

# The Window

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## LUTHERAN PATRON TO RECEIVE NIWANO PEACE PRIZE

In February it was announced that Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land has been awarded the Niwano Peace Prize for his work toward interreligious dialogue among Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Jerusalem and worldwide. Bishop Munib is our Lutheran Patron and we all join in offering him our heartiest congratulations

Bishop Munib, who is also President of the Lutheran World Federation, is the 34th recipient of the award, which is given annually by the Niwano Peace Foundation (NPF) of Japan in recognition of the service and the scholarship of an individual or organisation towards promoting peaceful cooperation among religions, particularly in places of difficulty. It is the Bishop's commitment to interfaith harmony, equal dignity and respect for all people, non-violence and to seeking a just peace between Israel and Palestine that are being recognised. The presentation will take place in Tokyo, Japan on 27th July.

'In a world characterized by leaders who seek to emphasize difference and hatred, Bishop Younan has consistently striven for the opposite. His work emphasizes peace over power and unity over monotheistic domination,' wrote the NPF International



Bishop Munib Younan. © Albin Hillert/LWF

Committee, noting his cultural work in the Middle East and across the globe, fostering and participating in interfaith dialogue with Jerusalem's three Abrahamic faith leaders and their communities despite historic tensions among the groups.

Bishop Munib has also been instrumental in leading support of justice and peace in many other areas, including gender justice and the just use of water, and is a founding member of several Middle East interfaith groups.

## WALL BUILT, THEN TAKEN DOWN

Roman Catholic and Protestant bishops were together in Wittenberg for a service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The members of the congregation built a mock wall and then took it down in memory of the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9th November, 1989. In his sermon the Catholic Bishop of Speyer, Karl-Heinz Wiesemann, said that in view of increasing nationalism it is even more important for Christians in Europe to bear witness together to peace and reconciliation.

## NEEDED URGENTLY

As you will read in the report of the Annual General Meeting (page 3) our Treasurer for the past few years, Pastor Erich Rust, wishes to hand over to someone else. He suffered an accident some time ago and as a result he is having to take things a little easier.

Unfortunately, none of the people attending the meeting offered to take over. So the matter is becoming somewhat urgent. If you would be willing to find out exactly what the job involves please contact Erich by email at [erichundsigrunrust@gmail.com](mailto:erichundsigrunrust@gmail.com)

## THE BUSINESS MEETING

Our Society's Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday 25th February, 2017. Thirty-five members and two non-members gathered in St Boniface's German Roman Catholic Church in London. In welcoming us Fr Christian Dieckmann, the Parish Priest, (pictured



here) told us a little of its history. The present church replaces a building dating from 1875 that was somewhat ironically destroyed by German bombing in the Second World War. It is a plain modern building, but it has a landmark tower which is very tall and slender, with four bells from the earlier church hung vertically. The interior of the church contains some very high quality furnishings and wrought ironwork, most of which were created by artists and craftsmen from Krefeld in Germany, the birthplace of Fr Felix Leushacke who initiated the rebuilding. Fr Dieckmann explained that the church is regularly used for worship and that the ancillary buildings house the beautiful hall in which we were gathered, and a hostel accommodating visitors from all over the world. He encouraged everyone to explore the church during the lunch break, and wished us a successful day.



The Business Meeting was chaired by our Anglican President, Dr John Arnold. After prayers led by Pastor Erich Rust, the minutes of last year's meeting were agreed and then the Co-Moderators gave their report.

### Our Co-Moderators Report

Bishop Michael Ipgrave (Anglican) began by highlighting the Visby Conference. It had been a wonderful experience, and thanks were expressed to the Bishop of Visby and his Diocesan staff, and to Richard Wottle in particular, for their generous support. He was delighted to tell the meeting that Richard has agreed to become our Swedish Co-ordinator.



*Jaakko Rusama and Michael Ipgrave*

The Executive Committee had met four times during the year, he continued, and expressed thanks to the Lutheran Council for their generosity in providing the committee with a convenient meeting place in London. Small working parties continue the committee's work between the meetings. The Society will have a stall at the Berlin *Kirchentag* in May and a number of regional events are being planned in the UK to mark Reformation 500. Already preparations are in hand for the next conference to be held in Durham in August 2018.

Michael spoke appreciatively of our Society's newsletter, *The Window*, which contains information and stimulates reflection and stimulation. The website and Facebook pages are also used to disseminate information. New publicity leaflets in a variety of languages have been produced and he urged members to make use of them, and to promote the Society whenever they have the opportunity.

Dr Jaakko Rusama (Lutheran) said it had been a busy year for a small organisation which is voluntary, ecumenical and international, playing an important part in promoting the

visible unity of the Christian community. He thanked our Patrons, the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Archbishop of Dublin, and the President of the Lutheran World Fellowship; also our Presidents, Dr John Arnold and Bishop Juergen Johannesdotter, both of whom are very supportive and involved; and the Executive Committee which consists of lay and ordained people from both our denominations as well as a Roman Catholic observer.

He also expressed appreciation of the invaluable contribution made by Pastor Erich Rust, our Treasurer for some years, who has indicated that he would like to step down. Helen Harding is the Membership Secretary and also maintains the links between the National Co-ordinators, and does other valuable administrative work. Canon Dick Lewis is a most efficient secretary, he said, and is also the highly innovative editor of *The Window*.

The Society faces many challenges, one being publicity and how to attract and inform people. The publicity leaflets in several languages are a good start, he said, and so are the new pull-up banners, one in German and one in English, available from the Secretary for use by any members attending events where they can fly the flag for the Society. You can see one behind Fr Dieckmann in the photo top left.

John Arnold thanked Michael and Jaakko for their report, and for heading up the Society and the effective way they chair the Executive Committee's meetings.



### Our Treasurer

Before presenting the accounts Pastor Erich Rust announced his intention of standing down as Treasurer.

Because the CAF Bank has introduced a monthly fee on every account held, the Society has closed one account and incorporated all our finances into one, he told us.

The Conference in Visby involved a lot of income and expenditure and the unexpected, drastic change in exchange rates following the Brexit Referendum meant that the Society was facing a deficit on the conference account. However, the Diocese of Visby had come to our aid and generously subsidised the event. He expressed thanks to them and was relieved to be able to report that the conference account is clear. Erich also thanked Dick Lewis and Helen Harding for their work as co-signatories on our account.

Tim Moore asked if, in view of what had happened about the conference, it



*Sally Barnes making a presentation to Erich Rust, our retiring Treasurer*

might be helpful for the Society to hold a UK account in Euros for future events in Europe. The meeting agreed to refer this to the Committee for consideration.

Erich reminded the meeting that our Co-ordinators in America, Germany

and Finland each maintain their own accounts and manage their own subscriptions and expenditure.

Sally Barnes then thanked Erich for having served the Society so faithfully, and she presented him with a token of our appreciation for all he has done.

### Our National Co-ordinators Reports

**Pastor Jochen Dallas** reported that the Society is alive and well in Germany. They have €718 in the bank and are yet to send subscription reminders for this year! He told the meeting that Brexit had come as a big shock to everyone involved in ecumenical partnership with British churches, and how important it will be to maintain these partnerships. Jochen had represented the Society in Hannover at the annual Consultation of Representatives of the German churches with links/partnerships to Church of England churches, and the German committee is preparing for the *Kirchentag* and is planning a meeting for all our German members in 2018 in Erfurt.

**The Rev Sigurður Arnarson** reported that there had been little activity in Iceland during 2016, but in contrast **Pastor Fredrik Ulseth**, our man in Norway, has been in regular contact with the Church of Norway's Council for Ecumenical and International Relations (CEIR). The Council was involved in the publication of "*Towards Closer Unity: Communion of the Porvoo Churches 20 Years*" and promoting the Society fits well within this Porvoo focus. He has given the Council members the Norwegian edition of our information leaflet, and has made sure that a copy was presented to all the representatives assembled at the Norwegian Synod in January. The Church of Norway has become in-

dependent of the State, so he is more easily able to spread information to all clergy and parish councils.

In Fredrik's opinion simply providing information through The Window or inviting people to come to international conferences is not enough. If people are to get engaged in ecumenical issues good local ecumenical networks need to be established. He feels that the Society, by working within the Porvoo context, can make a positive difference.

During the year **Lennart Sjöström** retired as the National Co-ordinator for Sweden and thanks were expressed for the way in which he has undertaken this role since returning to Sweden from the UK where he had been Rector of the Swedish Church London. As already reported, **the Ven Richard Wottle** from Visby has agreed to take on this role for us. Visby Diocese also has connections with the Swedish Church Abroad, so opportunities for creating contacts for the Society are quite good.

**Tom VanPoole**, our North American Co-ordinator, was thrilled that eight of their members had been able to attend the conference in Visby. They remain active in ecumenical efforts and, as reported in The Window last May, long-time member the Rev Tom Prinz was awarded the Virginia Council of Churches Faith in Action Award. The American branch had \$2406.60 in the bank at the end of the year.

### Our Membership Secretary

Helen Harding reported that a number of people have joined the Society. New members come mainly through personal recommendation, so she reminded the meeting that every UK member had been sent publicity material and encouraged them to use it to spread the word about the Society.

She is doing her best to help members to feel that they are part of something that is useful as well as quite extensive. During the year she had circulated two "Bulletin Boards" to UK members containing all sorts of useful information, and she also sends occasional emails to the whole membership across the world.

Helen agrees with Fredrik Ulseth that networking is very important and hopes that the committee will find ways of encouraging this during the coming year.

### The Elections

Our Co-Moderators and Secretary were willing to stand for another year and were re-elected unopposed.

No nomination was forthcoming for the post of Treasurer. Erich Rust assured us that he would not leave us in the lurch, but he is anxious to relinquish the task and hopes that a successor will be found soon.

**Jo Jan Vandenheede** (Lutheran), who has been a keen member of the Executive Committee, has resigned. John Arnold thanked him for his lively contributions to the meetings and wished him well.

**The Rev Susanne Skovhus** (Lutheran) was elected to fill the vacancy for one year. She is Pastor of the Danish Church in London and is also working with the Lutheran Council coordinating the Reformation 500 events.

### Date of Next Year's AGM

The Chairman, John Arnold, apologised to those for whom this year's change of date from March to February had created problems. The earlier date had been chosen to coincide with the Reformation 500 *Stationenweg* visiting London. Some people had visited it on their way to the meeting. Next year's meeting will be on **3rd March, 2018**. He then thanked everyone for coming and closed the business meeting with prayer.



