



The Lutheran Link brings you short articles about ecumenical news, special events, Lutheran work in Britain and practical information for Lutheran churches and congregations.

If you have any news or a feature article to submit, please write to enquiries@lutheran.org.uk

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- Revd Teemu Hälli
- David Lin
- Rt Revd Martin Lind
- Revd Michael Mehl
- Jan-Eric Österlund
- Revd Mark Steadman
- Revd Eliza Zikmane

A Big Lutheran Gathering

Report on CLC's AGM by James Laing, CLC General Secretary

Palestinian fairtrade dates, *freekeh*, and *za'atar*, accompanied by tasty salads and turkey meatballs made by the International Lutheran Student Centre's catering staff were the talk of the town after CLC's recent Annual General Meeting – but it was not all about food and socialising! The Palestinian food was in honour of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) in support for Christians in the Middle East, and was served as samples to tempt CLC's member Churches to stock it in their shops. This is tied to the outreach part of our new Vision, publicised at the meeting, to be “a vibrant Lutheran community witnessing to the gospel, uniting its members and other Christians towards integration – we will do this by building bridges to home Churches and UK Churches, celebrating our common life, welcoming travellers and immigrants, and strengthening their identity so as to better influence the UK and its Christian communities.”

In the business part of the evening, I gave a summary of CLC's strong financial performance in 2014, noting the increasing grants given to ELCJHL and to CLC's members to support ministry to Lutherans in the UK – from travel and church rental to grants for pastor salaries. As in the previous year, the ILSC accounted for the majority of income (£660,000 out of CLC's total income of £1.1m), and the bulk of expenditure (£525,000 out of CLC's total £731,000). Although £247,000 of CLC's income was a one-off compensation payment for the construction of the University of London's new Halls across Sandwich Street, we could report a commendable 8% increase on 2013 in a tough economy.

Our people were the main focus of the ILSC report from Miriam Campbell, who commended the staff team



Staff in front of the ILSC

and our support for them by paying at least the London Living Wage, acknowledging the Employee of each Quarter, and meeting staff needs by flexible working and one to one management. Her team's main priority

is the community of residents, postgraduates of 38 nationalities and more than eight faith groups, the majority being Christians, and all engaged in development of human society. We continue to work with our own local community (such as arranging volunteers for the Camden Foodbank, and in relations with the University of London and the Police and Safer Neighbourhood Panel.) In the near future we also hope to improve Wifi services and refurbish the building. CLC's surplus will mostly be put into a designated property maintenance fund, for when significant property expenditure may be required.

The rest of CLC's resources continue to support the Chaplaincy and CLC's Members. Oliver Matri, as our interim Chaplain while Tuulia Matikainen Castledine is on maternity leave, reported on a varied programme of pastoral care, social events, and regular worship every Sunday and Thursday. This rhythm of prayer will accompany a more conscious effort to strengthen the Christian identity and community life of the house, with monthly gatherings and a weekend away together. Oliver is also reaching out to the other youth and student workers in the Lutheran Churches around the country, to see how CLC's Chaplaincy can work more closely and better support them.

In pursuing the Vision, CLC continues to liaise on behalf of its members with other Churches in the UK, and the ecumenical groups and networks focusing on youth work, environment, interfaith, safeguarding, training and ministerial formation. We are also in contact internationally with the Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches, and of course ELCJHL. As well as our support for students and Christians in the Middle East, we give time to support children at risk around the world through Board positions at Stand By Me, and people with learning disabilities in England through Bethphage in Shrewsbury. Amongst our members we arrange pastoral and peer support for clergy, training on regulations or skills such as safeguarding or finance, and “table talks” inspired by Martin Luther's *tischreden* with panels or speakers and the chance to discuss various issues. These are all areas which are planned to increase in the coming year – see the back page of this *Link* for the calendar and where to find more information, but do also suggest any further ideas! We look forward to working with you and supporting you as our members in 2015 and beyond.

Thousands Speak Up for the Climate in June

The world is changing quickly. The Industrial Revolution sparked progress that has been important to every aspect of our lives, improving welfare and lives across the globe, connecting people. Technological advances our grandparents could not have dreamed of are a part of our daily lives. Unfortunately, these advancements not only impact our lives, but the world we live in. Human impact on the environment has become impossible to ignore. From easily measured things like tonnes of plastics and rubbish gathering in the oceans, to the more difficult concept of climate change, we are responsible for the earth we are called to care for, and we need to do a better job of it.

