

# The Window

SEPTEMBER 2022

THE ANGLICAN-LUTHERAN SOCIETY

Issue No. 130

We hope you enjoy  
this issue of your  
Newsletter.

It focuses on just one  
event - the Society's

T  
R  
O  
N  
D  
H  
E  
I  
M



C  
O  
N  
F  
E  
R  
E  
N  
C  
E

## CONFERENCE WAS A TIME OF DISCOVERY AND REFLECTION

*The Rev Dr Wim Kuiper, Assistant Curate at St Matthew's & St Wilfrid's, Sunderland (UK)  
shares some impressions of our Conference in Trondheim, 'A pilgrimage towards hope'.  
Inside you can find summaries of the presentations to which he refers.*

The many encounters with participants from all parts of the world are part of what made my (first time) participation in an A-LS conference such an inspiring and invigorating experience. Fortunately there was ample space for such encounters around the interesting lectures, round table discussions, mini-presentations and a great number of services in the magnificent Nidaros Cathedral. The conference was splendidly interwoven with the festivities around the day of St Olav, the patron saint of Norway, revered as an exemplary Christian king, who died on the battlefield in 1030 and whose remains, we were told, are resting somewhere in the Cathedral.

Part of our programme was getting to know this saint better and understanding why he has been and, to a certain extent, still is revered, not only in Norway but also in other countries such as the UK as the many St Olaf churches testify. Lutherans seem to be slightly more apprehensive about saints than the Anglicans, but there is a growing interest in both communions in drawing attention to local saints and to stimulating pilgrimages as a means of mission and evangelism.

How this is happening in the UK was illustrated by our Anglican Moderator, Bishop Michael Ipgrave of Lichfield, telling us about the activities connected to the grave of St Chad. Then it was interesting to hear, in a presentation by Pfarrer Karsten Dierks, about a different kind of pilgrim experience offered to visitors in Spandau. This is not a pilgrimage towards a holy, saintly place, but a beautifully laid out tour along a number of churches in this part of Berlin, collecting proper pilgrim's stamps on the way.

It was a lovely experience to walk together with hundreds of others the final leg of St

Olav's way, a network of long distance tracks through Norway and Sweden leading to Trondheim. On the eve of the big day we processed through the city before attending the St Olav's Wake Service, after which the cathedral was open the whole night for all kinds of prayer stations and activities, among which was a moving concert by a Ukrainian choir. On St Olav's Day itself we took part in the great Festival Mass, which was broadcast live.

An ecumenical and international meeting like this also provides an opportunity to reflect on our own theology and church practices in comparison to those of the others. We gained a lot of insight into the history, development and current trends within the Church of Norway and Norwegian society through the lectures of Bishop Tor Jørgensen. The liturgical traditions of this Church came alive through participating in a number of services, and I especially enjoyed the fact that a much greater part of the Lutheran liturgy is sung by both the presidents and the congregation than I am used to. Despite some differences, however, it was good to see that there is so much that we have in common.

Finally, it was great to hear from Canon Hilda Kabia from Tanzania about the hope for the peoples in Africa and the role of the Church in keeping that hope alive. It is this same hope in Christ that is great to share as we meet our brothers and sisters from across the globe and from different denominations on such a wonderful occasion as this ALS Conference in Trondheim.



## SOMETHING OF THE FLAVOUR OF TRONDHEIM

### GETTING SETTLED

It was very disappointing that a number of people were prevented from joining us for the conference in Trondheim. It was due to the uncertainty in the airline and airports, and was not helped by one key airline operator suffering from a strike. The result was that some had flights cancelled and could not get to Norway at all. Others had their flights delayed. However, during the course of Monday numbers grew and the Conference began.



The Comfort Park Hotel proved incredibly welcoming, with coffee and tea on tap in the foyer free of charge all day and all night! The rooms were adequate and the breakfasts amazingly varied and filling. The weather was warm and

sunny, and the views across the fjord are beautiful, the city is delightful and the restaurants are very good!



Those who arrived on the Sunday had been invited by the Anglican congregation in Trondheim to join them for their Communion Service at 6pm. They meet in the Chapter House in the Cathedral and enjoy very good relationships with their Lutheran hosts. The Rev Sheila Rosenthal, the Anglican Chaplain in Trondheim, treated us to a delightfully informal yet spiritually enriching act of worship.

The conference venue is The Armoury in what is now Trondheim's Military Museum. It stands in one corner of the courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace. Though it may not sound it, we found it a very impressive and comfortable room in which to meet.

## CONFERENCE IN TRONDHEIM, NORWAY, 25<sup>TH</sup>-29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022

*Welcome by the Rev Fredrik Ulseth, our Coordinator in Norway, and Bishop Michael Ipgrave, our Anglican Moderator*



Welcoming us to Trondheim, the Rev Fredrik Ulseth said that holding the conference in Nidaros (the ancient name for the city) was a dream come true for him. He was

born in the city and was ordained in the Cathedral. The Church of Norway's Council for International Relations had been very supportive, and their Senior Advisor, Beate Fagerli, had given him enormous practical support. She was indeed with us throughout the conference.

'Our dual theme is very relevant to the present day,' he said. 'Hope is something the Churches can offer a world facing wars, environmental issues, people losing sleep and lives being lost. Pilgrimage is the perfect theme for Nidaros which was one of the most important pilgrimage sites in

medieval Europe.' Doing a journey is both a dangerous enterprise and an inspiring one.

'Let this conference be a part of our journey towards hope, and on the way let us find out how St Olav can be relevant to the world today,' Fredrik concluded.

Bishop Michael Ipgrave thanked Fredrik, Beate and all her colleagues in the Church of Norway, and the planning group who had made the conference possible. He was speaking, he said, on behalf of his fellow Moderator, Dr Jaakko Rusama, in asserting how wonderful it is to meet in person, to confront such an inspiring topic as pilgrimage, and to begin on the Feast Day of St James, Patron Saint of pilgrims. Michael regretted that he and our Anglican President, Bishop David Hamid, would have to leave early in order to join the Lambeth Conference of Bishops starting in Canterbury on the Wednesday. But they were both determined to enjoy their time in our conference.

Fredrik then introduced Preces Olav Fykse Tveit who, until his election in 2020, had served for ten years as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

## 'A PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS HOPE'

A presentation by the Most Rev Olav Fykse Tveit, the Preces [Presiding Bishop] of the Church of Norway.  
His full text can be found on the Society's website. If you cannot access the website  
contact our editor, Canon Dick Lewis, and he will send you paper copies of all the presentations made at the conference.



Welcoming the conference to the Church of Norway, to Nidaros Diocese and to the Feast of St Olav, Preces Olav said that there is an urgent need to focus on what gives us hope. 'But we need to do more than talk about hope,' he said, 'we need challenges that show what we can contribute to hope, and we all need hope itself! Therefore, we need you as pilgrims of hope.'

### Ecumenical Dialogue is not an end in itself

More than that, he asserted, the ecumenical movement is a journey that brings us hope. He reminded the conference that it was here in Nidaros that the Church of Norway signed the Porvoo Common Agreement. 'I had the privilege of preparing the documents for our synod,' he told us, 'and the title was very affirmative – "Together in Mission and Ministry" – demonstrating that ecumenical dialogue is not an end in itself but a means by which the Church can do what it is called to do in a better and different way. It is not simply discussing something interesting. It is saying that we want to contribute something towards hope together. How shall we use our Churches' traditions and history, and our achievements, in a new way in times like these?'

### Hope must be at the heart of our Christian contribution

Reflecting on the word 'hope', Preces Olav told us that during his time as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches it was a constant theme: how might we make a difference in the world? 'I had to remind my colleagues again and again that we were there because there are problems in the world! That is the rationale of the ecumenical movement. As Churches we are asked by the United Nations and other agencies to offer a faith perspective.'

But what can we contribute? The Preces' view is that our task as Churches or Councils of Churches is to create hope for the world. Faith is not just what we think and what we do, but it is something that is offered to us and is expressed in our traditions, in our liturgies and in our prayers, and particularly when we pray "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be

done in earth as it is in heaven."

### The three-fold nature of hope


The Church has three things to offer; prayer, action and our confidence in God. 'When we talk about hope,' Preces Olav said, 'the ecumenical task of advocacy becomes central.' He admitted that to some people this sounded like getting side-tracked from the real ecumenical movement which is a theological movement. However, he is convinced that theology needs to issue in advocacy. 'The Church has a voice and must speak up for those who need a voice, and for those who need a theological reflection into a world that needs something other than cynical words or self-orientated discussions.' His focus is on what St Paul says in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 13, when he brings together these three, faith, hope and love. 'Very often we speak about love because, he says, that love is the greatest, but he says these three remain together. But I believe that, as theologians and preachers, wherever we are should not speak about any one of them without relating them to the other two. How can we speak about hope if it is not hope that comes out of our faith – faith in something more than ourselves? It is a faith that has shaped us.'

Hope has to be an expression of love. Hope that is just for our own benefit goes against the call to love. 'I would say that that there is a "Christian Hope" and that any hope that is not for the whole world cannot be "Christian Hope"!' Preces Olav asserted. 'If hope is based in the Creator God, the Saviour God and the Life-giving God it cannot be a hope that is only for some of us.'

### The pilgrimage theme is very relevant

Preces Olav moved to the pilgrimage theme. It reminded him of the motto of the World Council of Churches since 2015; 'To be Together on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace'. It is an urgent call to joint ecumenical effort in the situations in which we find ourselves. Pilgrimage is not just about visiting holy places; it's also about visiting holy human beings. 'If on your pilgrimage you visit one another, visit the reality and the context of others, it must quickly become a celebration of the gifts that the others have,' he said. 'It is not a matter of us saying, "This is what we have to offer you and this is what you ought to receive." To be on a pilgrimage of justice and peace, and indeed to be on a pilgrimage of hope, is to be open to receiving gifts from others.' This involves both humility and a desire for change. What can we show as signs of hope for today?

### Theology and service must be intertwined

Preces Olav reminded us of tension within the ecumenical movement between people who regard Faith and Order as an expression of doctrine and people who follow the Life and Work movement as works of *diaconia* or ethics. They must be brought together, he said, because we cannot have theological reflection that doesn't breed hope. 

### ⇒ How best to serve can lead to controversy

There is another vexed issue for the Church when it talks about hope; should it say something that has political implications? Isn't that the task for others? For Preces Olav that is a nonsensical question. How can the Church be Church without facing issues of suffering, conflict, injustice, exclusion, discrimination and so on? 'Theology is part of the public discourse. It's about the reality we all live in.'

This was a burning issue in the World Council of Churches during his time there. How might the Church assist people who are working for a better organised world? 'We had to remind ourselves that the United Nations Charter speaks of the 'people', and that the 'people' need more than just the secular states to move things forward, and because we represent some of the people of the world we share that responsibility,' he said.

### The right to hope is a universal right

When as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches he attended the United Nations COP 21 meeting in Paris in 2015 he spoke out and claimed that there are not only some rights that we care about that will bring a better world, but that everyone has the right to hope. 'Everyone has the right to hope that what is intolerable can be changed, things that are unfair, unjust, discriminatory, and that create the kinds of conflicts we see today. This right to hope is not just one among many rights. Hope is the perspective through which all rights are viewed, the things that enable us to organise a better world.'