## THE OUTWORKING OF THE MEISSEN AGREEMENT FROM A GERMAN AND A LUTHERAN POINT OF VIEW

*After the Business Meeting had been concluded there was a short break. Then our Anglican Moderator, Bishop Michael Ipgrave, invited our Lutheran President, Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter, to share his thoughts about the Meissen process. You can find his presentation on the website. Here is a summary of what he said.*

Bishop Jürgen started by reflecting that ecumenical dialogue involves knowing other languages, and that is not just familiarity with the words they use! He told us how the late Bishop Lilje of Hanover was attending a conference in Outer Mongolia. A Mongolian Bishop got up and made a short speech. His contribution was unexpected and no-one had been prepared to translate it. So Bishop Lilje stood up, went to the microphone and translated it. The Mongolian Bishop embraced him and led him back to his seat, and someone said to Bishop Lilje, "I know you know quite a few languages but I didn't know you could understand Mongolian." The Bishop replied, "I didn't understand it at all, but I know what people say on these occasions!"

Without friendship, and without a willingness to be surprised, no-one can exist in ecumenical dialogues. 'Truth is not the property of just one denomination,' Bishop Jürgen told us, 'We all share part of it.'

Much of his life has been spent in an ecumenical context, he went on. 'When I started as a young pastor in that part of Germany close to the Dutch border a large percentage of the people in my parish were of the Reformed tradition. I recall preaching to my confirmation candidates for just ten minutes. The candidates were very happy, but some of the older people said, "He is young; one day he will learn that to preach properly takes at least half-an-hour!" In that parish the Reformed regarded me as worse than the Catholics!' he smiled.

It is impossible to explore differences without first going to meet people, creating friendships, exploring their beliefs and customs and letting them discover a little of our own. Bishop Jürgen's experience as the Meissen Co-Chair from 2002 to 2009, with his Anglican counterpart Bishop Michael Bourke, introduced him to Rupert and Gesine Hoare, and through them he somehow found himself involved in the Anglican-Lutheran Society, something he has been very grateful for.

On arriving in London on the way to this meeting he went to Church House Bookshop near Westminster Abbey. There he found a book called 'The Catholic Luther: His Early Writings' edited by Philip and Peter Krey, and was delighted by the forward written by Wolfgang Thonissen. He quoted



part of it in which Thonissen states that after centuries of regarding Martin Luther as a heretic Catholics have gradually come to understand him as a serious religious person as well as a conscientious man of prayer. In 1996 Pope John Paul II stated that Luther's wish was to reform the Church. More recently Pope Benedict XVI appreciated the deep passion and intensity with which Luther dedicated his entire life to the search for God.

Bishop Jürgen is so happy that recent Catholic scholarship is recognising that the intention of the Augsburg Confession was to express deep concern for reform and to preserve the unity of the Church, and that Luther did not intend to split the Church. Now both Lutheran and Catholic theologians are able to see that the Confession should not be regarded as a document of division, nor as the foundational document of a new church, but rather as a sign and expression of the desire to maintain unity within the Church.

Turning to the Meissen Agreement itself he told us that when it was signed on March 18th, 1988, by representatives of the Church of England, the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the German Democratic Republic (DDR), and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), Maria Herrbruck, one of the delegates, called it an "historical moment in the Church." 'And she was right,' Bishop Jürgen continued. 'Since then one of the goals of the declaration – to strive together for full, visible unity of our Churches – has been achieved on many levels. German Evangelical Christians have been welcome guests at Anglican Eucharists and similarly Anglican brothers and sisters have shared in EKD Communion Services.'

The Agreement has encouraged links and partnerships at many levels. 'Most English dioceses and EKD district churches have at least one,' he said. 'Common theological conferences, visits from delegations of church leaders and above all the lively exchange between congregations, choirs, schools and youth programmes all characterise the partnership. There have been innumerable services and celebrations together. For years the German Protestant *Kirchentag* has had

Meissen services and Marketplace stalls that tell the Meissen story.'

Bishop Jürgen reflected that Germany and England wrestled bitterly with each other during the two world wars in the twentieth century. But today many friendships have been developed between the two countries. Something that is characteristic of Meissen gatherings is profound hospitality. He gave as just one example the deep friendship between the *Frauenkirche* in Dresden and Coventry Cathedral. 'The Church of England and the EKD live reconciliation,' he smiled. 'They understand each other as part of that one holy catholic and apostolic church that has come to us in Jesus Christ.'

He reminded the meeting that the Meissen Commission coordinates the many relationships between dioceses and *Landeskirchen*. Five English and five German members work together in this Commission under the direction of the two co-chairmen, Nick Baines, Bishop of the Diocese of Leeds, and Ralf Meister, Landesbischof of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover. The Commission plans further steps towards full visible Church unity, and is developing some guidelines and recommendations to facilitate ever deeper relationships, with the aim of building a confident Church in our pluralistic Europe.

'The ecumenical movement is founded on the work of pioneers who inspire others to commit themselves to ecumenical renewal,' Bishop Jürgen continued, and he paid tribute to Dame Mary Tanner of the Church of England (to whom we were to listen in the afternoon session) and to Dr Christa Gregel of the former Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR and Oberkirchenrat Klaus Kremkau of the Evangelical Church in Germany. 'The three of them contributed greatly to the success of the Meissen Declaration. All three are what we call in German "*Zeitzeugen*", contemporary witnesses of the process.' They and other people like them did the "groundwork" demonstrating how ecumenical conversations served to forge a single,

common position, the Meissen Declaration, from three very different Church positions. It is largely due to their efforts that the Meissen Declaration was positively received by the Synods of the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany, their dioceses and regional churches.

It is true, Bishop Jürgen admitted, that 25 years on we have not yet achieved full church communion. 'But our regional churches, dioceses and congregations have been enriched and changed by the indispensable and diverse experiences of fellowship we have shared,' he continued, 'and we rejoice over the communion already achieved and, thanks be to God, we "look forward to the time when the reconciliation of our churches is achieved" (Meissen Declaration A.iii) and we strive to overcome the remaining obstacles.' This will involve some hard work as both sides seek a shared understanding of the episcopal office, an understanding that can bear close examination in the light of the Bible and our respective confessional traditions.

It is remarkable how the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany are living out reconciliation today, something which even 50 years ago might have seemed unthinkable, he told us, so it is good to remind ourselves of how the Meissen process began and then to preserve and build on what has already been achieved. 'For the unity we have needs to be reclaimed time and again,' he warned. That is why during their shared chairmanship of the Commission he and Bishop Michael Bourke from Wolverhampton, and then Bishop Nicholas Baines from Leeds, chose to debate ►



President and Moderator, Bishops Jürgen and Michael

## DISPERSING THE CLOUDS OF UNKNOWNING: ECUMENICAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN ANGLICANS, LUTHERANS AND ROMAN CATHOLICS

*After lunch Lutheran Moderator Jaakko Rusama invited Dame Mary Tanner to address the meeting. This is a summary of what she told us. Her full text can be found on the website.*

Dame Mary began by reminding us of the different kinds of agreements there are. Some are agreed statements from international dialogue commissions officially appointed by different World Communions; some are agreements made at global level by the World Communions; others are regional agreements signed by authorities that take the participating churches into closer fellowship on the way to visible unity. They each add to a single story of reconciliation.

She would tell us a little of that story, she said, in a way that demonstrates the dispersing of clouds of unknowing, starting with Vatican II, then glimpsing the sun shining through in our European scene with Meissen, Reuilly and Porvoo, and finally she would look at the global Anglican-Roman Catholic and Lutheran Roman Catholic stories of clouds dispersing. 'For me it's an exciting story of God's grace and a changing of the Christian landscape,' she declared.

### The clouds begin to disperse: 1910-Vatican II

Dame Mary whisked us through the early part of the 20th century, pausing first at the Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 and then at the first Conference on Faith and Order in Lausanne in 1927. The Anglicans and Lutherans had the largest delegations alongside the Orthodox, Reformed, Methodists, Baptists, Society of Friends, Waldensians and uniting churches. 'But the gaping hole was the Roman Catholic Church,' Dame Mary noted. 'Catholics were forbidden to attend.' Those conferences set the agenda for future conversations: the nature of the Church; the Church's common confession; the ministry; and the sacraments.



*Dame Mary Tanner had a very attentive audience*

The World Council of Churches was inaugurated in 1948. There were still no Romans Catholics, but Lutherans, Reformed and Anglicans were beginning to get to know each other, and in the aftermath of two great wars they were learning to work together organising youth camps, exchanges, sharing in mission, and so on. 'The clouds of unknowing were dispersing,' she said, 'false stereotypes were being broken down and we were making new friends and discovering our common faith.'

'Friendship was the soil in which our ecumenical advance flourished,' Dame Mary told us. At a local level councils of churches were set up. And then came Vatican II. The Roman Catholic Church acknowledged that the Church *subsists* in the Catholic Church and not that it is the Church, and committed itself to the search for full visible unity, clear that the search for an agreement in faith 'sufficient and required' for unity must be the major concern. There followed what Dame Mary described as 'a veritable international dance of dialogues', sometimes

*Continued from previous page*

► deep theological questions like: What hinders full visible unity? Is it church dividing or not?

'It was during that period you invited me to an Annual General Meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran Society,' he smiled. 'That was the beginning of my friendship with the ALS, and I am very happy about it. Ecumenism is not the privilege of theological experts who write difficult books (understood only by few people). Ecumenism has a spiritual aspect which leads to prayer, adoration, service, Eucharist, and a longing for unity which all can share.'

The questions facing our Churches and congregations today are not the same

as they were 25 years ago, yet the process to reconciliation and more visible unity among Christians remains to challenge us all. Last year thousands of young people, at the meeting of the movement "Together for Europe", were chanting "500 years of separation are enough!" 'So,' Bishop Jürgen concluded, 'it is not just because of "Brexit" that we need to foster a longing and striving for the unity for which the Good Shepherd prayed: "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (St John, chapter 17. 20-21)'

multilateral, sometimes bilateral. They started to overcome years of living under the clouds of unknowing. 'People were really getting to know one another and beginning to see how much was held in common.'

Things began to gather pace. In 1965 an International Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue began; in March 1966 Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, visited Pope Paul VI and they issued a *Common Declaration* in which all that their traditions held in common was recognised. They spoke of 'a new stage of development of fraternal relations' and of a sincere intention to remove the causes of conflict and to re-establish unity.

Two years later a Preparatory Commission produced *The Malta Report* which summed up the substantial core of faith that Anglicans and Catholics share. 'It's hard for us to realise just how startling this was,' Dame Mary said. 'It also acknowledged honestly the divergences since the sixteenth century and the need to distinguish between "the merely apparent and the real".' That doctrinal work having been done the next stage could begin. It involved the recognition of the faith of the Church in one another's faithful lives, a reception of each other, not merely of documents. Ultimately that might, it was hoped, evolve into the quest for "full organic unity".

