics are all dealt with in the context of real-life situations which the pastors, who are the main characters, have to face in their ministry. The exact situations might strike a contemporary reader as a bit removed from life in the 21st century, but the underlying challenges are just the same.

This is a book which is well worth reading. Ministers will find that it raises questions that are significant for their ministry today, and both they and lay members of the church will discover that it is a book with deep spiritual insights. I first read it in 1962, and it is a book that I have returned to many times during the intervening years. If there was a literary equivalent to *Desert Island Discs*, it would be top of my list of the eight books that I would take with me and, in my opinion, it should be compulsory reading for every theological student.

Bo Giertz, *The Hammer of God*, Minneapolis, Augsburg Books, 2005 (Revised Edition). ISBN: 978-0-8066-5130-9.

gy, biblical reading, and hymns. There was a general awareness that what the Church had to offer chimed, at that moment, with what the country as a whole needed: the overcoming of fear in the face of oppressive power and the belief that peaceful means could bring about real liberation.

The churches did not calculate their actions with the aim of boosting their membership. Instead they offered political ministry to a people that badly needed it. The peaceful transformation of East Germany into a democratic polity within a few months is the outcome against which their commitment ought to be measured, and the reason why Christians ought to remember it with pride and gratitude.



Peaceful protest following prayer meeting, October 1989

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

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A GUIDE TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

by Martin Davie

A book reviewed by Committee Member, the Rev Donna Mistlin

Dr Martin Davie has previously taught at a Church of England Theological College and has written and contributed to several books and articles about ecclesiology, systematic theology and church history. He has also been involved with inter-church dialogue as a Church of England representative. Now he is the Theological Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity and Theological Consultant to the House of Bishops.

This book was commissioned by the Church of England's Council for Christian Unity and was written in response to a request from some of the Church's ecumenical partners in Continental Europe. They wanted a guide to the Church of England for those training for ministry. The Council for Christian Unity also felt that it would be useful for people in this country who wanted to increase their knowledge of the Church's structure, theology and history.

In 250 pages the book explores in a clear and concise manner the essential fabric of the Church of England. In twelve chapters Martin Davie covers the foundations, history, structure and Government. The chapters on Government are helpfully split into National level and Diocesan, Deanery and Parochial levels. The issue of Establishment is covered in some detail including a useful section on the Objections to the Establishment of the Church. The Chapter on the Doctrine of the Church is very detailed and is valuable to those who have some previous knowledge of Christian belief.

Martin Davie rightly points out in Chapter Eight that the term 'vicar' is a label commonly applied to anyone who is entitled to wear a dog collar. He expands on this and goes on to explain the rich variety of ministry within the Church, both lay and ordained.

There is a focus on worship covering in some detail the Book of Common Prayer, the Alternative Service Book and Common Worship, accompanied by short notes on music, preaching and vestments.

Chapter ten looks at the Church of England and its relationship with other Churches with reference to the pre- and post-Reformation periods to the present. Chapter eleven continues the theme of ecumenism with 'Interfaith Relationships'. The Church of England's Ecumenical Principles are clearly laid out on pages 172-194, and the book ends with a chapter on the mission of the Church detailing history and current mission initiatives.

This book is, as the title suggests, a useful guide to the Church of England with an excellent index which makes it easy to navigate around the contents. The footnotes are helpful providing references to further resources including websites. Inevitably there have been a number of new developments within the church since publication but the book remains relevant.

A Guide to the Church of England was published by Mowbray in 2008 (ISBN 978-1-9062-8613-2)