That has to be done by putting Christian values alongside those of people of other faiths. As Christians we have a contribution to make. That is why, in the Preces' opinion, those engaged in ecumenical dialogue cannot ignore basic human rights – to life, to livelihood, to security. 'I think this unfortunately reminds us of where we come from,' he told us, 'how the power of the state and the work of the Church have for a long time been part of our history and politics. But there is no excuse for saying that it must always be like this. I would argue that the ecumenical movement has brought us to an understanding of what it means to be Church, and that there is no way of being Church unless you involve yourself in working for justice and peace – real justice and peace.'

### There is danger when this hope is denied

Preces Olav then made a brief reference to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Whilst some Orthodox theologians see only the victorious Christ in the cross, other traditions focus on the suffering Christ. 'If we don't see the suffering of Christ as an expression of our faith in Christ who is in solidarity with the suffering creation and suffering human beings, we are not really bringing the message of our Christian faith and the Christian hope,' he insisted. 'Hope is not only for victory, but is also the promise of Christ's presence in our sufferings so that we can address the suffering of others. The ecumenical movement is struggling to know how to do this.' He reminded the conference that Russians as well as Ukrainians are suffering as a result of this war. Whilst there is no way the war can be justified using Christian arguments, the Church must offer a voice of hope for those on both sides. That was the situation at the very

beginning of the modern ecumenical movement as it sought to bring together people who had been suffering through many conflicts and the Great War.

### The ecumenical task is an ongoing challenge

Preces Olav suggested that the ecumenical task has been a difficult one, and that perhaps we have become used to a period of peace towards which our predecessors had to strive as an expression of their hope. 'In many ways,' he said, 'we have reaped the fruits of their labours. Now we are beginning to see how difficult it can be. But this is not the time for us to say, "We give up!" Now is the time to say "This is our task!" But we don't know exactly what to do or how to do it. However, I need to remind you that hope is only apparent when things are not as they should be! Hope is not some extra added value; it is what is necessary to effect change.'

He offered us a chilling reminder of how Churches and traditional thinking can sometimes be an obstacle to hope. 'This year is "Queer Year",' he reminded us, 'and we have already seen attacks on the LGBTQ+ community. The shooting in Oslo [in a Gay Bar in Oslo on 25<sup>th</sup> June when two died and 21 were injured – Ed] could have been a massacre if it had not been stopped. We cannot say that the Church is responsible for any particular event, but we do need to adopt a critical approach to our Church, to our theology and to the practice of our congregations.'

### A theology of transformation

Preces Olav expressed appreciation for one contribution of the Orthodox Churches to ecumenical dialogue. They have reminded him that Incarnation is not just about God becoming a human being, it is a theology of transformation. He quoted Jürgen Moltmann's summary of what hope is theologically: 'Hope for the ultimate without hope for the penultimate soon loses its force, or it becomes violent in order to extort the ultimate from what is penultimate.' (*The Living God and Fullness of Life*, tr Margaret Kohl, Geneva: WCC, 2016) Dominating knowledge establishes facts, participatory knowledge leads to community. Belief in possible change is the key to the future of peace and communities and evaluates their potentialities. 'Moltmann describes, in a much more elegant way than I, that hope must be an element in theology,' the Preces said. 'It requires an eschatological element as well as an immanent element that shall bring justice and peace.'

### Conclusion

So, Christian hope is more than a general optimism. It is stating what we believe to be possible as opposed to what we see. 'But,' Preces Olav concluded, 'we should focus that hope in the way we believe, in the way that we work and in how we do our ecumenical work together – providing signs of hope that enable people to believe and to love. The words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 5 conclude my reflections here; "Hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us".'

Preces Olav Fykse Tveit's presentation was followed by discussion which is included at the end of his presentation posted on the Society's website.

## THE BISHOPS' ROUND TABLE

*This was a discussion chaired by Prof Richard Stephenson, one of the Conference planning group. A fuller account is on the Society's website. This article presents a summary.*

Richard warmly welcomed the "panel of prelates" as he described the seven bishops sitting round the table, and invited them to introduce themselves.

First was **Bishop Erik Varden**, Roman Catholic Bishop of Trondheim. He was born in Norway but had spent most of his life in the UK. He joined the Cistercian Order at Mount St Bernard in Leicestershire, remains a monk, but has been Bishop since 2019. The Catholic community in Trondheim is spread over 55,000 square kilometres, but there are only 16-17000 Catholics so it is a small community. However, it is a rich mix because they come from some 130 nations.



Next was **Tor Jørgensen**, a Norwegian who until 2015 was Bishop of the Diocese of Sør-Hålogaland in the north of Norway, but is now Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain. He had been General Secretary of the Norwegian Mission Society and had served before that as a missionary in Japan.



**David Hamid**, is a Bishop in the Church of England's Diocese in Europe plus Morocco, and Anglican President of our Society. The 300 congregations in the diocese are scattered across the continent so he felt he could trump Bishop Varden in terms of the area he covered! David was born in Scotland, ordained in the Church in Canada and served there until he was appointed Director of the Ecumenical Department in the Anglican Communion Office in London. He has been Bishop since 2002.



**Jana Jeruma-Grinberga** is Bishop Emerita of the Lutheran Church in



Great Britain and Lutheran President of our Society. Latvian by birth, she served in the Latvian Church in Exile before joining the Lutheran Church in Great Britain. Since she retired in 2019 she has worked as Anglican Chaplain in Riga under the Porvoo arrangements whilst retaining her involvement in the Latvian Church worldwide, though not the Latvian Church which does not ordain women.

**Olav Fykse Tveit** the Preces (Presiding Bishop) of the Church of Norway was General Secretary of the Church of Norway's Council on Ecumenical and International Relations until his election as the seventh General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in August 2009, where he served two 5-year terms. He became Preces in 2020 and was consecrated in the cathedral in Trondheim.



**Michael Ipgrave** has been Bishop of Lichfield in the Church of England for six years and is Anglican Moderator of the Society. He grew up in Leicestershire and has often visited Mount St Bernard, he told Bishop Erik, and also spent time as a curate in Japan, so he felt he was among friends!

**Herborg Finnset** is Bishop of Nidaros. She explained that there are eleven dioceses in Norway and her diocese has two bishops because the Preces is also based there. The diocese consists of the city of Trondheim and a number of smaller towns. It is 22,000 square kilometres so she too is involved in a lot



of travelling. She served as parish priest in a number of places in the north of Norway and as Dean of Tromsø from 2005 until 2017 when she moved to Nidaros.

Richard then suggested that today there is growing interest in pilgrimage. However, Martin Luther doesn't seem to have approved, thinking that they might not be bad in themselves but that they diverted Christians from their true callings. Luther would probably be surprised that the "Luther Trail" seems very similar to pilgrimage, attracting Christians from around the globe to Wittenberg, Worms, Erfurt and the other Luther sites! Henry VIII was far less ambivalent and banned pilgrimage in England. However, there has been a growing revival of interest in Anglican Churches recently. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church Catechism (para 2691) has always encouraged pilgrimages. They evoke our earthly journey toward heaven and are very special occasions for renewal in prayer.

Richard's first question for the bishops was: **What is the state of pilgrimage in the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran Churches today?**

**Bishop Erik** reiterated that pilgrimage is a symbol of our journey towards our heavenly homeland. You can go on pilgrimage without necessarily going very far, he said, since Catholic churches contain the 'Stations of the Cross' which provides a way of following Christ to the cross and beyond. 'You do this within the church but in spirit you are in Jerusalem,' he said.

The Benedictine Rule, he told us, also sets out the distribution of Psalms during the monastic day. He suggested that the Psalm before Vigils, Psalm 3 which is normally considered a 'waking Psalm' because it contains the verse 'I was asleep but now I am awake', has the title 'David, during the rebellion of Absalom, when he had to leave Jerusalem'. Bishop Erik reminded us that David had to leave in a hurry and how



⇒ Abiatha thought that the Ark of the Covenant should go with him. But David said it should stay in Jerusalem. If he was saved he would return to it. David left Jerusalem bare foot, head covered and singing. This reminds a monk that he is an exile. He is not where he is supposed to be.

In the middle of the day the Gradual Psalms are sung, which Jewish pilgrims sang as they made their way to Jerusalem. Finally, at Compline, Psalm 133 is used which was a priestly Psalm sung in the sanctuary before the Ark. So, Bishop Erik concluded, each day is a pilgrimage in miniature, from exile to homecoming. That's how we should all see our lives, and that's the framework in which pilgrimage makes sense.

**Bishop Tor** then took the microphone. He had been living a kind of pilgrimage over the past three years since becoming Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain! It is a tiny Church that recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. He constantly asks, 'Why are we here?' Exploring our roots is also a kind of pilgrimage. When he was in Japan he used to take his children into Temples to explore something of what happens in other religions – the seeking for God, the seeking for meaning, and the seeking for hope is fairly universal, he said.

**Bishop David** thanked the Roman Catholic Church for Vatican II and the notion of the people of God being the 'pilgrim people of God'. This has become an understanding across all the Churches. We are supposed to be on the move – not static. The Diocese of Europe is a diocese of migrants, people who are living outside their country of origin for work, study, education and all kinds of reasons. We have to keep our vision of Church as a people on the move, not just from place to place but also shifting our ideas and practices - how we receive other migrants, for example. 'The Spirit is moving us and tugging us along,' he said. 'Sunday by Sunday, as we go up the aisle to the altar, we are engaging in a little pilgrimage towards union with God which is our destiny.'

'We have all of us been migrants during the course of our ministries,' noted **Bishop Jana**. Latvia used to be a predominantly Lutheran country which

now has a more equal representation of Catholics and Orthodox. Lutherans used to be suspicious of pilgrimage regarding it as a bit 'Roman', but that has completely changed in the past ten years. St Mary's Basilica at Aglona (shown here) is the focus of an enormous pilgrimage with people walking from all over the Baltic States and Poland for 15th August. Jana had been there with 150,000 people in the fields outside the Basilica praying the Lord's Prayer together, and she'd found it a most moving experience. 'God works in unexpected ways,' she smiled, 'and some who think of the walk simply as a way of challenging themselves do meet God on the way!' She feels that the pilgrim movement has led to a kind of spiritual awakening in her country, though not necessarily associated with any of the established Churches.

**Bishop Herborg** said that after the Reformation pilgrimage was forbidden in Norway in an attempt to neutralise the cult of St Olav, and Nidaros as its focus. It was in the 1960s that a group of Swedes arrived in Trondheim and said, "We are pilgrims!" 'The local people were astonished,' the Bishop said, 'because no-one had said that for 400 years!' This year (2022) is the 25th anniversary of the pilgrim routes established by a joint initiative of the Church and local government. The thinking behind it is that the routes will provide physical exercise, as well as cultural and even spiritual benefits. Local farmers and landowners had to be asked if they knew where the old pilgrimage routes were, and many did. People often start on a pilgrim trail as tourists and finish up with unexpected



experiences. However, 'the most important pilgrimage,' Bishop Herborg said, 'is to your local church!' Two things stand out for her; physical contact with the natural world and the road, and extending welcome to the stranger.