This plan set out in *The Malta Report* set the pattern for the European agreements of Meissen, Rueilly and Porvoo, between Lutherans, Anglicans and Reformed, Dame Mary explained. 'Each Agreement banked theological agreements which became the basis for a formal Declaration signed by the European authorities of all the participating churches and offered up in prayer. This set out all the mutual acknowledgements, and committed those churches to share in a closer life of mission and service on the way to full visible unity.'

### Anglican-Lutheran-Reformed European Regional Agreements

Dame Mary referred to the dynamic behind *The Meissen Common Statement*. The goal was living together – and not just Anglicans and Lutherans – and striving for visible unity. The

means was by first banking doctrinal agreements, not least among them *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM), and harvesting the fruits of the Anglican-Lutheran and Anglican-Reformed international bilateral dialogues. Then formal Declarations were signed that recognised the faithful lives of one another and made commitments to act together in service and mission. This included setting up structures of oversight to keep everyone accountable to the Declarations that had been signed. 'Bishop Jürgen has spoken about how we are doing just that in the Meissen partnership,' she continued. 'The sun is shining!'

'Meissen remains a significant regional agreement. It took Lutherans, Reformed, united churches and Anglicans to a new stage of reconciled fellowship,' she said. 'It created a fellowship of faith, service and mission, on the way to visible unity, as did Reuilly. It also provided a model for other relationships in the future.'



Dame Mary Tanner

Next, Dame Mary turned to the Porvoo Communion. Archbishop Robert Runcie had recognised the 'commonality' between the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland and the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran Churches. The challenges in mission that they faced in Northern Europe were similar; it was a special time for Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania in the aftermath of the fall of communism; they were all episcopal churches; there had been theological conversations between the Church of England and the Church of Sweden going back to 1929 and piecemeal agreements on

Eucharistic hospitality. Now, in addition to Meissen, there was the *Niagara Report* (1988) on episcopate. In 1989 conversations began and with the last dot in place the Commission gave thanks in Porvoo Cathedral in 1992. The Porvoo Declaration was signed in 1996, and its format goes back beyond Meissen to Malta.

'The conversations were driven by the conviction that visible unity is utterly required for credible and effective mission in a Europe looking for its own identity,' Dame Mary went on. What was envisaged was communion where unity was not uniformity, but was expressed in rich diversity, held together by a common faith. 'The portrait wasn't just of what the Porvoo Churches were to become together but what we believed was God's intention for the Universal Church. The Porvoo Communion was never seen as being a Northern European end in itself, any more than Meissen was.'

The great breakthrough which made closer communion/closer visible unity possible was an understanding about apostolicity, succession and episcopal succession, that recognised how faithfulness is carried by more than one means of continuity – a rope of strands of succession. Succession in episcopal ministry could be understood as a sign of the guarantee of God's fidelity to the Church, and as a sign of our intention to be faithful. 'Nevertheless, the hard issue still faced us,' she continued. 'How, with integrity, could we all move towards a single, interchangeable ministry?'

Then, remarkably, agreement was reached that when one strand in the rope of succession had been temporarily broken, but where a community had been faithful to the apostolic teaching and mission, those who had not at times used the sign of episcopal succession were free to embrace it once again. 'It was a great breakthrough!' she said.

Dame Mary referred us to the recent publication "*Towards Closer Unity: Communion of the Porvoo Churches 20 Years On*" which tells the story of twenty years of deepening the relationship, dispersing the clouds of unknowing. 'The theological agreement in *The*



*Porvoo Common Statement*, a European advance to full visible unity, has and is making a difference in our lives,' she asserted, 'but there are more clouds to disperse if the Church is called to be fully local and global – the all in each place linked to the all in every place. And that conveniently takes us from the regional agreements to the global.'

### **The Anglican–Roman Catholic story of clouds dispersing**

After the *Malta Report* the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission swiftly began to produce Statements agreed by the members of the Commission, on the Eucharist, Ministry and Ordination, and Authority. Dame Mary smiled. 'In 1982 they were bound together in what was perhaps unwisely entitled *The Final Report!*' she said.

ARCIC's *Final Report* was sent to "the highest level of authority in each Communion" with two questions. Is the *Final Report* consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans, the faith of Roman Catholics? And, if they are consonant then what are the next concrete steps we can take on the basis of the agreements? 'What a risky process asking the questions to "the highest level of authority" was!' Dame Mary said. 'This was a new journey, never undertaken before! Anglicans might not even know who their "highest authority" was! The documents were not only inviting reflection on authority but on our own Anglican structures of discernment and decision making. Sadly, that's where the clouds began to thicken again.'

For all kinds of reasons, the vision of Malta was forgotten or lost, and much of the enthusiasm among the laity waned. All the doctrinal agreement had led to little in changed relationships, in life sanctioned by authority, and no Eucharistic hospitality was extended.

ARCIC II was set up and more agreed statements produced, but the response was somewhat half-hearted. 'It was as if confidence was lost, the clouds were thickening yet again,' Dame Mary commented regretfully. 'But there was, as Cardinal Cormac

said, "money in the bank". And in many places the laity were simply getting on with things!'

Theological dialogue continues with the work of ARCIC III set up in 2001, but it has yet to publish its first agreed statement. However, in 2000, with the Pope's blessing, Cardinal Cassidy and Archbishop George Carey called 11 pairs of bishops from around the world to Mississauga in Canada to review where Anglicans and Roman Catholics were and where they might be going. One text they brought with them in their bags was *The Malta Report!* The outcome was not a Declaration but a recommendation that a high level commission of bishops be set up to take things forward, and the International Anglican–Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) was born. The baton was passing from theologians to bishops!

IARCCUM produced *Together in Mission and Ministry* which, in true Malta style, summed up theological convergences and set out a programme of action. Nothing yet has come of it. But things have not stood still. In November 2016 in Rome Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin commissioned 19 pairs of bishops from around the world to go out to work and witness together and take their communities with them in what Justin called "an ecumenism of action". We await the outcome.

### **The Lutheran - Roman Catholic story of clouds dispersing**

Even before ARCIC began its work after Vatican II the International Lutheran–Roman Catholic dialogue had started work and produced an extraordinary wealth of doctrinal texts. *The Gospel and the Church* in 1974; *The Eucharist* (1978); *Ways to Community* (1980); *Ministry in the Church* (1981); *Facing Unity* (1984). In 1983, marking the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth, *Martin Luther – Witness to Jesus Christ* offered a portrait of Luther largely indebted to Roman Catholic scholarship, and in 1994 the important Statement *The Church and Justification* appeared. But while the theologians were enjoying themselves, Dame Mary commented, 'what struck me was that there was no official response process for these agreed statements.' However, there were bi-lateral talks going on, in Germany and in USA, which produced

some tiny breaks in the clouds.

Then in October 1999, in Augsburg, representatives of the LWF and the Vatican signed *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* which demonstrated that Lutherans and Catholics could express a common, though not total, agreement on justification. They described their agreement as "differentiated consensus" – agreement in essentials and legitimate diversity on other matters. At last, the mutual condemnations of the sixteenth century no longer applied. 'It is hard for Anglicans to understand just how momentous this was,' Dame Mary said. '*The Joint Declaration*, with its concept of "differentiated consensus", is the one sign of official reception of the fruits of Lutheran–Roman Catholic dialogue to date. What is interesting to note is that although Methodists and Reformed have officially supported the Declaration, it was only last year that the Anglican Consultative Council passed a resolution recognising the significance of the *Joint Declaration*, and this was only affirmed in the General Synod of the Church of England in February, 2017.'

Two years ago Lutherans began to think what might happen in 2017, the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther's Ninety Five Theses. How should the beginning of the Reformation be marked? In the light of the new ecumenical relationships would the notion of celebration be appropriate? How were Lutherans and Catholics, along with all the Churches springing from the Reformation, to remember? The conclusion was that 2017 should be a commemoration not a celebration. An official joint Lutheran–Roman Catholic document, *From Conflict to Communion*, compiled for the commemoration, presents 2017 as an opportunity for deeper communion between Lutherans and Catholics and for the celebration of the common witness they share to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It stresses those issues on which Lutherans and Catholics can now speak with one voice if not total agreement. It contributes to a new atmosphere of trust between formerly estranged Catholics and Lutherans and can be thought of as instrumental in stimulating a wider reception of one another. 'In terms of our subject,' Dame Mary said, 'it is a clear ▶



## OUR CLOSING EUCHARIST

We moved from St Boniface's Roman Catholic Church to St George's Lutheran Church, just a short walk away, for our closing Eucharist. The Rev Dr Roy Long and the Rev Susanne Skovhus, newly elected to the Society's Executive Committee, had devised the service and they conducted it between them. It was an English version of an old German Liturgy and therefore very suitable for use on this occasion, and in this wonderful building which, whilst no longer in regular use, is the oldest Lutheran church building in Great Britain, having been founded in 1762.

The preacher was Dr John Arnold. He spoke about the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, the characters in Jesus' parable recorded by St Luke (18.9-14). The Pharisee stands in the Court of the Temple, a place of prayer rather than of sacrifice, and prays aloud, as was usual, beginning well; "God, I thank you." But he is talking to himself, intending to be overheard by others. His gaze has slipped from God to neighbour and not in the good way that Jesus taught. "God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even as this tax collector." By a strange irony, in making comparisons and claiming not to be like other people, he shows that he is just like other people, turned in on himself, *incurvatus in se*, a sinner.

In contrast, Dr Arnold said, the tax collector is portrayed only as a sinner, but he is a *justified* sinner. He is in a right

relationship with God and his neighbour, simply because he has faith that God will indeed be merciful to him.

'The Pharisee and the tax collector are not two individuals in the life of Jesus, like Levi or Zacchaeus,' Dr Arnold reminded us. 'They are characters in a story by Jesus. They are twin figments of a single, creative imagination; and we should think of them not as two different people but as two aspects of one person, of humankind, of ourselves.'

You can find the full sermon on the website. The whole service provided a wonderful conclusion to what had been a wonderful day.



*Continued from previous page*

indication of clouds dispersed and sun shining!' *From Conflict to Communion* encourages Lutherans and Catholics to

- ♦ commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate what this means and strive towards the goal.
- ♦ rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ in this time.
- ♦ witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.



What is a wonderful sign of how far the clouds have dispersed is that on October 31st, 2016, Pope Francis and Bishop Younan, the President of the LWF, went to Lund to commemorate the Luther Anniversary and in their joint statement pledged their two Communions to pursue their dialogue so as to remove the remaining obstacles that prevent them from reaching "full unity", stressing a commitment to common witness on behalf of the poor, the needy, and the victims of injustice. And they ended their statement that Catholics and Lutherans are now a step nearer to the unity for which Christ prayed.