With this commitment to our planet in mind, over nine thousand people gathered near Parliament on June 17th, 2015 to Speak Up For the Love Of... all the things affected by climate change. These people gathered to talk to their government frankly about the necessity of change on a policy level concerning the environment. Brought together by The Climate Coalition, the main action of the day revolved around people meeting with their own MPs and lobbying them, asking questions and sharing their concerns about the importance of this issue. The banks of the Thames were thronged from Westminster to Lambeth Bridge, with even more people at St. John's Church and Archbishop's Park viewing the interactive art and the information booths.



Worship at the Emmanuel Centre, led by Ruth Valerio and with music from Andy Flanigan

The day began with an ecumenical service, happening simultaneously in both St. Margaret's Church and the Emmanuel Centre, where the Lutheran Churches were represented alongside Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Quakers, and many other denominations, groups, and individuals. All present shared the ideal that the issue of climate justice is fundamentally a faith issue. At these services, those attending heard stories from those currently being affected by climate change in different parts of the world. They spoke with one voice of God's call for us to be stewards of the earth, and prayed for responsible action to be taken.

At the close of the lobby day, there was a rally on Millbank where faith leaders and farmers, Olympic athletes and children shared why it was important for everyone to be there and to continue to speak up for all the things we needed to protect. The electricity in the air buzzed as one by one, each person in front of the crowd shared why they were deeply invested in this cause.

This year marks some major events in the fight for climate justice. The day after this lobby event where the Anglican Bishop of Salisbury Nicholas Holtam relaunched the Lambeth Declaration, the Pope released an encyclical addressing the world at large, not just the Catholic Church, about our responsibility to care for the earth. Titled *Laudato Si*, on Care for Our Common home, this extensive document lays out in no uncertain terms our part in the destruction of the earth's habitats, and the part we need to take up in its restoration and protection. Later this year, leaders from across the globe will meet in Paris for the twenty-first Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Network Convention on Climate Change, or COP 21.



Crowd waits on the South Bank to meet with their MPs and discuss what action the UK can take to protect the climate

The people gathered near Parliament on the 17th of June were there because it is important for us to raise awareness now for that event, to make it clear to our leaders that care for God's creation is a vital issue for all of us. Stay involved with the Climate Coalition at theclimate-coalition.org, get involved in events like Pray and Fast for the Climate, join or support one of several pilgrimages for the COP 21 this November (see the LWF website lutheran-world.org, or ourvoices.net), and continue to speak up for the environment we all live in.



Faith leaders gather outside St. Margaret's Church, including Lutheran pastors Revd Eliza Zikmane and Revd Teemu Hälli



Open Garden Squares Weekend comes to a Lutheran Courtyard

On Saturday, June 13th, the International Lutheran Student Centre and St. Mary's Lutheran Church opened their courtyard garden up to over 200 visitors as part of the London Open Garden Squares Weekend. The small but airy garden was a place of peace and hospitality to those who spent their time within it. Guests were welcomed to sit on the garden's benches, rest their feet and appreciate the greenery around them. Not a strolling garden, many found respite while they sipped coffee or tea and sat, enjoying lively piano music or beautiful violin duets, meditation, or lectures on seeing gardens as an important aspect of every part of our lives, from health to architecture.



One of the coordinators of the weekend's events came by, and remarked that amongst the guidelines for including a garden in the weekend was the quality of being "a nice place that you wouldn't know was there if you didn't know it was there." Tucked away from the hustle and bustle of Euston Road, that's exactly what the courtyard garden of the ILSC and St. Mary's could offer.

The garden was opened for enjoyment of the space and the musicians and speakers who filled it, but it was also an opportunity to care for our global neighbours in witness to the Gospel. Taking donations for refreshments, St. Mary's and the ILSC raised over £90 in donations for Stand By Me, a charity based in the UK which cares for children in vulnerable situations around the globe, to support efforts to rebuild their Hetauda Home for girls in the wake of the Nepal earthquakes.

The day couldn't have happened without the work of those who shared their time to be there. Volunteers came from both the student centre and the German Lutheran church, and spent the day serving food and coffees, directing people and talking about what it was like to live or worship in the space. One volunteer, Jutta Zwick, noted that it was a great event to bring together the two communities, saying that one of her favourite things about volunteering was "getting to know some of the members of the church community. It often feels like we are so separate, even though we are in the same building; so it was really great that this is something we can do together." Open Garden Squares Weekend was indeed a great opportunity to bring together the church, the students, and the wider community.

News from the Pews and others, brought forth at the AGM 2015

Latvian Church Abroad:

The Latvian Church shared a moment of remembrance for the passing of their Dean emeritus, Juris Jurgis, in December. At this moment, the Latvian Church employs three pastors in the UK, with Gita Putce retiring soon, and leaving a vacancy in North England to be filled. The Latvian Church also reports that there is a new archbishop residing in the US who will be involved in meetings and groups pertaining to the Porvoo Agreement, but delegates representation on the Porvoo Panel to Very Rev Andris Abakuks.