**Bishop Michael** referred to some of the many Biblical images of pilgrimage. The First Epistle of Peter in particular as a very pilgrim-oriented work. The word '*peregrinus*' means one who comes through the fields, one who unsettles, who is a stranger from outside. Pilgrimage is a world-wide thing, he said, something he has experienced in Zimbabwe, in meeting thousands of Nigerians in the Holy Land, and in the tradition in England when, on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, "Mothering Sunday", people would visit their mother church. People would also visit the graves of their loved ones. 'Those are two kinds of pilgrimages that persisted in England,' he said, 'despite the fact that pilgrimage had been banned.' So perhaps the revival of pilgrimage in England is simply making explicit something that has been implicit for centuries. When Bishop Michael is on pilgrimage he reflects that, while he has chosen to take this route, many people are forced to make long journeys – migrants and asylum seekers, people fleeing danger. He carries a simple prayer stick he was given when he visited 'The Jungle', the enormous refugee camp outside Calais in France. 'A pilgrimage can be a witness to justice,' he said.

Richard Stephenson then moved on to the second part of the session which was about Hope. He showed Chris Antenucci's depiction of the Road to Emmaus (shown on the top of the next page). Two disciples whose hope was gone when Jesus was crucified ⇒



meet the stranger who opens the scriptures to them and they then, in the breaking of bread, recognise him as Jesus.

Richard told us that 'Google' suggests that pilgrims hope for various things, from healing, miracles, peace or just weight loss. So his next question for the Bishops was:

### Where do you see 'hope' in your respective Churches?

**Bishop Erik** said that it is easy to lose hope when congregations are dwindling and there are over-large institutions, but what strikes him is the goodness that he meets every day; people want to help and get together as community. The opposite of hope is hopeless, and he meets a lot of hopeless people who say things like 'I'm lost!' or 'My life isn't going anywhere!' or 'I'm stuck!'



Hopelessness is often a sense of being trapped in circumstances that restrict movement. So hopeless people start to fidget, and Bishop Erik thinks that the first step towards hope is to sit still and ask, 'Where am I now? And if this isn't where I should be or could be, how can I go somewhere?' In antiquity everything seemed to be falling apart and people felt trapped. Along came the Gospel which said, you're free. You can be free in your heart and soul and

no-one can take that freedom from you. Today young people are fed up with purposelessness. They want goals. And that, for Bishop Erik, is a sign of hope.

**Bishop Tor** said that 'grace' and 'joy' are the basis of his hopes for the congregations of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain. Another sign of

hope, he asserted, was the two Archbishops in England using their sermons on Easter Day to criticise the British Government's plan to send refugees arriving illegally in Britain to Rwanda. 'That was courageous and a sign of hope,' he said.

**Bishop David** explained that the Diocese in Europe has a "Ministry Experience Scheme" for young people aged 18 to 30 and that part of that programme is a study pilgrimage to the Holy Land. 'The reason is that pilgrimage leads to conversion,' he said. 'When they meet the People of the Land, the people who have been displaced and the people who have displaced them, and they hear the stories from both sides, and when they meet members of the ancient Churches, something happens. They don't bring back souvenirs; they bring back a change of heart.' On his last

visit they went to Emmaus. 'One of the great things about Emmaus is that archaeologists can't decide where it is!' he chuckled. 'There are at least four candidates. But I feel that Luke didn't intend a specific place. His intention was to convey that on the road when we meet a stranger and offer hospitality we are encountering Christ.'

**Bishop Jana** said that she sees hope in the fact that the structures of the Church are gradually collapsing and she is convinced that out of that will be born something new. 'Buildings may die and structures may die but faith will not die, and Christ will be there at the centre of whatever it is that's coming,' she said.

**Bishop Olav** sees hope in the fact that pilgrimage opens the way to both purpose and openness. 'God is more than something I have created,' he said. This opening up comes through exercise, through fellowship and through praying together. 'Another sign of hope,' he asserted, 'is that the Church is changing and becoming more of a part of the life of ordinary people. There's a kind of pilgrimage going on, out of our churches and into the life of the community where God is.'

**Bishop Michael**, adding to Richard's Biblical references, reminded us that when Jesus was asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' he told a story about pilgrimage, about a man on a journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, and of fresh encounters. And what gives Bishop Michael hope is the way that congregations welcome the stranger who may be a refugee, an asylum seeker or someone recently released from prison. These things really open up churches, and he finds real hope in that.

Right at the end **Bishop Herborg** told us that all week she has been singing a song we all know, '*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.*' To that she would add there is also hope.

## END OF DAY ONE

As Bishop Michael had reminded us in his introduction, our conference was beginning on St James' Day.

We went into the cathedral for their **Celebration of St James the Apostle**, a most impressive service of Holy Communion.

This was the first time most of us had experienced the magnificent organ that occupies the West Wall of the interior and flanks a Rose Window. It would not be surprising if it registers on a seismograph, so deep and rich are its tones!

When the service was over we moved to a restaurant for the **Conference Dinner**, held at the end of the first day because some of the Bishops were leaving for Canterbury and the Lambeth Conference the next day, and we didn't want them to miss it!

## ANGLICAN EUCHARIST

*On the Tuesday morning we were invited to join the Anglican congregation in Trondheim for a Eucharist. Our Society's two Presidents officiated. Bishop David Hamid presided and Bishop Jana Jeruma-Grinberga was the preacher.*

In her Sermon Bishop Jana reminded us that on that day the Church of England calendar celebrates Saints Anne and Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 'This might be less familiar to Lutherans, especially those from the US and Germany, as these extra-canonical saints don't always make it into our calendars,' she said. They are not mentioned in the Four Gospels and the source for their names and some quite extensive details about their lives is the *Proto-Evangelium of James*, (<https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0847.htm>), a third or fourth century document. Bishop Jana smiled: 'As a good Lutheran I have to say that it is more akin to a beautiful story ... and less to Biblical truth - which is not to say that stories and myths are not true, just not factual!'

Jana wondered what it was like being a grandpa or nanny to Jesus. 'Was he really always gentle Jesus, meek and mild,' she wondered, 'or did he suffer the terrible twos alongside the other toddlers of his generation?' That incident at the Temple, when Jesus was found by Mary and Joseph in theological discussions with the teachers there, certainly suggests a twelve-year-old with a mind of his own!

Bishop Jana and her husband have a grandson who is three-and-a-half years old. 'One of our very favourite occupations is going for a walk together; but the way we walk is some-

what analogous both to pilgrimage and to our ecumenical journey,' she smiled. 'My idea of a walk is that we have an aim in mind - the park, for instance, and feeding the ducks or playing on the swings ... but his aim is to climb every wall on the way, sniff most of the roses, chat to random strangers and sit down by the birch tree to watch the ants marching up and down. Sometimes he runs ahead and comes back; sometimes he hides behind lamp posts and leaps out at me!'

That is a little bit like our ecumenical endeavours, she said. 'We might agree, mostly, that our aim is to arrive at full visible unity ... Some of us would like to head there in a very linear fashion, ignoring all the fascinating diversions that the doctrinal equivalent of a walk in the park offers us. Quite often some of us, some Churches or denominations, run far ahead on the journey, and either have to wait for the rest of us to catch up, or end up coming back to join the slower of gait and thought. Often, too, whatever process we are following, whatever joint walk we are taking, the walk and the talk are more important than achieving an end quickly; by stopping on the way to watch each other, and to listen, we learn a great deal more about this complex journey that we are on than if we simply ploughed on, regardless. In other words, we find fellowship and friendship by walking together, even if we don't necessarily think we are heading to the same place or that our route is entirely clear.'



That, Bishop Jana thought, is one of the great strengths of our Anglican-Lutheran Society. 'We find companionship with one another without setting complex, difficult targets: instead we savour the exploration of our common faith and values, taking sustenance together on the way and affirming that that which unites us is far greater than that which divides.'

Today's Epistle began, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love God, who have been called according to God's purpose." Accepting this truth and absorbing it into our lives will help us to deal with difficulties and diversions, Jana concluded. 'It holds before us the hope of a pilgrimage that has as its end, or its purpose, the vision of eternal splendour for which we have been created, and towards which we are walking - stumblingly sometimes, boldly sometimes, but always walking with and in Christ.'

## 'PILGRIMAGE: 'WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF CHAD''

*This was the title of a presentation given by the Rt Rev Michael Ipgrave, Bishop of Lichfield in the Church of England and Anglican Moderator of our Society. It is summarised here by our editor. You can read it in full on the Society's website.*

### Introduction

Bishop Michael spoke about St Chad of Lichfield who died in 672. 'He was the first Bishop of Lichfield; I am the ninety-ninth,' Bishop Michael smiled. 'Chad is associated with pilgrimage. In the Diocese of Lichfield which he established we are discovering ever new depths in what it means to be a pilgrim people.'

### Chad's pilgrim life

Chad lived in a time of division and conflict. Following the end of Roman rule in Britain, the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were often at war with one another. Northumbria and Mercia were bitterly opposed to one another in the struggle for dominance in England. Chad came from Northumbria to Mercia armed with no weapons except for the gospel →



⇒ of peace. Crossing boundaries in an undefended way is a mark of authentic pilgrimage, being a pilgrim puts us in a place of **vulnerability**.



There was tension in the Church. Should Roman customs introduced by Augustine through the Canterbury mission be followed, or those shaped by Irish monastic Christianity? Chad had been formed by Irish traditions, not least by spending several years in the monastery of *Rath Meilsige*, near Carlow, Ireland. However, the Church in England decided to follow Roman rather than Irish ways – at the Synod of Whitby in 664 – and Chad willingly accepted the Roman way of doing things. This ready acceptance was just one example of the humility for which he was renowned; and **humility** is a mark of pilgrimage, at least as Chad practised it.

When he came to Mercia, Chad spent the three brief years of his episcopal ministry in walking around the villages, farms and settlements of his vast diocese. He covered huge distances. ‘We know that,’ Michael said, ‘from the number of places in the West Midlands and beyond that take their name from him.’ But he would only travel on foot. He refused to ride a horse, and that meant that those he met on his lengthy walking visits were physically on the same level as him; he was not looking down on them from the height of a horse. So pilgrimage, as Chad practised it, was a simple expression of humility – keeping close to the ground.

Chad was a *peregrinus*, as so many monks were in the Irish tradition. The Latin word, which is the root from which the English ‘pilgrim’ derives, is also the name of a bird, which swoops up and down on the currents of the wind as the human *peregrinus* does on the currents of the Spirit. ‘It is very fitting that there are peregrines nesting in the towers of Lichfield Cathedral today,’ Michael remarked. Like the peregrines, the Irish monks walked the roads across



Europe and embarked in fragile coracles on the wild Atlantic, and ventured deep into thick forests and impenetrable marshlands. They did so with an absolute trust in the direction of

the Spirit to take them wherever the way of Christ led them. ‘That characteristic of **trust** seems to me a really important marker of the pilgrim life,’ Michael asserted, ‘and it is one that Chad, a genuine *peregrinus*, showed throughout his short life. After only three years as Bishop of Lichfield, he died, still in his thirties, in 672, of the plague – what a contemporary resonance that has!’ The Venerable Bede wrote that a few days before his death Chad’s brother monks heard heavenly music coming from his cell, and realised that Chad was being visited by angels, ready to lead him on his final journey in the Spirit. ‘Lichfield Cathedral today is full of carvings and images of angels, Chad’s trusted spiritual companions on his pilgrimage home.’