### Conclusion

Dame Mary left us with two pictures that show the miracle of how far the Churches have come together. The first (left) was seeing Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin together in Rome with Justin taking off his episcopal cross and handing it to Francis who immediately kissed it and put it

around his own neck. The second was the photos of the Pope in Lund embracing the Archbishop of Uppsala, Antje Jackelén, a woman bishop. 'These are precious moments that say more than words can about mutual acknowledgement,' she concluded. 'They show the clouds of unknowing have lifted. We are friends in Christ. Reconciliation is happening. Now the question for us all is - where next, for God's sake and the world's sake?'





## REFORMATION RESTORED NORMALITY TO THE CHURCH

Recently **Dariusz Bruncz** (left), a member in Poland, had a conversation with Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch of Saint Cross College in Oxford, UK. He published it on the web in Poland and, with Prof MacCulloch's agreement, offers it to readers of *The Window*. **Dariusz** is in bold type.



**We all know that there was no 'Reformation' in the singular. Many Protestant narrators have been claiming that there had been dark ages before the Reformation, almost a spiritual desert, and we know that is not true. Is it possible to point out the main reasons which without doubt led to the outbreak of the Reformation?**

I think of two really. **One** is that the Western Medieval Church was very unusual in having been a single institution over such a long time and over such a big area. That is very unusual for Christianity. Normally you have 'Christianities'. Poland is a good example, where you had Catholicism and Orthodoxy within its frontiers before the Reformation, whereas in Western Europe, from the far west (Ireland) through to central Europe, you have a single institution. And because it is unique, it would be very likely to break down. And that is what happened in the 16th century. It fragmented, just as the rest of Christianity had been fragmented for so long. That is one reason and you could say that the Reformation restores normality when it comes along and divides the Church.

### **Restores normality - in what sense?**

Yes, Christianity by its nature is divided. There has never been a single Christian Church and so, although terrible things have happened because of the divisions caused by the Reformation, the actual fact of division is not the unusual circumstance that people often say it is. It is because they only look at the Western church, and then only the first stage, and they think it is the norm. **The second** unique feature of the Western Latin Church was its total ban on the marriage of clergy. It is the only Church in Christian history which has made clerical celibacy compulsory for all clergy. We often forget that when the Reformation came along one of its great features was the restoration of the marriage of clergy. Think especially of the first decade of Reformation: Martin Luther married, Martin Bucer and so many of them married, and not just as a sort of side issue, but they proclaimed that this is an essential part of clerical ministry, that clergy are not separate from ordinary people.

**Was it really celibacy? Luther got married in 1525 and he did not want to get married. He was in a sense persuaded to do so, although later he rediscovered marriage for himself.**

That is only seven years after the Reformation started. It emerged as an issue very quickly and became absolutely central for the clergy. You had to be married. Very few did not marry. They did it partly because they wanted to

get married and partly because they felt that it put an end to the idea of clergy being a separate caste, a different kind of human being. Marriage and sexual relations are part of being human and the clergy must demonstrate that. We sometimes forget this when we are thinking about the Reformation because, for Protestants at least, it is no longer an issue – but it was an issue then.

**I mentioned the spiritual desert as describing late medieval spirituality. The Irish Catholic historian, Eamon Duffy, demonstrated in his monumental book 'The Stripping of the Altars' that on the eve of Reformation everything was actually functioning very well.**

I am an admirer of that book. What it says about the Medieval Church is that it was vigorous, and satisfied the spiritual needs of most people. Interestingly, what it does not talk about are monasteries. In fact, it does not mention them at all. And what it does talk about is England which was a very good part of the Old Church. It functioned very well. Its bishops were admirable for the most part. I agree with Eamon Duffy, who presents a picture of a Church which satisfied the consumer demands of ordinary people. But clearly something sparked when Martin Luther made his protest. And my suggestion would be that the Church had drifted too far from its foundation documents in the way it presented salvation. The fact that it made purgatory so central for its system of offering salvation could not be justified from the Biblical text. That is all very fine if you are simply going along with the life of the Church. But when someone charismatic points out that it is not actually part of the Biblical message, then that is a very explosive thing to do, and that is what Martin Luther did.



*The marriage of Martin Luther and Katherine von Bora, 13th June 1525*



**But there had been reformers before, like Wycliff and Hus and many others.**

The difference is largely the speed with which the message could travel. That was due to printing. It is an old cliché to say that printing made the difference, but it really did. You mentioned John Wycliff, the English dissenter, and another great difference (and this is really odd) is the fact that the Lollards, who took their origins from Wycliff, did not put their message into song. They had no hymns. And hymns are one of the most important secret weapons of the Reformation. If you think of Luther writing inspiring hymns, if you think of the Reformed Protestants creating metrical psalms, these were the people's music. They were liberating for ordinary people, a way of singing their religion which the old church had slightly privatized by developing beautiful choirs, and beautiful music for the choirs, but taking it out of the people's mouths and creating a liturgy performed by professionals, professional laity as well as clergy; whereas Luther and Calvin gave music back to the people.



Psalm 25 versified by Clément Marot  
© La Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français

This seems to be more important than preaching, because people were not just listening but also performing. The Hussites had music of their own. That is why there were successful. And they managed to make a national Church before the Reformation. Luther's genius, shared by those who spread his message, was to leap over language barriers, and so his message was not only German but became also English, French etc. And the Reformed were even better than Luther in being international. Again, a vital thing was the psalm, which is so easy to turn from French to English – you have Geneva Psalms or the English version in Sternhold and Hopkins.

I think the other thing we forget about Protestantism is that it is spread through the international language, which was Latin. It's simplistic to think that the Reformation got rid of Latin. Of course, it didn't. How else could a reformer in England speak to a reformer in Germany? Latin! It is so obvious. When you think of Johannes a Lasco speaking to his English friends, it was clearly in Latin. He never spoke English. No one outside England learned English, which was a difficult language for foreigners, and marginal for Europe anyway. Really, very few foreigners could speak English.

The most that some might have been able to do was to order a meal in English.

**So the leaders of the so-called 'Stranger' churches in London, the churches for exiled Protestants from the Continent, they used Latin?**

Yes, the leadership, yes, because it was the language for every literate person to speak. So the Reformation was pushed forward by Latin.

**We are in Oxford, and in 1521 the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Warham, wrote a letter to the Archbishop of York, Cardinal Wolsey, regarding the condition of affairs at the University of Oxford. And he wrote that the University "has been infected with the heresies of Luther and others". His letter also contains a demand to surrender all works of Luther which ought to be burned. We know that the first martyrs of the Reformation in England were Lutherans – people like Robert Barnes. How big was the impact of Luther and his Reformation on England? Why did England not become Lutheran? Was it about Luther's stance on the marriage of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII?**

That was a slight factor. Luther did oppose the marriage and it meant that the King and the powerful people in England became anti-Lutheran. But much more important was the English movement of Lollardy. And if you look at the beliefs that most Lollards held, they do not make a good fit with Luther's doctrines. Luther, for example, did not value the Epistle of St James because he thought it speaks too much about good works. Well, the Lollards focused very much on this epistle because they stressed the importance of living a good life, while they felt that the official Church did not. So, they emphasized the Epistle of St James.

For Lollards, justification by faith was not the major issue in their controversy with the Church. Lollards were also very hostile to sacred images and Luther was not. You spoke of Robert Barnes, who was definitely Lutheran. Well, when Barnes met the Lollards in the 1520s he wanted to convince them that they were wrong on several issues.

While Lollardy was not a large section in late medieval English society, their beliefs do seem to have shaped the way in which the English accepted Protestantism. To understand why England did not become Lutheran at all, you have to take notice of Lollardy. You have first the impact of Luther, who was significant in university circles, but then you have, very quickly, a turning away from Luther. One other great division I did not mention was the Eucharist. Lollards were very sceptical about the idea of the Real Presence. Luther affirmed it, while the Swiss Reformers denied it, and the English Reformation followed the Swiss. So, perhaps you have here the biggest issue after images and Law.

**Many – especially Catholic historians – say that the English Reformation was about the marriage of Henry VIII, Boleyn and Cromwell. Some historians speculate that Queen Anne Boleyn, mother of the great Queen Elizabeth the First, and Cranmer, the**

**most notable politician at the Henrician court, were covert Lutherans...**

Using the word Lutheran is not very helpful because [in England] it was a term of abuse used by the enemies of the Reformation. So anybody who was against Reform used this word – the Spanish did as well, they said *Luteranos*. Was Anne Boleyn Lutheran? I do not think so. She had no links to Germany but she did to France. The word I use in my books is 'evangelical', which does not quite mean the same as it means in the Lutheran tradition. In German the word *evangelisch* means Lutheran, while *evangelikal* means 19th century English Protestants, the Evangelicals, whereas in England, *evangelical* is the word they used at the time of Reformation in the way I have described, and it does not link to its later use in the modern times. So, I used 'evangelical' to describe Queen Anne Boleyn, Archbishop Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, because their religion was in the process of being formed, and part of that process involved separating from Luther. Cromwell's beliefs were, for instance, more radical than Luther's and set patterns which later on went in the direction of the Reformed tradition. If you look at the Reformation of Henry VIII you look at many aspects like the break with the Pope that do not have anything to do with the Reformation. Henry hated the Pope but it did not make him Protestant. But Cromwell, his chief minister, and Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, were evangelicals. Cromwell's agenda was not Henry's. Cromwell was using his powers for evangelical causes. He was given his unusual, very odd title of vicegerent [a person exercising delegated power on behalf of a sovereign or a ruler, a term that had also been applied to the Pope as the earthly representative of God - Ed] in spiritual affairs, which was not given to anybody before. He was following his own agenda with the authority of the King, and that is why he was executed. One of the charges against Cromwell was that he was a Protestant heretic. He could have been burnt at the stake but the King was merciful and cut his head off.

**Some notable Protestant theologians, Lutheran and Reformed as well, feel that the Reformation should not be celebrated or commemorated alongside Catholics.**

**On the other hand, you have conservative Catholics criticizing Pope Francis for joining Lutherans in Lund for jubilee celebrations, saying that one cannot celebrate a divorce! What is your stance on the Reformation Jubilee?**

Should we be celebrating? I think we should be commemorating it and remembering it as something very important. And that does not commit us to saying that it is a good or bad thing, because clearly it is a mixture of both. For some it was liberation, for others it was disaster. It destroyed many beautiful things but it created many beauties as well. You could say that it liberated minds to give us an Enlightenment. So it is like this dreadful Brexit-Referendum decision we in the United Kingdom have just made – you cannot simply say 'Yes' or 'No' to a complicated issue. That was the problem with the referendum. And you can't say 'Yes' or 'No' to the Reformation, it seems to me. You can say it is hugely important.

We are in Oxford and six or seven years ago we created a monument for those who died and were members of the university or came from Oxford or Oxfordshire. This monument is in the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. There you will see this brand new memorial – a lovely thing on the wall – and it has an alphabetical list of the names of Catholics and Protestants who died at the time of the Reformation. And it begins with the phrase: 'Remember those ... who died'.