Swedish Church:

Very Rev Michael Persson of the Swedish Church brought news about changes at the Nordic church in Liverpool under the new LCiGB pastor Rev Jo Jan Vandenheede, and the ways in which they have been working to address changing times and needs of the community. With different communities coming together to worship and share their cultural traditions, things have been good but there is still more to be sorted out about how to best address the needs of the new, shared community. They also reported the upcoming synod meeting on 9th-10th July, where Antje Jackelén, Sweden's first female archbishop, will speak.

Icelandic Church:

Guðrun Jensen reported with formal thanks to the CLC for awarding grants to allow for three services per year, as they are unable to employ a pastor within in the UK itself.

Women's World Day of Prayer:

Margaret Pickford spoke on behalf of the WWDOP, reporting that as she has stepped into the role of Chairperson in 2013 and no longer represents the Lutherans on the board, Johanna Sternberg is now the Lutheran representative in the committee. She gave some information about the committee and the day itself, which takes place on the 1st Friday in March each year.

The committee is a group of volunteers that produces and translates each year's materials for the Women's World Day of Prayer in the UK., including a bible reflection, ecumenical service, and children's resources. They also produce and sell bookmarks, cards, CDs, and other materials for use. Margaret encouraged those present to take part in the global movement. As it is a worldwide event, it may be possible to get materials in whatever language a congregation may choose to use.

Lutheran Church in Great Britain

This past year the LCiGB was able to celebrate and ordain three new clergy members. The LCiGB and the Church of England also formed a working group together

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(“News from the Pews” Continued from page 3)

to build upon the Porvoo relationship and its practicalities, which LCiGB formally signed in September 2014. At the synod meeting and amongst the Trustees, there has been much work towards building a sustainable future for the LCiGB in the coming years.

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

The EELK shared news of their new Archbishop Urmas Vilmaa, who will be in London this October regarding the Porvoo Agreement, and on Tiit Salumäe, the new Bishop with responsibility for the EELK in Europe, who is based in Tallinn with links to the Rochester Diocese.

They also shared thanks to the Estonian Ambassador HE Lauri Bambus, the CLC, and the Swedish Church for support of services in their two remaining congregations several times per year.



Two new offerings from the Council of Lutheran Churches— for you!



Though the Lutheran presence in the UK may at some times feel small, it is a network that reaches across borders, cultures, and miles. CLC works to make that network stronger, more visible, and more accessible to all its members. In order to do this, there will be two calendars forthcoming to help people from all of our Churches and congregations stay more connected through events and prayers.

In our intercessional prayers, we take time to pray for our congregations, and the Church at large. Recognizing that we are a part of a larger tradition, and supporting each other in prayer, is a fundamental part of our Lutheran lives. In this spirit, the CLC will soon be sharing an Annual Prayer Calendar, which congregations can use to join a network of prayers for each other, by each other. Each Sunday will feature a different church that your worshipping community can pray for, either individually or as a part of your intercessional prayers. The calendar will run from September, and each congregation will be prayed for over the course of the year.

The Council is also putting together a calendar of events for the next 18 months, including theological events, trainings, consultations and more. Watch for more information coming to you by email, post and on the CLC website, and look to receive your calendars in August.

If your church or organization has any news to share, email intern@lutheran.org.uk to be included in the next issue of the Lutheran Link!

News Feed:

World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel,
20-26 September, meetings around the country

National CTE Consultation-A Framework for Local Ecumenism,
23 October 2015, Augustana Centre 30 Thanet St. London
WC1H 9QH

Thomas Mass, 25 October 2015, ILSC Chapel, 30 Thanet St,
London WC1H 9QH

Reformation Day service, 31st October 2015
St George's Church 55 Alie Street, London, E1 8EB

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change COP21
30 November-11 December 2015, Paris, France

Reformation Day service at lunchtime on 31 October 2017
Westminster Abbey, London

A Prayer in Summer

Creator of all, thank You for summer!
Thank You for the warmth of the sun and the increased daylight.
Thank You for the beauty I see all around me and for the opportunity to be outside and enjoy Your creation.
Thank You for the increased time I have to be with my friends and family, and for the more casual pace of the summer season.
Draw me closer to You this summer.
Teach me how I can pray no matter where I am or what I am doing.
Warm my soul with the awareness of Your presence, and light my path with Your Word and Counsel.
As I enjoy Your creation, create in me a pure heart and a hunger and a thirst for You.
Amen.