#### The historic pilgrimage to Chad’s shrine

People visited Chad’s grave in Lichfield in large numbers, so a man who had walked as a pilgrim throughout his earthly life became himself the object of pilgrimage after his death. The story of this holy man gave inspiration and hope to the people of medieval England, and they walked long distances to celebrate his memory. ‘Keeping alive and renewing a **memory** of holiness is one key purpose of the pilgrim,’ Michael remarked, ‘and when they arrived at Lichfield they encountered the most tangible sign of that living memory: the shrine housing the bodily relics of Chad himself.’

The pilgrimage to Chad’s shrine was not only a celebration of holiness in the past; it was also a quest for **healing** in the present. The Venerable Bede wrote of frequent miracles that happened at the shrine and throughout the medieval period, that there was a powerful sense that visiting the shrine in expectant faith could bring restoration of body, soul and spirit to the afflicted, and this was a major motivation for pilgrimage.

‘As a place where people sought healing, Lichfield became one of the first pilgrimage Cathedrals in England, and it is likely that that in turn led to another key feature of the site: its **accessibility**,’ Michael told us. ‘Unlike most medieval English cathedrals, Lichfield is entirely built on one level, with no steps or changes in flooring to impede the progress of people with a disability.’ He described how everything was done to enable people to reach the cathedral easily. ‘The principle that pilgrimage sites and routes should be accessible to all seems centrally important to me.’

#### Renewing Chad’s pilgrimage today

At the Reformation, the shrine of St Chad was dismantled, the relics dispersed, and open celebration of the pilgrimage stopped, though it is likely that some people continued to observe it privately. ‘Remarkably,’ Bishop Michael told us, ‘it later transpired that the bones of St Chad were not ⇒

entirely lost. A small collection of the relics that had been secretly kept by one of the priests of the cathedral had been passed on through generations of his family and others who had secretly kept the old faith, and found their way to France.' Then, in 1841, these relics were solemnly enshrined in the newly built Roman Catholic Cathedral of St Chad in Birmingham. 'Their remarkable story demonstrates the extraordinary tenacity of the memory which underlies Chad's pilgrimage.'

Michael went on to describe how in recent years, there has been a wide growth of interest in pilgrimage among Christians of many different traditions, and in society at large. 'In 2012, a 92-mile walking route between the two medieval cities of Chester and Lichfield was inaugurated, called the Two Saints Way after St Chad and St Werburgh, a female Anglo-Saxon abbess and saint,' he explained. 'Then, last year, a longer route of more than 500 miles linking Lindisfarne in Northumberland to Lichfield was walked for the first time to mark Chad's journey from Northumbria to Mercia – it has been given the name of the Two Kingdoms Way.' Several shorter routes have been established by parishes and communities wanting to recover the history of their connection to Lichfield. 'I think we can also see evidence of the importance of the other values I mentioned: humility, vulnerability, trust, accessibility, and the quest for healing,' he said.



A journey to the ancient future.

Humility in its root meaning is about keeping close to the ground. As your feet make contact with grass, stones, mud, gravel and even tarmac, you become aware of your connection with the natural world, which conveys a humbling sense of your own smallness in the midst of creation. 'But in an age of ecological crisis it also arouses a sense of penitential humility for the damage that we have caused and continue to cause to our fragile world,' said Bishop Michael. 'Pilgrimage is an exercise in ecological humility.'

Vulnerability can be present in different physical forms – mad cattle in the fields, mad drivers on the road – and it can also be challenging to walk in undefended company and conversation among fellow pilgrims. 'But pilgrimage is more than just walking: it is an act of faith in Jesus Christ, and a witness to him,' Michael reminded us. 'When Chad went walking through seventh-century Mercia, he would greet anybody he met and talk with them about Jesus Christ. Doing that in secular Britain today puts you in a place of vulnerability, but that is where we should be as we follow our vulnerable Lord.'

Setting out to walk on pilgrimage requires a strong sense of trust, trust in the leader, and trust in the people who have put up the way-marking signs or drawn the maps. 'But,' said Michael, 'underlying that trust is a God who guides us on our way and accompanies us on the journey.'

That experience of trustful journeying is accessible to all, whatever their background or belief. There seems to be something about the act of walking that opens people up to new levels of spirituality, and that is itself open to all. And in the last two years, as the pandemic has led us further into the possibilities of online experience, virtual pilgrimage has become a real possibility for those unable to walk physically. 'This is an area where the Chad pilgrimage websites are working hard to open up cyberkinetic possibilities in the home. In doing that, they are continuing the principle of accessibility which goes back to Chad's first shrine,' Michael remarked.

In September 2017 more than five hundred people joined in an ecumenical pilgrimage from St Chad's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Birmingham to Lichfield (Anglican) Cathedral to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Reformed, Baptists, Salvationists, Orthodox and others walked together with a priest who carried a small relic of Chad himself. At Lichfield, for the first time since the Reformation, part of Chad's body lay for a few hours at the site of his tomb.

But, Michael concluded, that is not the end of the story. Bernard Longley, who is the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, has promised that that same relic of St Chad will, in November this year, be returned permanently to Lichfield, entrusted to us in the Church of England to keep in a restored shrine in our Cathedral at the point shown below. 'We hope, pray and expect that this will help people of all Christian backgrounds to recover a sense of the unity that we have lost through our divisions. Chad was a saint of the Undivided Church, before even the great split between East and West dramatically fractured the universal fellowship of Christians. In honouring him we long for the healing of the bitterness, violence and division which have scarred the Body of Christ, so that a restored Church can be a sign of healing for a divided world,' Michael concluded.



The site of the new Shrine for St Chad in Lichfield Cathedral

## 'NORWAY AND THE CHURCH OF NORWAY TODAY'

Tuesday morning continued with presentation by the Rt Rev Tor B Jørgensen  
(Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain).  
This is an edited version. You can read it in full on the Society's website.



### Introduction

Since 17th March 1946, the date of his Baptism, Bishop Tor has been a member of the Church of Norway. At that time the population of Norway was 3.1 million of which 3 million were members of the National Church, and there were 12,000 Lutherans in the Lutheran Free Churches, about 11,000 Methodists, 4,000 Roman Catholics and 23,000 with no religious affiliation. Today the population is 5.4 million, and the religious mix is very different.

Bishop Tor is now working in Great Britain as leader of a minority Church. He had found a new book by Jeremy Morris (*A People's Church: A History of the Church of England, 2022*, Profile Books) very helpful in understanding about the Church of England. 'Until quite recently we had a State Church in Norway as there is in England,' he said.

### Norway

Up until recently Norwegians were a homogeneous people. There was very little immigration into Norway until around 1965. On the other hand, between 1830 and 1920, around 800,000 Norwegians left Norway. But today it is very different. 17% of the population are immigrants, mainly from European countries while the numbers from Africa and Asia are tiny in comparison. There is also a small population of indigenous people, the Sami. 'In years gone by, the government had a strict programme of "Norwegianisation" so that the Sami should become "proper Norwegians",' Bishop Tor told us. 'They were to forget their own language and culture and become "normal" citizens. That is not a good story, but it is one that has been replicated the world over.'

### The arrival of Christianity

Christianity came to Norway in the 10th Century. King Haakon Haraldsson the Good, son of Harald Fairhair, was not a Christian but sent his son to England where he stayed with King

Athelstan for ten years. He was baptised and returned to Norway bringing priests and bishops with him. But his reputation has suffered because he used force to compel the people to become Christians. 'There was a period of 20 years of peace in Norway under a Christian king. Those who wrote the sagas prefer writing about fighting rather than peace so there is very little written history of that time! But I think he was a very important person because he created understanding between different religions and different traditions and was able to keep the peace,' the Bishop said.

### The Reformation

Norway was only a small country and for 200 years it had been under either the Swedish or Danish kings. King Christian III of Denmark had been to Worms as a young prince and heard Martin Luther explaining his faith. On his return in 1537 he succeeded in making Denmark a Lutheran country, and Norway too. 'The King became God's representative and he used the priests to serve both his kingdom as well as the Kingdom of God. So for the next 250 years Norway was a peaceful country.'

Something that later turned out to be a difficulty is that at that time the Church of Norway lost the 'Apostolic Succession', they had Superintendents instead of bishops. Then one of Luther's friends, Johannes Bugenhagen, pictured here, came and crowned the King, signed the papers and ordained seven new bishops for Norway. However, he was not a bishop himself, so the succession was lost.



### A Norwegian Revolution

After 250 years of peace Napoleon started his wars in Europe and the

Danish King supported him. When Napoleon was defeated the Treaty of Kiel in 1814, between the British and the Swedes, took Norway from Denmark and gave it to Sweden. 'The Norwegians protested,' Bishop Tor explained, 'because on Ascension Day, 1814, delegates from all over Norway had written a constitution of their own. They had wanted an independent Norway and they elected their first King.' This led to a short war with Sweden but in November 1814 the Norwegians accepted the King of Sweden as King of Norway but, they said, "We must keep our constitution and our own parliament in Oslo!" Under this arrangement Carl XIII, became the King of Sweden and Governor of Norway. The Bishop told us that Crown Prince Karl Johan took a special interest in and responsibility for Norway, and personally handed golden crosses to the five Norwegian bishops in 1815. 'My successor has the one I used to have,' Bishop Tor smiled.

This new constitution was interesting. Article 2 says "The Evangelical Lutheran Religion shall remain the official religion of the State. Inhabitants who profess the same shall be required to educate their children therein." Then Article 4 says "The King shall at all times profess, maintain and defend the Evangelical Lutheran religion." So the King was to be the defender of faith and, in practice, the governor of the Church. Article 16 states "The King shall establish regulations for all church and religious services of a public nature and for all meetings and gatherings concerning religious affairs and he shall take care that the public structures of religion shall adhere to the prescribed standards." Notice, Bishop Tor said, that nothing is mentioned about Freedom of Religion. 'On the contrary, this is a cementing of the Lutheran religion as the only accepted religion in Norway. There was a strict article that said Jews were not' →

⇒ permitted, nor was the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). Also, there was no freedom of assembly. You could not have a religious meeting if there was no priest present unless he had given permission for the meeting to take place.'

A key figure in understanding Norwegian church History is Hans Nielsen Hauge.