It was actually the idea of the local representative of the Queen. He is an Anglican married to a Catholic. In his old school, Eton College, they already had such a memorial to pupils who either died because they were Protestants or Catholics. We created a similar one in Oxford and the Chancellor of the University, Chris Patten, a former Governor of Hong Kong, who is a Roman Catholic, unveiled it. I compiled the list.

**Are there any Lutherans on the list?**

No because there were no Lutherans here. Cranmer was initially Lutheran but drifted away from the Lutheranism. Barnes, who was surely Lutheran, was linked to Cambridge and not to Oxford, and was burnt at stake in London. No-one replaced Barnes as a Lutheran.

**And William Tyndale?**

Well, Tyndale is interesting. The early part of his Bible translation is very influenced by Luther. The preface to the Epistle to the Romans is actually his English translation of Luther. After he accomplished the New Testament he went back to the Old Testament where you have the books of the Law, and there Tyndale's introduction to each book is brand new, and it is far from Luther's view of the Law.

**Are there any topics regarding the Reformation which still are not clear, or can we say that everything has already been said? Are there any dragons and unknown territories, using your own words?**

It is not possible to reach an end to discussion about the Reformation. We have a much better picture than we did. We can put theology, economics, social sciences, politics side by side, and we cannot say that only one thing was the cause of the Reformation. When I was young it was all



*Continued from previous page*

economics and social causes and not theology. We have rediscovered the importance of ideas in the past 20 years. And I think we could look more at so-called radicals and we could consider more about doubt in the 16th century and how it was expressed.

### **Doubt? Were there any people who doubted?**

Well exactly; clearly there were more than we might think but it was very difficult for them to express themselves, partly because it was dangerous, and partly because they may not have had any concepts in which to express their views. We live in a world where it is very easy. Perhaps it is easier to express doubts than belief. But it was not so then. So we might think about people fitting in because they had to. And we might think more about how much people actually internalized the Reformation, how they became Protestants and what that might mean, and how much of the old world survived alongside a new. In Lutheranism it is clear that a lot did. Reformed Protestantism? Some, but not so much. And here in England a lot of the beliefs from earlier times survived. But the great thing is that we can now have a much bigger picture, and we do not only have to look for the best moments in *our* history, we can also find good things in other people's histories. We can judge much more clearly.

**In your most recent book, 'All Things Made New', you suggested that many people have said that the English Reformation was a reformation without reformation, Catholicism without the Pope, or even Lutheranism without the doctrine justification by faith. You wrote: 'The Church of England has over the last two centuries become increasingly adept at covering its tracks and concealing the fact that it springs from a Reformation which was Protestant in tooth and claw.' Why? And what does the Reformation mean for the Church of England today?**

The Church of England covered its tracks because much of it went in a different direction, the Catholic direction, and

that happened because of the persistence of Cathedrals, which fit very badly with Protestant theology and practice. But they survived here.

Once you have a movement within your Church which thinks of itself as explicitly Catholic then the Reformation becomes an embarrassment. And the Church of England attempted to reposition itself between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. If you do that you do not want to be close to the Reformation, so that is what I mean by covering the tracks.

**Many books available on the eve of the Reformation jubilee in England state that the Church of England is losing its substance and integrity, and one can observe some kind of intellectual fashion to become Roman Catholic.**

Well, there's a misunderstanding there, because Roman Catholics tend to celebrate their converts, whereas the Anglicans on the whole do not. The traffic is about equal. It is not the Anglican way to be gleeful about conversion. We do not think it is polite! There is a little ceremony by which you become an Anglican, but is it very intimate; it is not done in public. Another reason you hear a lot about conversions to Roman Catholicism is because journalists think they understand Roman Catholicism. They do not have to be religious, but they know how to explain it. But Anglicanism is not simple, and it is not glamorous like a Catholicism which makes a more straightforward show on radio or the TV. So I do not despair over the Church of England. We are full of arguments and anger – one of our features is that we have our arguments in public and the Catholics tend to put them out of sight. Anglicans love arguing and are rather good at it.

### **The Reformation succeeded or failed?**

I am not going to say yes or no! You cannot imagine the modern world without it. It is an unescapable fact of being European. We are all changed by the Reformation. We are still living in its breeze.

## **THEOLOGY SUMMER SCHOOL**

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*Christ Church, Oxford: Tom Tower*

# CLERGY AND LAITY IN SHARED MINISTRY : A RESPONSE TO A CRISIS OR THE REDISCOVERY OF A GOSPEL IMPERATIVE?

*Our Editor, Dick Lewis, reflects on a situation that is becoming increasingly familiar to Anglicans and other Christians in Europe and North America.*

Something that is of concern to Anglicans in the UK, USA and Canada is the decline in membership and the number of churches being closed. The parish model, in which every church has a full-time priest, is coming under stress. Indeed, many people think it is rapidly becoming a relic of the past. Whether this is true for my Lutheran colleagues I do not know, but I would be very interested to hear from you.

More and more, parishes in the UK are being grouped together, especially in rural areas. For example, where I live there is a grouping of no less than 25 places of worship served by a handful of clergy. In circumstances like this it is impossible for any one person to fulfil what have come to be regarded as the traditional roles of the parish priest, and it seems to me that the theological education and training of both clergy and laity needs to reflect this new reality.



I read recently of a presentation made by Archdeacon Bill Harrison, Director for Mission and Ministry in the Diocese of Huron, Canada. During a meeting of church educators last February he suggested that the role of the priest is something that has evolved throughout Christian history. Anglicans need to acknowledge that

'priests serve the church, but they are not the church,' he said.

He notes that over the past 500 years priests have been expected to take on an ever-growing list of duties. As well as becoming sacramental ministers and preachers, they are also trained to be teachers, scholars, leaders, counsellors and advocates for social justice. The result, he suggests, is that the Church tends to place too much responsibility for too many things on the shoulders of its clergy.

'I wonder whether the effort to cover all of those bases through priestly preparation may have been a mistake,' he says. 'I wonder whether we have, unintentionally, contributed to the sense that the Church is primarily a priestly organisation rather than a community of all the baptised.'

Archdeacon Harrison raised a number of questions that got me thinking, and I wonder how you, our Society's members, might feel about them. They seem important as we think about how to help church members in the immediate future to discern the ministry to which God might be calling them, to test their vocation and then to prepare and train for that ministry, whether ordained or lay.

**First**, can you imagine priests who are not trained to fulfil all the roles outlined by Archdeacon Harrison? Just how

acceptable do you think they would be? If they are not to be leaders, counsellors and advocates for social justice, who might assume those roles? Might it be members of the congregations and communities who already do those things? Might others be being called to those roles? How might they be recognised as part of the Church's ministry?

**Second**, is the pressure created by needing to fill all these traditional roles distracting our priests from the imperative to evangelise and create disciples? In addressing that question we should perhaps ask who else might God be calling to be evangelists and to nurture disciples? Are there people already exercising those gifts and how might their calling and ministry be recognised?

**Third**, should the training of priests somehow be delivered in close relation to the training of deacons and lay people? If collaborative and complementary ministry is to be encouraged, where better to start than in collaborative training?

**Finally**, what impact might the growth of less traditional forms of ministry have on the formation of priests?

I have my own ideas, but I am interested to hear yours. Do you agree with Archdeacon Harrison's suggestion that our Churches have become 'priestly organisations'? How would you begin to approach the questions he has posed? If you are ordained, to what extent do you feel your training has helped or hindered your ability to exercise your ministry collaboratively with other authorised ministers and lay people? If you are a lay person, in what ways do you feel that your gifts and experience have been valued and used within the ministry of the church?

If you are willing to share your stories, whether they be positive or not so positive, please contact me by email at [dick@ccwatford.u-net.com](mailto:dick@ccwatford.u-net.com). We might be able to share some experiences in a future edition of The Window and perhaps make a small contribution to the discussions taking place in many parts of the world about how best to recognise, equip and encourage every church member to share in the ministry to which Christ calls us all.



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## WORKING TOGETHER HAS ITS VIRTUES

*The Rev Rikke Juul, a parish priest in Rosenvængets in Copenhagen, tells us of a meeting between members of the Lutheran-Anglican Porvoo community.*

From 25th to 28th February, 2017, about 30 priests from 11 different Lutheran and Anglican churches met in the city of Bergen, Norway. Our main topic of conversation was the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation under the heading "Identity, Memory and Hope: the Continuing Importance of Reformation of our Churches and Communities".



Bergen is a beautiful city, but in February, when the weather forces you to keep your gaze fixed on the ground so as to dodge the deep puddles, you could easily be in Bergen without realizing it! And that is how 30 priests approached St Mary's Church, stooped forward and zigzagging along the pavement! We gathered there each evening for prayers, and were confronted by the magnificent altarpiece, representative of the church before the Reformation, with Mary and infant Jesus in the centre surrounded by a great throng of saints.



The altarpiece was great, but my favorite was the pulpit. It is decorated with richly detailed carvings of seven women.



They are supposed to represent the seven virtues, though they do not look particularly virtuous because of their lack of attire! To be confronted during a short act of worship by several proud breasts is supposed remind

us of the seven virtues: purity, justice, love, persistence, patience, kindness, humility - and could there be a better starting point than that for fruitful ecumenical work?

Several times during the conference, we broke up into small

groups to talk in depth. In these groups it became apparent how the identity of the various churches largely results from the nation's remembered experience of the Reformation. There were great similarities between the Nordic countries, while the Eastern European Lutheran Churches in Estonia and Latvia had faced particular challenges during the Soviet Union. They have handled these challenges in different ways, and so their Churches have consequently evolved differently.

Anne Burghardt from the Lutheran World Federation made a presentation based on Luther's theology. She pointed to two ideas that still have significant meaning for us all. First, the way in which Luther speaks of God's unconditional love; and second, Luther's idea that everyone should have access to Scripture, and not just by translating the Bible but by teaching people to read and so empowering them through education.



Marion Grau, Professor of Systematic Theology and Missiology in the School of Theology in Oslo, made it clear that we can no longer subscribe to an understanding of salvation formulated in 1517. Talk about salvation needs to focus on the challenges of today. She mentioned the climate crisis, economic crisis, the fear and lack of trust that people have in institutions, the crisis in communities based on ethnicity and other issues. Whatever our national and church background we could all recognize these challenges. She made us look forward to our shared task, which is about facing these challenges together. Our hope for the future of the Porvoo Churches rests on working together.

The seven virtues were in use throughout the conference. As we sought wisdom and insight, we tried to be humble, fair and kind in the way we listened to each other. Our differences required the exercise of persistence and love. To that we could add 'purity' in the form of 'abstinence' - prices in Norway and pastors' salaries did not go together too well!