A farmer in the south-east of Norway, he had a religious experience of salvation that totally changed him. He started to travel through Norway, either by boat along the



coast or on foot, and as he travelled he was always knitting. He was a very spiritual and practical man who drew people to him. 'The priests, especially here in Trondheim, didn't like that at all,' said Bishop Tor, 'so he was first arrested around 1796, released and then later detained for ten years. But while in detention Hauge was able to write and to read. It is said that he published 200,000 copies of his books which were very popular.' All the lay movements in Norway more or less started with him, the Bishop explained, and we still see evidence of them today, groups that are opposed to the priesthood and who provoked conflict in the Church of Norway for a very long time. 'But Hauge said very clearly to his followers, "Don't leave the Church!" That was his last wish and his legacy lives on within the Church of Norway.'

In 1905 the people of Norway rejected Oscar II, the Swedish king who, after a while, finally bowed to their wishes. A referendum was held to decide if Norway should be a republic or a kingdom, and the kingdom won. A Danish prince, Carl, was elected unanimously and he became the first of the new dynasty here taking the name Haakon VII. He ruled until his death in 1957. 'His wife, Maud, was English, the daughter of Edward VII, and went back to England every winter because it was too cold for her here in Norway!' chuckled Bishop Tor.



### A difficult period

The rise of Hitler in Germany led to war. On 9th April, 1940, the Germans invaded Norway. King Haakon eventually escaped to Britain. The leader of Norway's nationalist party, Vidkun Quisling (shown above), was appointed as Minister-President, and he was inaugurated on 1st February 1942. The Minister for Religion decreed that a morning service should take place that day in Nidaros Cathedral to celebrate Quisling's new Norwegian Government. At first the Dean refused, but the Minister insisted. So word got round that the regular morning service would take place in the afternoon. The cathedral was packed, thousands gathered outside the west front, and started singing hymns with a Norwegian flavour. The police dispersed the people but without using force. The Dean was dispossessed by the Nazi regime and as a result the bishops, meeting in Oslo, said they could no longer continue as bishops in this Church. 'They sent letters of resignation in which they said they would continue as spiritual leaders but would have nothing to do with the government,' Bishop Tor said. The clergy followed and, of the 858 registered ordained pastors, 797 resigned their positions as government officials. Most continued to live in their church houses and to exercise their pastoral care. So the Church was a symbol of resistance, offering comfort and hope to the population. People thought there would be a new spring when peace eventually came.

### Peace comes – but it brings no spring

The war ended and, unhappily, things got back to normal. The lay movements wanted to keep control over the Church so the old conflicts re-emerged. However, things changed in the 1960s-70s. In 1969 came what

came to be called the "Petroleum Revolution" when Norway became a rich and affluent country. All religious education in schools was ended so local congregations had to create their own religious education programmes. Then a new influx of immigrants began to arrive and, like most western nations, the country of Norway began to

experience increased secularisation. Questions began to be raised about Church-State relationships. Many thought that entering a new millennium would be the moment for the disestablishment of the Church. But how was it to be done? 'Many people were opposed to change,' said Bishop Tor, 'but representatives of the Church and Parliament were able to create a new Article 2 in the constitution which reads, 'Our values will remain our Christian and Humanist heritage.' And I think the Spirit was with them because they were able to relate back to the Christian tradition as well as the positive Humanist elements in our culture.

The Article 16 was changed to, "All inhabitants of the realm shall have the right to the free exercise of religion. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway will remain the Folkchurch of Norway and will be supported by the State. Detailed provisions will be laid down in the law, and all religions should be supported on equal terms."

'All religions shall be supported on equal terms,' repeated Bishop Tor; 'That meant that when the Church of Norway gets money from the State then all the other Churches, religions and accepted humanist organisations must also receive money from the State!'

The King did not want his position to be removed from the constitution. His belief was that the King should belong to the Lutheran Church. That is dealt with very informally as when, for example, a bishop is ordained the King will always be there, though not officially but as a private person.

### Difficulties and Challenges in the Church of Norway today

Bishop Tor is much less pessimistic about the future of the Church ⇒



## ST OLAV FROM AN HISTORIC-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

*This is a summary of the presentation by Dr Margrethe Stang who is Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Media Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. It followed the mini-presentations described below, and the full version is on the Society's website.*

Dr Stang began with a brief account of how King Olav Haraldson II, who was martyred at the Battle of Stiklestad on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1030, was proclaimed a local saint. The Battle was perceived as a battle between Christian and pagan armies, but this was not so. 'Of all the Christianising kings we have in the early middle ages (St Edmund in England, St Stephen in Hungary for example) Olav was certainly one of the most brutal and bloodthirsty ones! People normally associate the word 'saint' with someone who is very nice, but it's Olav's martyrdom that made him a saint in the eleventh century.'

Being an art historian Dr Stang proposed exploring St Olav through images. 'Quite excitingly,' she said, 'the earliest image we have of St Olav is not a Norwegian image, nor Scandinavian, nor even Northern European. It's in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.' It is a rather dark, shadowy image in which he is standing and has an axe on his shoulder. It is a very long time before we get an image of Olav associated with Norway that we can date.' She then outlined Olav's key points. His body was enshrined in 1031, just a year after his death and his cult is mentioned in European sources in the 11th century. Nidaros Cathedral was built from about 1070 and the Archdiocese of Nidaros established in 1153. 'If Bergen or Oslo had been chosen instead of Trondheim it's likely Norway might have had another patron saint,' she quipped. Olav's life and miracles, the *Passio Olavi*, were recorded in 1150-1160, and in the Law of Succession in Norway, 1163, to end battles over the

monarchy, Olav is named as *Rex perpetuus Norvegiae*. St Olav's axe was included in the claws of the lion in the royal Norwegian coat of arms in round about 1280.



The first image she showed Dr Stang described as 'quite comic'. From Eastern Norway it shows the king enthroned, wearing a long gown fastened with a belt, a cloak and a crown. In his left hand he holds a book and his right hand held something which is lost (a common problem with cult statues which were touched by pilgrims and bits fell off). She showed another dating from c1200 which is "more beautiful" and very well carved. He holds an axe in his right hand and in his left he may have held a sceptre because the Seal of Nidaros Archdiocese shows him holding a sceptre, finished with a lily on top. 'Olav became a really powerful personality in his after-life,' Dr Stang told us. 'There are

many medieval sculptures preserved in Norway and Olav is portrayed in every second one!' →

→ than he was 50 years ago. There are all kinds of challenges: voluntary lay organisations are not as strong as they were and it is difficult to recruit enough priests. Confirmation classes are still strong, but there is a decrease in the number of baptisms. 'But,' he said, 'whenever there is a crisis of one kind or another the Church is always the place to which people turn. The doors are always open and the clergy play an important role. The Church is very involved in the cultural and political life of Norway.'

The Church is criticised for standing up for the poor people, for refugees, for human rights and for nature and the environment. 'But that,' Bishop Tor concluded, 'is a good thing. The Church is fighting the good fight in this country. There is more that I could say about the Church of Norway today, but now I must stop!'

## SIX MINI-PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS

After lunch, on Tuesday afternoon some of our members shared ideas of pilgrimage and hope as they found them in their own spheres of ministry.

**Karsten Dierks** described how some congregations in Spandau, Berlin, had got together and created a pilgrims' way taking in all the churches in their neighbourhood with way-marking and pilgrim stamp.

**Kimberli Lile** spoke of her work as Pastor in an Adult Care environment and in the United Lutheran Church in Wartburg, New York. a joyful combination of chaplaincy, religious life, and work with elders and their families, all things that are firmly in her family's Lutheran roots of Christian service to all people, regardless of creed.

**James Chegvidden** told us of an ecumenical initiative with a Polish Catholic community sharing the church building with his Anglican congregation in London, and of their growing ministry to asylum seekers from Iran.

**Charlotte Hudd** had taken up residence in the care home where she nursed when the Covid-19 pandemic struck and her colleagues fell ill.

**Andy Roland** described how he had become a writer of religious fiction.

**Helen Harding** demonstrated how environmental conservation can begin just outside the church door.

Four of these are on the website.

Here is the "more beautiful" carving. The axe is often quoted as the means of Olav's death. 'But, said Dr Stang, 'I believe it was by a kind of contamination that the axe of St Olav turned into the means of his martyrdom!'



She then showed us some examples of sculptures all conforming to the high medieval ideal of kingship. Olav remains popular whilst other new saints like Francis with his focus on the poor, for example, which become popular especially after the Black Death, do not catch on in Trondheim. But the cult of saint-king was very much alive elsewhere. She showed us a bust of Charlemagne dating from around 1300AD, stylistically very similar to Olav's images

A saint has to have miracles associated with him or her. The miracles associated with Olav are mostly from after his death. 'They show the compassionate Olav, which is the saint around whom the cathedral is built and who pilgrims come to, not the brutal warrior king,' Dr Stang smiled. She showed one half of a walrus ivory diptych (below right), probably made in Trondheim c1300, which illustrates some of his miracles.

In the centre panel is a boy with a boil on his neck and his mother pointing him to St Olav who heals the boil. To the left is a cornfield and the king riding over the corn and it is flattened. He then makes the corn rise up again and the harvest is saved. The bottom left depicts a really brutal story of Richard the Priest who was accused of seducing a young girl. Her brothers seized him, chopped off his legs, poked out his eyes and cut out his tongue. Being unable to speak he had to pray silently (at that time prayer was vocalised) and St Olav came to him and restored his eyes so he could see the saint, restored his arms and legs and then pulled the stump of his tongue out so that he could speak again. To the bottom right is the martyrdom of Olav showing the lance, axe and sword, the three weapons with which he was killed. The diptych is in Copenhagen. The other half depicts events associated with the Virgin Mary.

Dr Stang then gave an explanation of an altar frontal (top of next column) made here in Trondheim around 1300. It depicts the saint standing in the middle with the symbols of the four Evangelists separating the four compartments. The lower left shows Olav riding to the Battle of Stiklestad and gives money to a farmer demonstrating his generosity to the Church. Lower right shows Olav dreaming about a

ladder up which he climbed for heaven, but was woken up before he got there. His men thought the dream a bad omen – Olav was destined for martyrdom. Top left shows the Battle, and Olav is dead. His sword is beside him along with his shield. He is unarmed and is therefore a martyr. A lance pierces his chest, an axe cuts into his knee and a sword cuts his neck. Top right probably depicts his burial. These are more fully described on the website.



Dr Stang then explained how in the fifteenth century the Black Death devastated Norway. Its already sparse population was drastically reduced, the religious elite was almost wiped out with only one bishop surviving. Norwegian political independence crumbled, the Church remained very wealthy, not very well educated and quite worldly, its wealth coming from the export of fish. But the upshot is that Norway becomes provincial until the nineteenth century. ➡



However, St Olav's cult blossoms abroad. Around the Baltic a new set of legends appears in which St Olav is a popular hero. He travels and helps people and shown here, in a mural in Lid Kyrka in Sweden, you see him in a ship wearing a green tunic, a troll stealing a baby and someone being seasick over the side of the boat! The stories are often ballad-like, often grotesque and are found all around the Baltic Basin. 'This is the very kind of mural you would expect to find in Norwegian churches,' Dr Stang remarked, 'but you don't. There simply wasn't the economy, the wealth, to do this kind of thing.'



The poor Norwegians could not afford the huge altarpieces found in Danish churches, for example, but they could buy small winged altarpieces. She showed this one, made in a German workshop for a Norwegian church around 1500, showing St Sunniva to the left and St Olav to the right. St Sunniva is Patron Saint of Bergen, a mysterious Irish princess about whom little is known, St Olav wears a modern German tunic and tight hose and he's stepping on a dragon with a human face.



Nobody knows why this dragon appears in the iconography but there is a theory that the creature represents Olav himself and that he's treading down his own ego. 'But that sounds to me a bit Post-Freudian!' Dr Stang commented.

While imported images of Olav showed him in fashionable short tunic and tight hose, and sometimes in armour, locally produced Norwegian ones tended to depict him in his traditional long belted tunic and cloak with an axe, and this is how the pilgrim badges of the saint depict him.

When the The Reformation began there were few people in Norway who could afford books and who could read properly to whom Protestantism might appeal. Lutheran

ideas began to appear in Bergen, the largest, most German city in Norway. But in effect The Reformation was a *coup d'état*. Norway was incorporated into the Danish realm, with the Danish king as head of the Church, so the Reformation was regarded as much more positive and liberating in Sweden and Denmark than it was in Norway. But the upside is that religious images were not forbidden and there were few iconoclastic incidents recorded, which is why so many religious images have survived. 'However, the feast day of St Olav became a private family feast, a local feast with bonfires and lots of good food and drink, and this continued in some regions of the country right up to the twentieth century,' Dr Stang told us. She showed us an image of a calendar stick of the type used right up to the seventeenth century on which the Feast of St Olav was marked with an axe, there is one axe for his martyrdom and another for the day of his translation into the cathedral. So he was never forgotten.



Dr Stang also shared images of Icelandic drinking horns that feature Olav alongside other rulers; Constantine, Charlemagne, three idealised rulers who brought Christianity to their people.

Moving to modern times, she swiftly explained how after the Napoleonic Wars Norway was taken from Denmark and given to Sweden as a prize of war. However, in the constitution that the Norwegians had already written the Norwegian kings would always be crowned in the cathedral in Trondheim. This brought to everyone's attention the fact that the medieval church was badly in need of repair. It had suffered a severe fire and the nave was in ruins. Renovation began in 1869. The cult of St Olav revived, ☞



though he was not so much a religious but more of a political figure. ‘Now fast forward to 1930,’ she said. ‘The restoration of the cathedral was nearing its completion, the Rose Window was brand new and everyone travelled to Trondheim to see it. There were souvenirs. This spoon is from my own drawer at home. Everything had St Olav on it! Lutheran families, Socialist families, everyone would have these knick-knacks with Olav on them.’

But the Second World War and occupation followed. ‘St Olav was “kidnapped” by the National Socialists in Norway and Vidkun Quisling compared himself to St Olav and his national-socialist party NS (Nasjonal Samling) held rallies at historical sites such as Stiklestad,’ Dr Stang explained. She described in some detail the way in which the Norwegian Church leaders responded to occupation, as you can read on the website. ‘St Olav’s Day now takes a very popular turn. I think the event at Stiklestad where he was martyred and which I think some of you will visit on Saturday was premiered in the 1950s,’ she said. ‘Watch carefully for its message. In the 1950s the country was divided. Some had sided with the Nazi occupiers while others had resisted them. It’s a religious play but it’s about mothers and fathers and children and grandparents facing the question, “What do we do when we have to make a choice between what we believe to be right and what might be wrong?”’

Norway’s pilgrim routes started in 1993 as part of a pan-European phenomenon. The European Union has been



very active in this. ‘The Olav Festival to which pilgrims come started as a Church Music Festival, then in the 1990s turned into a medieval fair with jousting and things like that, and today it’s becoming more like a seminar with a lot of talks and discussions about ethics and not necessarily about religion, and cultural issues are brought to the fore,’ Dr Stang concluded. ‘My talk has covered 1000 years from the Battle of Stiklestad up to today. Your task is to take Olav into the future!’

## A BRIEF CULTURAL INTERLUDE

After Dr Stang’s presentation we made our way to the Cathedral and a concert that he been specially arranged. The *Schola St Sannivae* ladies’ choir sang Medieval music associated with St Olav, whilst the organist interspersed their songs with modern music played on the cathedral’s magnificent organ.

It may not have been to everyone’s taste but the concert offered a wonderful movement between old and new that resonated with our conference theme, as pilgrimage in the present opens doors to both past and future.



The Dean, bottom left, with a group in the cathedral

On Wednesday morning we went to the Chapter House for our Morning Prayer once again led for us by the Anglican congregation in Trondheim. From there we divided into two groups. Each spent half the morning exploring the delights of the cathedral with the help of the Dean, while the others were introduced to the city and some of the churches by her husband. At 11 o’clock sharp the two groups swapped over so that everyone who wanted to was able to enjoy both tours.

Then there was a two hour break during which people could find some lunch in one of the many restaurants, visit the museum, or simply spend more time in the cathedral which is beautifully restored and full of half-hidden delights.



## 'THE CATHEDRAL OF HOPE'

On Wednesday afternoon the Rev Einar Tjelle, Head of Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue and Deputy International Director, Church of Norway, told us about an innovative and exciting ecological project. You can read the full text on the Society's website.

Einar Tjelle expressed regret that we were not meeting in Fredrikstad, where Hope Cathedral is being built. He showed a short film which described the vision of artist, Solveig Egeland. She lives in the very south of Norway, and had walked thousands of hours along the beach at the sea's edge, picking up garbage, plastic, being irritated, longing for something new. She had a kind of a dream, a vision of a cathedral literally coming up from the ocean. She wanted to transform this garbage, this plastic, into something beautiful. You can see a video at <https://www.hopecathedral.no/about>

She took the idea to Bishop Atle and he encouraged her. It should be a very broad project, he said, involving people from different faiths, so it has been an interfaith journey from the beginning in 2018.

Einar Tjelle thoroughly approves of this approach. 'I have for many years tried to make bridges and combine ecumenical work with themes including interfaith dialogue. You often gain more if you are actually doing things together – *diapraxis*,' he said. 'So Hope Cathedral has been a colourful journey, bringing together people from different generations: confirmation and school classes collecting plastic from our beaches that now actually forms part of the building; handicraft workers, carpenters and people with skills for maintaining churches and building boats have created the basic structure. 'We have refugees serving coffee, Imams working alongside Sikhs and Hindus, people from City Missions helping people get back to work and to do training, alcoholics trying to get back into work. So just imagine, there are people from children to old environmentalist grandparents, activists and carpenters smoking their old pipes. You have some religious people in their suits! So it is a fantastic mix, so colourful! I think this is something that our Church needed as a lot of things we do are in boxes –

for the children here, retired people there, old people somewhere else. But here it is integrated, connected.'

### So what does the Cathedral of Hope look like?

We were shown another video (which you can find at : <https://youtu.be/8n8S7O6gbY8>) The commentary told us that, 'inspired by Norway's stave churches, the structure rises majestically on its 120 square metre barge made of timber and roots and built in a traditional fashion. The roof is a 300 square metre colourful work of art made from more than 1000 plastic fish boxes that have been washed, granulated, and turned into 4000 roof tiles in more than 50 different colours. The thinking behind it is that the ocean is borderless and binds us together – nations, continents and all people, regardless of our religion. The ocean gives life and is our common inheritance. This inheritance is our investment. If we are to save the ocean we must do so together. Hope and the ocean belong to us all.'

Einar Tjelle then shared some startling facts with us. 'One dumper truck full of plastic waste enters the ocean every minute,' he said. 'That's around 8-11 million tons of plastic impacting marine and wildlife and people every year, and the amount is increasing. It's a huge problem. At the same time we have the climate problem with the warming up of the oceans. Just focusing on life in the oceans, many species are becoming extinct. The World Wildlife Fund said two years ago that, since 1970, 68% of global wildlife population has been lost. It's more than two-thirds of the populations of animals, fish, birds and insects. Think about that. That is as big a challenge in the oceans as it is on the land. So this makes me think of the theological concept of sin, something I think we should rediscover find and start using again. Churches talk about conversion, but here is an area where we urgently need conversion because this cannot go on. This is our



generation. It's our duty to do something about it.'

In 2015 the United Nations set some Sustainability Development Goals. SDG 14, "Life below water", says "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, the seas and marine resources for sustainable development." This is the goal that Hope Cathedral is working towards. And, Einar Tjelle told us, there are some good signs. The United Nations Assembly in Nairobi agreed a mandate to negotiate an instrument to end plastic pollution (UNEA5). This could be a kind of Paris Agreement about plastic in the oceans, but there is a long way to go because this is just a mandate to negotiate and it needs putting into practice.

Although the World Council of Churches was discussing this integrity of creation, as it was put, in the 1970s and 80s, there was very little discussion or awareness in the Church of Norway until 1995 when the General Synod debated consumerism as an ethical challenge. Inter-religious dialogues were started with the Muslims, Buddhists and Jews, and an Inter-Faith Council was established in the mid-1990s. 'What's quite interesting,' Einar told us, 'is that, even before all this, in the early 1990s, some discussion groups on environmental matters were started in Oslo involving several religions. They had put together a booklet, □

⇒ 'En Levende Jord I Krise' (A Living World in Crisis), about what they were thinking and reflecting on theologically and ethically. They were writing as individual religions but also together.'



Across the globe a lot has happened since 2010 with an inter-faith climate summit in Uppsala, with "Religion for Peace" and the World Council of Churches, which was quite important and, of course, *Laudato Si*. All that happened around the Paris agreement on climate. The Church of Norway has been talking more about climate change, particularly the political aspects of it. 'I think we have learned from our indigenous people in Norway, and from the ecumenical committees, and we are thinking more broadly and in a diverse way. So we now are engaging about the ocean, the forests and, of course, the climate. We need to see these things together and include the social and justice elements too,' Einar Tjelle said.

Now the United Nations is asking for assistance from faith traditions. They see that we have ecological values based on theology which, together with the indigenous people's wisdom, can lead to the work becoming broader. This interfaith dimension has been part of Hope Cathedral from the very beginning and Einar Tjelle is heading Norwegian Interfaith Climate Network which started in 2014 and includes activists from several different faiths. 'We've been working together on Hope Cathedral and when it

comes to ownership of the project, last year the Buddhist Society in Norway came in as an owner together with the Church of Norway, the Roman Catholic Church, Caritas and some others, so we have a very broad ownership. So diapraxis, co-operating together, not only talking, is our main activity – we are actually doing advocacy, we're doing very concrete work together.' This is explained in another short video which you can see at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RsTVaVsQjU> (copy and paste).

'We also have our unique contributions to make,' Einar asserted. 'because the project does not try to mix everything into one soup, as it were. We are trying to establish places in the Cathedral of Hope so that, for example, prayer for the ocean can be offered from a Buddhist or Islamic perspective. Sometimes we do it together as well, but we also do it side by side.'

'We have also made some pilgrimages connected to this project,' Einar told us. 'An interfaith group walked from Oslo to Fredrikstad over two days



with input, discussions and silence on the way, and ended with a powerful ceremony at Hope Cathedral where they shared resources from their different traditions.'