We left the conference having been reminded of our shared belief in the love of God - and, last but by no means least, of the fact that we also share a real hope. For despite our differences, we live in the same world and believe in the same God.

## ANGLICANS AND LUTHERANS SHARING IN DAILY REFLECTIONS

*Our Editor, Dick Lewis, reports on a joint Lenten initiative that has ongoing usefulness*

At the beginning of Lent our Membership Secretary sent a message to all our members she could contact advising them that 42 Biblical reflections for use in Lent had been prepared and put online by the Anglican Lutheran Coordinating Committee (ALICC), as one way of marking the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. They have been written by Anglicans and Lutherans from all around the world, both ordained and lay, women and men.

Although designed for a Lent study programme, this set of reflections can actually be used at any other time of the year, and if you were not aware of them or did not make use of them in the weeks leading up to Easter you can find them posted on the websites of both The Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion. They can also be downloaded as a booklet: *"Liberated by God's Grace: Anglican Lutheran Reflections"*.



The reflections are in three sections - "Salvation: Not for Sale", "Human beings: Not for Sale", and "Creation: Not for Sale" - each focusing on what Reformation in its broadest sense means for Christians today.

The Director of Unity, Faith and Order at the Anglican Communion Office, the Rev John Gibaut, who contributed one of the reflections, says, 'This timely volume brings together diverse Anglican and Lutheran voices from around the world in wondrous harmony, as we reflect together on what reformation and renewal mean for Christians today and into our common future. For Anglicans, the volume is an experience of "receptive ecumenism", a way to engage in the Lutheran World Federation's 2017 theme, "Liberated by God's Grace".'

Just to take one example, the reflection for my birthday began with a verse entitled "Be not Afraid," by John Michael Talbot

Be not afraid.  
I go before you always.  
Come follow me, and  
I will give you rest.

It was followed by the text of Matthew 6.25-34, Jesus' advice not to be anxious, and then this reflection by Marko Tiitus, a Lutheran from Estonia:

*'At a leadership training course a business executive found that fifty-four percent of his worries related to things that were very unlikely to happen; twenty-six percent related to past actions*

*that could not be changed; eight percent related to the opinions of people whose opinions really did not matter to him; four percent concerned personal health issues that he had since resolved; and only six percent concerned real issues worthy of his attention. By identifying and then letting go of the worries he could do nothing about or that were a complete waste of his energy, he eliminated ninety-four percent of the problems that had plagued him.*

*'However, letting go of all or most of one's worries is not merely a matter of mental technique; rather it is the outcome and fruit of trust. Jesus, talking about worrying about clothes, food and drink, says, "Indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." The basis of trust is an experience that, in spite of the instability, unpredictability and controversialism of life, the course of the world and our own*

*life are ultimately in the hands of God.*

*'Trusting in God is about giving up one's own strength and accepting oneself as weak and helpless. Paradoxically, there is nothing more secure than to feel one's own weakness; this is connected to understanding that one's vanity is embraced by an inexplicable power. My experiences will help me to grasp that this inexplicable power is nothing but my Heavenly Father.*

*'Human beings who discover in themselves even a tiny bit of trust in God and in life are relieved of the stress of constantly worrying and awake to see their present and future more clearly. Their lives are getting more and more interesting and colourful. What type of job can I do? What am I going to do together with my family or friends? Are there any new hobbies waiting for me? These questions become important when one's energy and time are relieved from constant worrying and devoted to living more fully in communion with God and one's neighbours.'*

I act as Chaplain to our local Hospice and as I read this I became conscious of the fact that this is exactly the attitude to life that we try to instil in our patients in the Day Care Centre. That morning, as I read it, I found myself feeling very grateful to Marko Tiitus for helping to instil it in me!

Just one tiny thing puzzled me, however. I used the link of the LWF website to find Marko Tiitus' reflection on my birthday. When I checked the Anglican Communion link later in the day it was not there. Marko Tiitus' reflection appeared three days later! Now how strange is that?



## EUROPEAN REFORMATION SONG CONTEST

*You may recall that back in 2015 a competition was announced encouraging people to write new hymns and songs. In March the winners were invited to a special event in Wittenberg when the importance of church music and hymnody was stressed.*

The Danish hymn “Når du vil / When you will”, written by Holger Lissner and the Norwegian composer Åshild Watne, is on many church people's lips. It won the class for traditional hymns in the Leuenberg Community's European Song Contest launched in 2015 to mark the Reformation anniversary. So far it has been published in Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, German and English.

The winning contemporary song was “Limesen égő / Burning on Limes” with lyrics by the Hungarian poet Zsolt Miklya. It was set to music by the group Hangraforgó (László Faggyas and Bea Sipos).

On March 17th the winners and other songwriters were invited to a service at the *Stadtkirche* in Wittenberg when their songs were sung. Holger Lissner



*Danish poet Holger Lissner and Norwegian composer Åshild Watne with the competition's jury, from left, Professor Jochen Arnold and Dr Britta Martini and right Peter Steinvig, organist in Karlsunde Beach church. Photo: Geke / CPCE.*

said, ‘It was special to sit in the church where Luther and Melancthon preached and hear my hymn being sung by the congregation at full blast!’

Bishop Ilse Junkermann preached a sermon in which she stressed the importance of music and singing in

the church. ‘Europe needs songs,’ she declared. ‘People who sing along do not go to war with each other. Europe needs songs about peace.’

New songs are an important part of the ongoing process of reformation, she added.

Professor Jochen Arnold, who is responsible for the Leuenberg community's work on liturgy, expressed himself as overwhelmed by how successful the contest has been. Over 100 musicians

and poets participated, and most if not all of their contributions were of a high quality. He explained that the Leuenberg community had focused on music in connection with the Reformation anniversary because music brings people together in a special way. ‘It touches our hearts today, as it did 500 years ago,’ he said.

## THE PRESIDENT AND THE DEVOUT MUSLIM

*Our editor, Dick Lewis, was very moved by this letter from Richard Griffith who lives in Ravenna, Ontario, published in the April edition of The Anglican Journal, the newspaper of the Church of Canada.*

I live in the Beaver Valley, but work sometimes in Toronto. On a recent Saturday morning, still in Toronto, I woke up early, intending to return home. I drove straight to the nearest gas station/coffee shop, arriving there sharply at 7am. Out of the corner of my eye, I glimpsed the figure of a man, apparently lying on the concrete pad next to the shop.

A drunk? Early in the morning, here at the Tim Hortons? I didn't really see him at first because I was still steering around other cars and whatnot. But at that precise instant, CBC Radio had Donald Trump on saying: ‘No more Islamic terrorists! We don't want them!’

I parked the car, got out and, with Trump's message still ringing in my ears, looked more closely at the “drunk”. He had his shoes off and he was kneeling down on a spread-out garbage bag. He was facing east. He was praying.

Oh! The aural message and the visual message, received at the same instant, were irreconcilable. It was a startling juxtaposition: totally disorienting and discomfiting. Trump's miserable, hateful edict about an important issue that may affect millions, an issue about which he demonstrates no real knowledge, interest or compassion, versus the sight of

a devout Muslim, an ordinary man, a cab driver as it turned out to be, performing his simple morning ritual, on his knees, on a cold, wet cement pad in a Toronto parking lot.

When I emerged with my coffee a few minutes later, the man was returning to his cab to resume his day. I was glad he hadn't been listening to the radio. On the very next evening, six men were killed in a mosque in Quebec City. They were shot in the back while praying.

We cannot allow our private lives or our public policy to be governed by fear and ignorance. ‘Peace is not the absence of war but the absence of fear.’ (Ursula Franklin).





## DANES WONDER IF DUAL MEMBERSHIP MIGHT ASSIST IN WELCOMING MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

For some time now the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark has been conscious of a change taking place in Danish society. Many newcomers, refugees and immigrants, are converting to Christianity and seeking baptism. Some of the 700,000 people of non-Danish origin are Europeans with a Christian background culturally similar to the ELCD, but a large percentage are Christians coming from different ethnic and theological backgrounds, and a considerable number of them are starting to knock on the National Church's door.

In February the Diocesan Ecumenical Council met in Vejle to tackle the question, 'Should the National Church make a special effort in the coming years to include refugees and other immigrants in the local church community, and if so, how do we do it and what will it mean for the Church as we know it today?'

There were presentations by Bishop Marianne Christiansen, Professor Viggo Mortensen, retired Pastor Birgitte Arffmann, Asylum Coordinator Marie Munch Roager, Asylum Minister Birgitte Møldrup, and by an Iranian convert.

The Iranian told the meeting how, at the risk of his life, he had converted from Islam to Christianity, and how he had longed to find a welcome in a Christian community in Denmark. However, he had initially been given the cold shoulder. He stressed how

important it is that churches should stand ready to welcome converts and not reject them or question their faith. These are people are looking for communities that offer them relief from their loneliness and boredom. They are not so concerned with issues of dogma or theological tradition.

He also suggested that the National Church has a need of people like him to pave the way for a larger missional and diaconal work among refugees and immigrants.

There was general agreement among the 55 present. Part of the National Church's mission should be to provide religious instruction for refugees and immigrants. It was not a matter of whether it should or should not be done, but rather how to do it.

It is no easy task having to take into account language and cultural barriers, amongst other things, as well as the administrative and economic framework.

Above all, it is a movement that needs to grow from below, so that efforts to integrate refugees and immigrants stem from actual encounters at a local level rather than being imposed from above.

### The Bavarian Experience

Interestingly, just four weeks before the meeting in Vejle, in January, 2017, a consultation organised by the Conference of European Churches and the Danish Church had been held in Copenhagen on 'Migration and Ecclesiology'.

### Change is afoot

During the course of the discussions the Danish situation was compared with what is happening in the Lutheran Church in Bavaria. The Bavarian Church has just over 2.5

million members and is in many ways similar to the Danish National Church. But there is a significant difference.

Like the Danish Church, the Bavarian Church was for many centuries "mono-cultural". It was a German Church for Germans. But today about 20% of its hundreds of thousands of church tax paying members are first or second generation immigrants. There are 176 nationalities represented among those members and the Church is well on its way to becoming a "multi-cultural" Church. Indeed, several pastors from an immigrant background have been appointed.

However, many of these migrants, who are members of the Lutheran Church, also belong to their own "migrant" or "ethnic" churches. This marks a significant difference between the Bavarian Church and the Danish Church, for whilst the German Lutheran Church recognises dual membership, Danish canon law does not permit it.

Gradually an interesting scenario emerged. Christianity came to Denmark from Germany more than 1000 years ago and Denmark became a Christian country. The Reformation came to Denmark from Germany 500 years later, and the Danish Church changed from being Roman Catholic and became a Protestant, Lutheran church. So does the Danish Church again have something to learn from the experiences of Lutheran Churches in Germany - and European Churches in general - as they seek to meet the challenges that migration presents to their congregations today?