The project has captured the imagination of many organisations and groups across the world, including the European Environmental Christian Climate Network who have sent delegations, and the United Nations has been involved through an Ambassador from their "Faith for Earth" Initiative which tries to engage with faiths in different countries and launch advocacy campaigns on the role of religion and the environment. Nicholas Holtam, the

former Bishop of Salisbury in the Church of England, is an Ambassador.



He says, 'Hope Cathedral is a symbol being created in response to the environmental challenges of our day. The spirit in which we respond to these will be as important as the actions we take. I am pleased to become an Ambassador of this important project.'

There are parallel movements and visions in other places, Einar Tjelle told us. Sarah Wilson collected plastic from the River Thames and created a cope from it which you can see in the photo below being worn by the Bishop of Borg, Kari Mangrud Alvsvåg, at her inauguration ceremony. This gives a link to the Church of England – it is the same ocean, the same water.

Sarah Wilson said, 'I live on the water. I saw this rubbish every day, and I decided to do ⇒



## ‘WHERE IS HOPE FOR THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA? WHAT PART DOES THE CHURCH PLAY IN BRINGING THAT HOPE ABOUT?’

*This is a summary of the Rev Canon Hilda Kabia’s presentation on Wednesday evening.  
Hilda is Principal of Msalato Theological College in the Anglican Church of Tanzania, Diocese of Central Tanganyika.  
Her full presentation is on the Society’s website.*

### A VOTE OF THANKS

Hilda began by expressing gratitude to God and to Bishop Michael for providing the opportunity for her to take part in the conference. ‘*Asante sana Askofu kwa ukarimu wako,*’ she said. (Thank you so much, Bishop, for your generosity). She thanked everyone who had played a part in arranging the event.

She explained that she had been ordained as deacon in 2003 and priest in 2004, made a Canon in 2015 and since 2015 has been Principal or Dean of Msalato Theological College. ‘I am the first African Woman to hold that position since the college was established in 1961 as a Bible School’ she said. Prior to that, she had been a Bible College Tutor, Dean of Students, Assistant Lecturer at St John’s University of Tanzania and Chairperson of the House of Clergy in the Diocesan Synod. ‘For the last two Synods I was Secretary to the Synod of the Diocese of Central Tanganyika, the first woman to hold that position.’

The African Church, she reminded us, is part of the World-Wide Church which includes the world-wide Anglican Communion, sharing most of the beliefs and practices of other member Churches. The Church focuses on mission, from the grassroots to national levels. Fostering ecumenical relations with other Churches is also important. ‘However, according to the local context, specific cultural and cross-cultural awareness is always at the heart of the African Church,’ she told us.

### WHAT DOES THE WORD “HOPE” MEAN?

Hope can be understood as the expectation of something good in the future, something positive such as an improvement in life, development, growth, progress, or transformed life in the church and community. It is the opposite of despair, loss of interest in life, giving up and so on. ‘A life without hope can be very distressing,’ she said. Hope involves trust, trustworthiness, desire and expectation. But hope also needs a focus. Isaiah 40:31 says “those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.”



### WHAT DOES THE WORD “PILGRIMAGE” MEAN?

Whilst a Dictionary might define pilgrimage as a journey a person makes to holy place or a long journey or search, in our context, Hilda said, **we** might say that it is our journey through life here towards our heavenly home. But she had been asked to look at where hope is found in Africa so she proposed briefly looking at Africa and its people and what the word hope means to them.

### THE STORY OF AFRICA

Africa is one among the seven continents of the World, and each of the 54 countries of Africa comprises various ethnic groups. So Africa has enormous diversity culturally and traditionally. ‘Geographically,’ Hilda smiled, ‘God located Africa on a part of the World that is full of potential and Africa is known as a continent of hope and promise for a good future, sustainability and transformation.’ Africa is a religious continent, she said, and Africans religious persons. Africa has families where Christians, Muslims, and followers of African Traditional Religions live together irrespective of their religious differences.

### WHAT HOPE MEANS FOR PEOPLES OF AFRICA

If “Hope” as we have defined it involves the expectation of something good or better in the future, an holistic  $\Rightarrow$

$\Rightarrow$  something with it.’ She collected more than 6 kilogrammes of plastic waste to make it, and she called her project “Profane to Sacred”. And this is the same sort of vision that Solveig Egeland had as she walked along the seashore and thought of creating Hope Cathedral.

‘I think that building Hope Cathedral together is an expression of an awesome need in the global context,’

Einar concluded. ‘We have to do it together. We cannot do this from the political side alone, or from the business side alone, or from the NGO side alone. We have to co-operate more and more. I think that under the United Nations Sustainability Development Goal 17 faith groups and institutions and Churches and religions are so important and have also been given more and more value - building hope together.’

‘And so I end with this quotation from the Book of Job 12.7-10 :

*“Ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being”.*

⇒ improvement, development, growth, progress and transformed life in church and community, Hilda has no doubt on what the African bases that hope. 'The African puts his or her hope on God for provision, protection and sustenance. The African believes that God is the answer to all human problems. God is the answer to climatic, social, cultural and economic needs.'

Africans believe in life after death. There is no dichotomy between the physical and spiritual or supernatural. This is found across many African cultures in which Africans want to live good and fulfilled lives here on earth, doing good to both humans and God, so that when they die they may be accepted in the ancestral realm and live eternally. 'However,' Hilda cautioned, 'there are many weaknesses in their theology and these can only be addressed by Christ through his mission in the world.' Poverty, poor health and ignorance remain the biggest threats to the African to date. The coming of Christian Missionaries and Christianity provided an answer in partially addressing these weaknesses and problems, she said.

### **HOW THE CHURCH SEEKS TO BRING THIS "HOPE" ABOUT**

The African Traditional Religions and other religions do not take into consideration the effects of the Fall and the loss of hope for humanity that followed it, Hilda said. Only the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the saving work of the Cross can do that. So when the Missionaries came, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the saving work of the Cross, a significant contribution towards the true hope was made. 'Missionaries brought with them the Gospel in a holistic way, addressing educational needs as a response to the problem of ignorance, bringing hospitals and dispensaries as a response to the challenge of poor health, teaching trade and commerce as a response to the challenge of poverty, as well as improved farming tools and techniques,' Hilda explained.

The East African Revival of the 1930s had had far reaching results in East Africa and outside, and close relationships between believers were formed to include relationships outside immediate family blood relationships. So hope of eternal life focused on the work of Christ, and that transformed many lives.

When gradually African countries became independent many of their leaders and government workers were the product of the missionary schools, so a shift was made from the traditional religions to the creator God of Christianity and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

### **WHAT THE CHURCH IS DOING NOW**

'Despite some doctrinal differences,' Hilda told us, 'we all focus our hope on Christ Jesus. The reason we are all here today in Trondheim demonstrates part of that unity across denominations for both the Northern and the Southern Churches.' The African Church is heavily involved in advocacy for environmental protection and conservation, the poor and marginalized, gender based violence, child protection, and a concern for HIV/AIDS victims. These are all part of the Mission of the African Church in collaboration with our Northern Church Partners. Speaking as one

voice, the African Church has stood up against oppressive world economic systems alongside our brothers and sisters across the world.

### **AN ACTIVE PILGRIM WITHIN THE CONTINENT**

African churches are Holy Places for all people regardless of age, gender or origin. There they meet to worship, pray, study scripture, offer mutual support and create community organisations according to their particular national and local context within the continent. 'The African Church believes that all Christians, regardless of their age and gender, are given authority by virtue of their baptism to be ministers of the Church,' Hilda asserted. 'So secular education and theological training are important to men and women called either to the ministry of the laity or to the ministry of the ordained, so that they are well equipped servant leaders for God in their particular countries in the continent.'

Canon Hilda then spoke of an initiative she is personally involved in within the Anglican Church of Tanzania, Diocese of Central Tanganyika. In April 2016 a Church and Community Mobilization Process (CCMP) has been introduced as one of the subject areas taught at Msalato Theological College. The aim is to empower lay and ordained ministers and leaders of church groups, women and men, children and young people, to provide holistic ministry to church groups, church members and their surrounding community whilst sustaining themselves using their own locally available resources.

### **CHALLENGES ON THE PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS HOPE**

'There are many challenges facing the Churches in Africa as we make our pilgrimage towards Hope,' Hilda agreed. 'Many cults and much false prophecy are undermining the unity of the Church. Poverty is still a problem and the decline of the world economy has led to donor fatigue and a decline in support for the African Church. Gender based violence and child abuse influenced by technology is a serious problem. Property ownership and inheritance issues are two of many others issues. In Africa technology is good when used appropriately, but it is harmful when not used appropriately.'

Globalization, technological advancement, corruption and bribery, the use of the Smartphone and internet are slowly destroying African community, and young people chatting throughout the night on social media is also destructive of community and family interactions – not just in the African Continent but probably world-wide. 'War situations and conflicts in Africa and other parts of the world have dampened the spirit of unity in the Church worldwide,' Hilda admitted, 'and right now there is the Russia-Ukraine war.'

### **THE WAY FORWARD**

'Our presence here today in this conference and in this beautiful City of Trondheim is very significant,' she said. 'We are moving together on a "Pilgrimage towards HOPE".'

Canon Hilda concluded. 'Let us all, Christians in the Churches of Africa and in the Churches across the rest of the world, focus our hopes on Christ Jesus as we pilgrim towards the hope of eternal life in the Kingdom to come.'

## MAKING OUR OWN MINI-PILGRIMAGE

*Helen Harding gives a short account of a long Thursday!*

We had an early start on Thursday morning, needing to be at the tram stop for one of the (free) ancient trams to take us up the hill behind Trondheim. Only two 'wagons' but we had a most enjoyable ride out of the city and then up into the more wooded area.

At Lian we were greeted with our picnic breakfast – plum and ginger drink, a large bread roll, a large piece of tasty quiche, two different sorts of cheese, apricot jam and, best of all for many of us, the most delicious pot of smoked salmon.

Other trams arrived and we were treated to the story of St Olav. Most of us couldn't understand it but we had heard the story before so we occasionally recognised odd words! Olav's story wasn't just told, it was interspersed with traditional early music which enhanced it in a beautiful way.

It was damp after rain during the night, and a bit chilly so most of us were glad to set off on the pilgrims' way (just over 8km) mostly down hill through the forest. It was very peaceful, with many wildflowers growing along the way, streams to cross, quicker people overtaking others who were taking time to enjoy the sense of pilgrimage and our surroundings, but all of us following the pilgrim symbol.



Vistas of the whole city of Trondheim and the fjord on which it is situated



gradually opened up, the Cathedral towering above nearly every other building.

We all enjoyed walking with a number of different people along the way, learning more about them and each other, enjoying the wonder of God's creation – and the dry weather. We were certainly warmer by the time we finished than when we began!

Pilgrims gathered in the Archbishops' Courtyard and the opening ceremony began – in Norwegian, of course! But different styles of music were also showcased from groups who would be performing over the next couple of days as the OlavFest continued.

The afternoon provided some time for people to relax, have a coffee, go shopping, or even sleep. But some went to hear Bishop Tor telling them more about the Church of Norway.

The evening concert in the Cathedral, attended by many of our participants, was the world premiere of 'The Stranger', music by Kim André

Arnesen, the acclaimed Norwegian composer, and performed by the 'Together In Hope Choir' from the Minneapolis/St Paul area of USA.

The libretto reflected many of the themes raised during our conference. It demands that as we travel through this world together we notice one another's attitudes and behaviour towards other people – the 'strangers'. It was truly pluralistic and inter-faith, with quotations from the Bible, from the Qur'an, from Hindu, Baha'i, and Sikh religious and secular writers. 'Don't neglect hospitality' was the underlying theme. 'The guest is as God.' 'Welcome and entertain them all. Be grateful for



whoever comes because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.' 'Our faiths demand that we remember we are all migrants on this earth, journeying together in hope.'

Later in the evening, for those who were still awake and had the stamina for it, another, shorter pilgrimage started from two churches in the city and the two groups met and then walked to the Cathedral where the St Olav Wake Service took place at 2300.

A highlight in that service was the singing of the Kyiv Chamber Choir from Ukraine, and when the service was over all kinds of events took place throughout the night to welcome St Olav's day. A few of our conference participants stayed the whole night, but others did not! The pilgrimage from Lian that morning had sapped their strength! They went to bed!

## THE CONFERENCE DRAWS TO ITS END

Friday started with a brief meeting so that we could say farewell to those who had to leave early, thank Fredrik Ulseth and his team for all his hard work in arranging the conference, and to pray together.

Our last event was the St Olav Festival Eucharist. The cathedral was packed and there were two choirs, the cathedral choir and the Kyiv Chamber Choir from Ukraine (right) who sang a responsorial Psalm and a motet during the distribution of communion (left).



Charlotte Hudd and Wim Kuiper, two of our number, read lessons very well, while Karl Przywala,

Bishop Jana, Bishop Tor, Joanna Udal and Fredrik Ulseth assisted with the distribution of communion. The service ended with the hymn 'The Church's One Foundation' and we sang verses in English and Norwegian.



When the service was over we met the Preces and Bishops informally outside the West End of the cathedral. Then those of our conference who were staying on in Trondheim were invited by the Preces to a lunch and reception in his office in the courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace.

Bishop Olav spoke very warmly of our visit and of the importance of our ecumenical endeavours, and seemed genuinely pleased that the Society had chosen Trondheim for its conference.

Dick Lewis thanked him both for his generosity in making time to attend the opening of the conference and for opening the proceedings with his presentation on Pilgrimage Towards Hope, and for inviting us to lunch with him. He also asked the Preces to express our appreciation to his staff in the Church of Norway, and especially Beate Fagerli, for all they had done to facilitate the conference.

The conference was now formally ended, and those staying for Saturday's journey to Stiklestad had a free afternoon and evening. Some of them filled it by taking a short boat trip to Munkholmen, a small island off the coast of Trondheim which was once a monastery, then a penitentiary, a defensive site in the Nazi occupation, and now a museum and place of recreation for Trondheim's population. Some of them even paddled in the fjord which was not cold but very refreshing.



Everyone seemed agreed that this conference has been a joy and delight for all kinds of reasons: being able to meet after the COVID restrictions, tackling a topic of importance in our own times, enjoying the hospitality of both the Anglican and Lutheran congregations. It was great to have two newly ordained and three student members attending, as well as Sandy Goldbeck-Wood who was going to be ordained on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July in Bodø Cathedral by Bishop Tor.

We look forward to the Society's next conference in September 2024 in Edinburgh, Scotland.



## RE-ENACTING ST OLAV'S 'MARTYRDOM'

*For those of us fortunate enough to be able to stay on for an extra day there was a real treat in store. We were able to visit Stiklestad and watch the play Dr Stang mentioned and look for its underlying message.*

On the Saturday a very comfortable coach conveyed our group the 80km to Stiklestad, the site of the battle in which King Olav was martyred. We passed through a wonderful variety of countryside. The fjord was there to our left as we went along through fertile land with farms dotted along the hillside. We passed the place where the "Tirpitz" was moored during the war. She was attacked there by the 'Dam Buster Squadron' of the RAF but was saved by the weather. Fearing another attack she sailed to Tromso and it was there she was eventually sunk.

We wondered how our German friend felt as we passed the place. Jochen Dallas told us that he grew up with the legend of the "Tirpitz". 'It was the first model ship I ever built,' he told us. He was very laid back about it!

When we reached Stiklestad we found it a delightful place. To begin with there was an excellent restaurant serving all kinds of food and drink. There was a very pretty church with beautiful medieval wall paintings. As I examined them I was reminded of what Dr Stang had told us about the Reformation, and the lack of iconoclasm in Norway. How

lovely that these things have survived along with the many statues and carvings of St Olav.

There is an excellent folk museum the long houses and artisan workshop with people in costume demonstrating how people lived a thousand years ago. We enjoyed talking with them and discovered that most of them would be taking part in the theatrical extravaganza that evening.

It was in an outdoor arena where the events leading up to the Battle of Stiklestad were enacted. It was very colourful, with soldiers on horses as well as on foot, and peasants who were caught up in this momentous event. They had Christianity imposed on them and woe-betide anyone who persisted in paganism! It ended with Olav dead and the people mourning, but the miracles beginning. The choir and orchestra that accompanied the drama from beneath the 'stage' were superb, and the spectacle provided a wonderful conclusion to our pilgrimage to Norway.

On the journey back to Trondheim there was a beautiful sunset that kept most people on the coach enthralled.



Canon Hilda Kabia in Stiklestad looking at the paintings



The finale of the re-enactment



**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 together God's love and justice in the world

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

The Window © 2022  
The Anglican-Lutheran Society

**The Anglican-Lutheran Society**

10 Sandwich Street, London WC1H 9PL  
Tel: +44(0)1626852677  
Email: [angluthsociety@outlook.com](mailto:angluthsociety@outlook.com)  
Registered Charity No.1015153

**Patrons**

The President of the Lutheran World Federation (who has been invited)  
The Archbishop of Canterbury supported by the Archbishop of Dublin

**Presidents**

The Rt Rev Jana Jeruma-Grinberga - Lutheran  
The Rt Rev David Hamid - Anglican

**Co-Moderators**

The Rt Rev Dr Michael Iprgrave OBE - Anglican  
The Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama - Lutheran

**Secretary**

The Rev Canon Dick Lewis - Anglican  
[dick@ccwatford.u-net.com](mailto:dick@ccwatford.u-net.com)

**Treasurer**

Mr Patrick Litton - Anglican  
[treasurer.als@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.als@gmail.com)

**Membership Secretary**

Mrs Helen Harding - Anglican  
[angluthsociety@outlook.com](mailto:angluthsociety@outlook.com)

**Committee Members**

The Ven Christine Allsopp - Anglican  
Mrs Sally Barnes - Anglican  
The Very Rev Tom Bruch - Lutheran  
The Rev Jonathan Collis - Anglican  
The Rev Sarah Farrow - Lutheran  
Mrs Helen Harding - Anglican  
Dr Richard Stephenson - Lutheran  
The Very Rev Eliza Zikmane - Lutheran

**Co-opted Members/Observers**

Mr David Carter - Methodist  
The Rev Fr Phillip Swingler - Roman Catholic

**National Coordinators**

The Rev Susanne Skovhus, Denmark  
[sus@km.dk](mailto:sus@km.dk)  
The Rev Dr Jaakko Rusama, Finland  
[jaakko.rusama@helsinki.fi](mailto:jaakko.rusama@helsinki.fi)  
The Rev Dr Miriam Haar, Germany  
[miriam.haar@ki-eb.de](mailto:miriam.haar@ki-eb.de)  
The Rev Fredrik Ulseth, Norway  
[fredrik.ulseth@online.no](mailto:fredrik.ulseth@online.no)  
The Ven Richard Wottle, Sweden  
[richard.wottle@protonmail.com](mailto:richard.wottle@protonmail.com)  
Mr Tom VanPoole, USA  
[anglicanlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:anglicanlutheran@gmail.com)

**Editor of The Window**

Canon Dick Lewis  
Email : [angluthwindow@hotmail.com](mailto:angluthwindow@hotmail.com)

**A LAST WORD ON THE CONFERENCE**

*Rachel Sheppard reflects on her first experience of one of our events*

As a new student member of the Anglican-Lutheran Society, it was a real joy to join the Trondheim Conference, 'A Pilgrimage towards Hope', in July. It was a wonderful way to get to know more about the society and to meet some of its current members. I offer three reflections on intentionality, generous hospitality and gratitude that I would like to share.

My first reflection is on the idea of intentionality. It strikes me that intentionality is central to the idea of pilgrimage. Whatever our motivation for pilgrimage, whether as a spiritual exercise, to travel to a sacred place or to share a journey with others, pilgrimage begins with the pilgrim's simple intention to set out. As I begin my journey towards ordination, it is clear how important intentionality is in seeking out opportunities to encounter others who are from different Church traditions and backgrounds. It helps to open one's eyes and to encounter different ways of being. During the conference, I was able to hear about the Churches in Norway, the dialogue between Anglicans and Lutherans and the wider ecumenical movement. The programme itself was fascinating and emphasised the importance of this intentionality towards encounter as I move forward with my training.

My second reflection is on generous hospitality. Throughout the conference, we received a warm welcome from the Church of Norway. On an individual level, as a new member, I also felt incredibly welcomed by other members of the conference. On the Thursday evening, we attended a concert, 'The Stranger', with music by Kim André Arnesen and the Together in Hope Choir. The theme of the concert was hospitality, and the idea that 'we are all migrants on this earth' and 'we are all strangers somewhere'. Sometimes we are the ones who are offering hospitality, opening our churches, our communities and our lives to others. But at other times, we are the ones who are receiving. During the conference, I reflected on the theological significance of sometimes being in a position where we are the ones receiving hospitality, and the experience of generosity as a gift.

My third reflection is about gratitude. As we reflected on the theme for the week, 'A Pilgrimage towards Hope', and on what pilgrimage means in the Church today, I recalled the importance that pilgrimage has played in my own spiritual life. I thought back to pilgrimages and journeys made in the past and appreciated the opportunity to do this again in Trondheim. Coming together with others felt very special, particularly after the isolating events of the past few years. It was wonderful to travel, meet others in person, to have the Eucharist in larger groups, to hear choirs and to take part in Olavsfest. I could sense a feeling of possibility and openness that had been dampened for a while.

I particularly enjoyed hearing stories about St Olav and the opportunity to walk the pilgrim's way from Lian through the forest into Trondheim following the pilgrim symbol. The walk was incredibly peaceful, and I enjoyed both being in nature and seeing the views of Trondheim and the cathedral as we drew closer. It reminded me of how pilgrimage links you to those who are travelling with you at that precise moment, but also with the others who have walked the same path over the years. There is something very special about this journeying with others.

It was a privilege to attend the Trondheim conference and I am incredibly grateful for the warm welcome I received. I am looking forward to re-connecting with members at future events and staying connected with the Anglican-Lutheran Society throughout my training and beyond.