### Change is afoot

The Lutheran Church in Bavaria is responding to the fact that German society has become multi-ethnic and multicultural, recognising that churches must also become more diverse. Should the Danes do the same? And in particular, is there a case for changing Danish canon law so that dual church membership might be permitted for some migrant Christians, something that is not permitted at present? ▶



Marie Munch Roager giving a presentation on the Danish Church's Asylum Cooperation. Photo: Michael Ronne Rasmussen.

## BISHOP WITNESSES WORK WITH REFUGEES

*Taken from a report by Pete Bate originally published in Lichfield Diocesan News*

In February this year our Anglican Co-Moderator, Bishop Michael Ipgrave, who is Bishop of Lichfield, witnessed the grassroots relationships that Christians are building with refugees in their partner church in Germany. With his wife Julia, he spent five days in the Nordkirche Lutheran Church in northern Germany, visiting all three episcopal areas and sharing in worship, prayer and discussion with bishops, clergy and lay people.

During that time they visited Café Mittenmang in Hamburg, a meeting place for local people and refugees, and church projects in Bad Doberan, Rostock and Schwerin that work with refugees and the jobless.

Bishop Michael said: 'We were so thankful for the warm welcome we received from so many people on our first visit to Nordkirche. We are part of a worldwide family of Christians and we meet the challenges we share in different ways across the world. To see churches responding in practical, loving ways to the needs of refugees and others in their communities was heart-warming and encouraging. I pray that churches in the Midlands of England, in Germany and elsewhere will continue to choose to respond with practical love, care and attention to all who are in need.'



*Bishop Michael with Bishop Kirsten Fehrs and ordinands in Hamburg*



*Bishop Michael with one of the refugees he met*

Bishop Michael has previously spoken about the importance of building bridges between churches in the Midlands and the rest of Europe in the wake of the Brexit vote.

The Rev Christa Hunzinger, who hosted the trip, said: 'I am very thankful for Bishop Michael's interest in Nordkirche and the work we are doing, especially with refugees.'

She too recognised the value of partnerships between the British Churches and their European neighbours. 'I totally agree with him that our relations have become even more important after the Referendum for Brexit. We have to work for and live in unity, not hate and separation.'

'I felt especially touched in his interest for our work with refugees,' she added. 'Together we had beautiful and very moving encounters in the Café Mittenmang where every Saturday afternoon people from the parish and refugees come together, chat, learn German, eat and play.'

The Link between Lichfield and the Nordkirche is now in its sixteenth year.

*Continued from the previous page*

In fact, the Danish Ecumenical Council has already been considering such a possibility. The number of migrant churches in Denmark has increased enormously in recent years. Despite efforts to encourage greater cooperation between parish churches and these migrant churches, the migrant Christians remain largely separate from the National Church.

The Council has now sent the Bishops a series of recommendations as to how the Church membership rules might be changed so as to enable dual membership for individuals, to enable a migrant congregation to become associated with a parish church, and to

encourage the recruitment of priests to work in migrant congregations.

Bishop Peter Skov-Jakobsen, chairman of the committee, has been quick to point out that the kind of dual membership being envisaged by the Council should not be seen as applying to the larger, established churches such as the Russian Orthodox or Roman Catholic, nor to Protestants like Baptists and Pentecostals.

'There is no question of the National Church annexing other Churches members,' he says. 'It is about creating an opportunity to make Christian immigrants welcome and to offer them the chance, if they wish, to be members of

their own community and also of the National Church. This is not possible today. The proposal speaks both of individual membership and also of the possibility of a migrant congregation associating with a parish church of the National Church, provided that congregation is willing to accept episcopal oversight.'

It is hoped that a working party will meet with the bishops in May 2017 to hammer out the proposal.



*Syrian refugee Azad.  
Photo: Sean Hawkey / WCC*

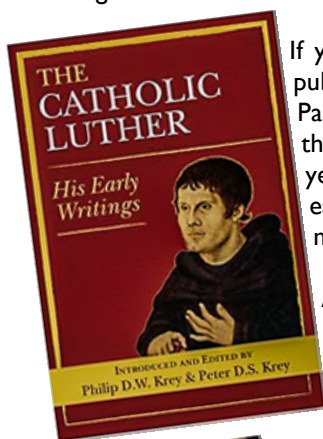


## READ ALL ABOUT IT!

**2017 is upon us, and with “Reformation Year” comes a trickle of new books about Luther, the Reformation, and related topics. Inevitably, it is a trickle that seems set to become a torrent so here Dr Roy Long offers brief reviews of some recently published titles.**

One of the phenomena of recent ecumenical activity has been a *rapprochement* between Lutherans and Roman Catholics which is, in some ways, surprising, bearing in mind the hostility that has existed for much of the past 500 years. This renewed relationship is reflected in some of the recent literature that has appeared.

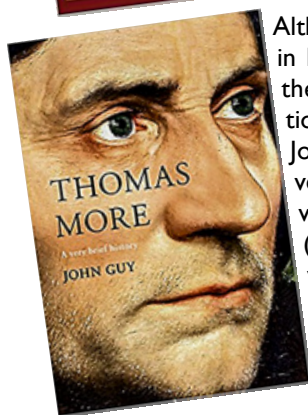
A good starting point is the Peter Stanford's *Martin Luther: Catholic Dissident* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-473-62166-4). Mr Stanford is a prolific Roman Catholic writer on topics such as Judas Iscariot and Catholics and Sex, and many topics in-between, and this new book on Luther provides a good, straightforward introduction to the life of the reformer. It is a pity that it is marred by occasional lapses in proof-reading (see pages 131 and 132, and 393) and that the references to Luther's writings are to the German *Weimarer Ausgabe*, rather than the more accessible (for most of us) American Edition of *Luther's Works*. Nevertheless, it is a book worth reading.



If you want to read Luther himself, then try the selection of extracts published in *The Catholic Luther* by Philip and Peter Krey (New York, the Paulist Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-809-14988-8) – you may remember that this was referred to by Bishop Jürgen Johannesdotter in his talk to this year's Annual General Meeting. The extracts are mostly from Luther's early works and give some particular insights into his developing sacramental theology.

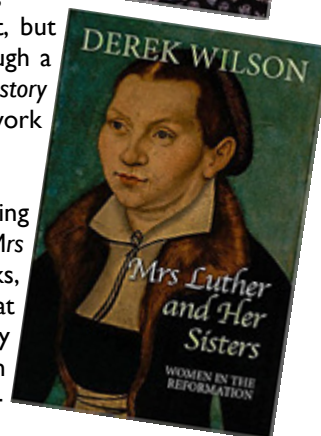
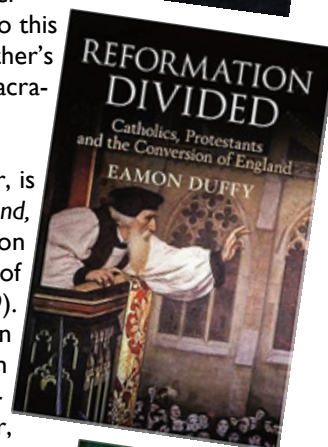
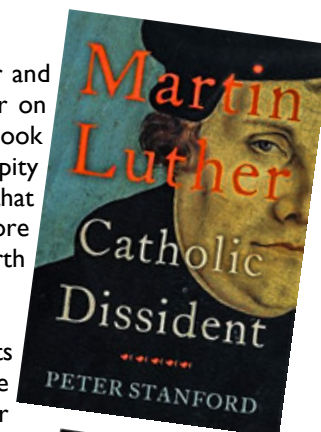
An excellent book, though only peripherally linked to Martin Luther, is *Reformation Divided: Catholics, Protestants, and the Conversion of England*, by the doyen of modern Catholic reformation scholars, Dr Eamon Duffy, Emeritus Professor of Christian History in the University of Cambridge (London, Bloomsbury, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-4727-3436-9).

Although the main concern of the book is with the Counter-Reformation in England, it casts its net rather wider and has interesting sections on the ministry in the Reformed tradition. Dr Duffy devotes a whole section to Thomas More, and another well-known Reformation writer, John Guy, also of the University of Cambridge, has produced a short, but very readable book on this staunchest of Luther's opponents. Although a very short book (just over 100 pages), *Thomas More: A very brief history* (London, SPCK, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-281-07738-0) is an erudite work which gives a good outline of both More's life and his legacy.



Finally, in this brief round-up of recent books, there is an interesting and thought provoking little volume by Derek Wilson entitled *Mrs Luther and Her Sisters: Women in the Reformation* (Oxford, Lion Books,

2016. ISBN: 978-0-7459-5640-4). This is a truly ecumenical book, which not only looks at the role played by Lutheran women at the time of the Reformation, but takes a wider view by including Reformed, Anglican, and Roman Catholic women – and, indeed, some men! Written in an easy-to-read style it is, nevertheless, scholarly and informative, and provides some interesting insights into less well known areas of the Reformation.



## SINCERE APOLOGY TO INDIAN MEMBERS

**The Editor writes:** Two of our members in Tamil Nadu, India, are good friends - or at least I hope they still are! You will remember reading an excellent and amusing article in the January 2017 edition of *The Window* entitled “Prayer and its Vibrations”. It was sent to me by the Rev Augusty Gandhi. I rummaged through my collection of photographs of our Society's members, taken on all kinds of occasions and at different times, and found one that I thought would be suitable. Unfortunately it was of Augusty's friend, the Rev Daniel Sekar! My apologies to them both. I believe that this one really is of Augusty!





## NEWS OF THE HEREFORD – NUREMBERG LINK

*At the end of October, 2016, curates, youth workers and a Reader from Hereford Diocese in the Church of England spent a few days with their partner community in Nuremberg, Germany.*

We stayed at in Heilsbronn in the *Religionspädagogisches Zentrum*. The facilities, including a wine vending machine, were excellent. On the first morning we had a talk about the Lutheran Church's confirmation programme.

We were very impressed by the care taken and the depth of teaching. Confirmation preparation can take 1-3 years and aims to enable young people to think theologically. For the families, confirmation is an important milestone in a child's life, and large numbers come forward. Candidates are encouraged to 'theologise' and be open about their thoughts and feelings.



*The Hereford Group*

Later we went across to the church where Herbert Kolb described an exercise he does with confirmands. They take a tea light and walk around the church to find the place where they feel God speaks to them. They light the candle in that place and then as a group they go around to all the places chosen and talk about why they chose that place. There are no right or wrong answers but a sharing of experience.

The next day, at the Lux Youth Church, the setting was cool and funky with lights, mixer desks, and band rooms. The church puts on many events, especially welcoming younger people, incorporating light shows and live bands as well as community events like a Minecraft service. Pastor Norbert Ehrensperger talked about the church's thoughts about the fine line between worship and entertainment and the shared difficulty we have in keeping people in their twenties and thirties coming to church.



*Bishops Castle Choir singing in the church at Erlangen*

Afterwards we gathered to talk about Brexit. Again here we found a great deal of common ground – particularly over the rise of far right parties across Europe and concerns about an unbalanced, vocally anti-EU media. We were agreed that personal connections such as our Nuremberg link were crucial in facing the coming issues for Europe and the EU as a whole.

On Saturday morning Judy Dinnen (a minister of Hereford Diocese on exchange in Nuremberg Diocese for three months) led us in Morning Prayer at the church in Hilpoltstein. In the church hall there was a presentation on the various events in the life of the church. This was

followed by a talk on the work with refugees.

Afterwards we walked up the hill to the Castle that is now home to a number of refugees. We were shown round by workers who exuded warmth and humanity. As well as being housed, the refugees are given German language and literacy lessons.

In the afternoon we were shown around a community living facility for people with disabilities and special needs. The place is run by "Diakonisches Werk". We were shown around by one of the deacons and then gathered for a service in the chapel and enjoyed singing together.

On Sunday morning we went to St Egidien church in the centre of Nuremberg for an experimental service that fused readings from scripture, read by Bishop Ark (who designed the service) and an actress, and music. The congregation joined in with hymns and short acclamations. The church is one of several beautiful and historic churches in the centre of the city and because of dwindling attendance they use St Egidien as a cultural church. I found the service deeply moving and the setting perfect for the occasion.

On Monday morning we were given a thought-provoking tour of the Nuremberg Rally Grounds by Sieglinde Klemm with a particular emphasis on the use of religious iconography in the rally ground. Some of the group went on to the museum which is housed in one of the buildings used during the time of the rallies and has an arrow shaped entrance that pierces the building to symbolise a wounded place.

In the evening we went to Erlangen, a beautiful church in a lovely university town, for a Reformation Day service at which Bishops Castle Choir was singing – another sign that the Link is alive and well.

## BUDDHISTS AND CHRISTIANS IN CONVERSATION IN MYANMAR

*Our Anglican Moderator, Bishop Michael Ipgrave, was among seventy men and women from Myanmar and from across the world who met in Yangon for a consultation between Christians and Buddhists, as Dick Lewis reports.*

Yangon really is a multi-faith city. The overwhelming majority are Buddhist, of course, but the city also has a number of Hindu Mandirs, Churches of different denominations, Shia and Sunni Mosques and a Synagogue.



The consultation took place during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 16th-20th January, and was attended by Christians from the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Roman Catholic traditions, and Buddhists from the Theravada and Mahayana traditions.

### The aims

Members of the consultation sought to achieve certain objectives:

- ◆ To listen to positive stories of engagement by Anglicans, Lutherans and other Christians with Buddhists
- ◆ To listen to Buddhist Scholars about their expectations and perspectives for a better relationship
- ◆ To reflect together on topics of mutual importance including a) action together b) living together c) prayer and meditation
- ◆ To discuss and develop strategies for future relationship between Anglicans, Lutherans and Buddhists around the world

### Broadening the experience

During their time together they also paid a visit to the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University to learn from the scholarly community there, enjoyed a creative and imaginative cultural programme presented by students from Holy Cross Anglican Theological College and met some of the pupils and staff the Mary Chapman School for the deaf (pictured here).



### Scriptures

There were four Bible studies, one of which was jointly led by a Buddhist and a Christian. There was a Buddhist presence at the Christian worship and a Christian presence during Buddhist meditation. People from

both traditions found that shared silence was possible, but because their understanding and practice of worship are different they did not actually join in each other's worship.

Two key Scriptures provided the focus for reflection and discussion:

'Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is an eternal law.' Dhammapada v.5

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' Luke 10:27

In addition, the consultation engaged with a variety of topics, including accounts of tensions between Christians and Buddhists that are on-going in some parts of Myanmar, and in other countries too. The fact that representatives of both faiths were together encouraged an honesty and graciousness in the way personal experiences were discussed and historical matters considered.

Speakers from a variety of countries and disciplines helped to set a wider context for the conversations and to bring insights to bear on what was shared. This international and cross-disciplinary approach allowed for a deeper engagement with complex and controversial topics.

### The outcomes

Three themes emerged from these conversations:

a) **The need for humility.** Christians in the West have a great deal to learn from the experience, theology and teaching of Christians in Asia. This is particularly important in view of the increased Buddhist influence and presence in the West.

b) **The need for honesty.** There are enormous differences between the two faith groups so it is important to listen to diverse views and opinions, both from the past and in the present, those that are painful as well as those that are more positive, so that lessons can genuinely be learnt ▶



## TALLINN'S REFORMATION CONGRESS

*Readers who attended last summer's conference in Visby may remember Randar Tasmuth who ran a workshop on the Estonian Church's plans for commemorating 'Reformation 500: Spirituality, Influences on Culture, Perspectives'. Here he tells us about the Congress held from 25th-26th October last year.*

During 2016 and 2017 a programme "500 Years since the Reformation in Estonia" is happening in Estonia. The Reformation Congress was one of key elements in everything being done by the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church.



*Randar giving the Inaugural Lecture*

The whole programme focuses on three main elements: Seminars, the Reformation Congress and a series of publications. The seminars cover the four topics in the material produced by the Lutheran World Federation, 'Liberated by God's Grace'. So in April 2016 we dealt with *Liberated by God's Grace*, in November it was *Salvation – Not for Sale*, March 2017 was *Human Beings – Not for Sale* and next November it will be *Creation – Not for Sale*.

Ten to fifteen pastors, students and lay persons have participated in each of the seminars so far, and the last one in March was the most lively in terms of discussions. We are looking forward

to the last seminar during which we shall hope to reach some conclusions and make plans for the future.

The Congress started on 25th October with addresses by Archbishop Urmas Viilma, Metropolitan Stefanus, and Rector Ove Sander. I gave the inaugural lecture on the History and Role of the Institute of Theology During The Past 70 Years, and the two day congress continued with a guest lecture given by Pekka Kärkkäinen from Helsinki.

Over the two days of the Congress our themes were:

I. Reformation, spirituality and history (The Gospel and Freedom of Faith; Reformation Theology; The Beginnings of the Reformation in Estonia during the 16th Century; and The Impact of the Reformation on the Religious Landscape in Estonia).

II. Reformation, culture, education (The impact of the Reformation on education; Lutheran Hymns and Estonian Singing Festivals; the Bible and the Birth of Estonian literature).

III. Reformation, human beings and society (Liberated Human Being and a Free Country; Lutheran Understanding of Work and Occupation; Reformation Spirituality Today – seeking my own self and a happy life).

IV. Reformation, churches and pluralism (Global Dimensions of Reformation; Ecclesial Plurality and Unity;

Reformation and Ecumenical Movements; Reformation, Secularization, the Neutrality of the State; and Religious Plurality in Estonia)

At the end the Archbishop and six other panel speakers discussed future possibilities. About 200 people took part at the Congress and students from the Institute were most eager stewards. The National Library of Estonia was an excellent venue for the congress and it was possible to follow the whole programme on the internet.



The Congress enjoyed enormous publicity. Tallinn Television gave a five minutes overview while a Christian Radio station broadcast the whole Congress. So the 70th anniversary of the Institute of Theology was celebrated at the same time! The Congress brought into view the ideas and values of the Reformation, not only to the capital city but also to wider audiences across Estonia. The students were especially happy to take part, to assist in practical ways and to reflect on the rich ideas shared in the lectures and subsequent discussions.

*continued from previous page*

that will facilitate both reconciliation and mutual understanding.

c) **The need to recognise our common humanity.** Both faith communities respond to situations in which people are suffering, and both are concerned for solidarity and social action. In a world where migration and its associated fear of the 'other' pose threats for hospitable and harmonious living, both Buddhism and Christianity inspire care for the stranger in our midst.

### What of the future?

The members of the consultation published a Final Statement expressing the hope that Buddhists and Christians everywhere will be inspired to follow the example of the people of Myanmar and meet, listen and learn, creating new friendships and communities of peace. This should be done at both leadership and grassroots levels and should ideally be planned jointly by Buddhists and Christians from different traditions, enable equal participation by women and men, and include both Buddhist and Christian Scriptures for reflection and study.

### 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

[www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.uk](http://www.anglican-lutheran-society.org.uk)

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The Anglican-Lutheran Society

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## THE CHURCHES CAN SPEAK ABOUT MORAL ISSUES

*On 8th and 9th February, 2017, there was a Nordic meeting of the Faith and Order Commission. Representatives from Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland gathered at Frederiksberg, Denmark, to discuss a key document of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Department.*

The WCC document is about 'Moral Discernment in the Churches', and it provided the basis for a thorough discussion. It is not easy to translate 'moral discernment'. It is about how and whether Churches can discern what is right and wrong in moral issues and dilemmas or, to put it into more religious terms, what God's will is in any given situation.

Is there a specific Christian morality so that Churches can speak with one voice on moral and ethical issues? Or should Churches simply limit themselves to dogmatic and other domestic church issues and refrain from interfering in moral issues in what are becoming increasingly polarized areas of public debate?

The World Council of Churches document on 'moral discernment' contains many useful insights, offering principles and approaches that can help to defuse situations in which conflicts arise between and within communities by helping people to understand why we all see things very differently. Above all the document challenges Christians to realize that, despite all our differences on important moral issues, there is more that unites us than separates us. When seeking 'moral discernment', for example, we all tend to draw on the same faith-related sources, the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, tradition, doctrinal authorities and spirituality, before turning to other things such as common sense, science and experience.

Thus, it is argued, it should be possible for Christians to find a common frame of reference that enables us to engage in more meaningful discussions amongst ourselves. Then Churches will be better able to engage in debates about moral issues in society without it sounding as if they are all shouting into an 'echo chamber', only listening when their own ideas and attitudes are being expressed and are being reinforced by the echo!

## 2018 CONFERENCE TO BE IN DURHAM

As reported in January's Window the 2018 Conference will be from Friday 24th to Tuesday 28th August and will be based in St Chad's College, very close to Durham Cathedral. The accommodation there is very pleasant, the rooms will be en suite, and we are assured that the food is good!

When the conference is over it may be possible to extend your stay at the college and to have a short sight-seeing holiday taking in such wonderful places as the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. Saint Aidan went there from Iona in 635AD and founded his monastery which became the base for Christian mission throughout the North of England.

Make a note of the dates now so as to be sure not to miss out. Full details will be available in the October Window. But the planning group is aiming to have a brochure ready to circulate to all our members during the summer. They are taking steps to ensure that the conference content will appeal to everyone, not just scholars and theological students but anyone interested in finding Jesus Christ at work in the world today.