

THE PORVOO COMMUNION OF CHURCHES

Porvoo Church Primates' Meeting, Reykjavik, Iceland, 20-22 OCTOBER 2013

COMMUNIQUÉ

Justice faints and hope fades when the church looks in on itself

The Presiding Bishops of the Porvoo Communion of Churches, meeting in Iceland, unanimously agreed to the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad and the Lutheran Church in Great Britain becoming full members of the Porvoo Communion of Churches. This decision was warmly welcomed by all present and is commended to the processes of the member churches as may be necessary.

The Presiding Bishops of the churches of the Porvoo Communion meet every other year to discuss matters of mutual concern, receive reports of activity within the Communion and to guide the future shared work of the churches. At the meeting in Reykjavik, generously hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland, the Bishops shared news of developments in their churches and wider societies, particularly against the background of austerity and economic challenges faced by all the members of the Porvoo Communion from Portugal in the south to Finland in the north. Hope within the mission and service of the church was seen as vital to the work of all the churches and their shared life. The Presiding Bishops also commented on the reports received on Porvoo consultations carried out on marriage; on issues related to migration; and on the diaconal ministry (ministry of service).

The Churches of the Porvoo Communion, based mostly in Northern Europe, are Lutheran and Anglican Churches that have signed an agreement to "share a common life in mission and service". The name Porvoo comes from the Finnish diocese and city in whose Cathedral the Eucharist was celebrated on the final Sunday of the conversations in 1992 leading to the Common Statement and thus to the Porvoo Communion of Churches.

The Bishops, together with members of the local church and other Porvoo representatives, participated in two services of Holy Communion. At the first, which took place in the Lutheran Cathedral (Domkirkjan) in the historic centre of Reykjavik, the Bishop of Iceland, Agnes M Sigurdardottir, presided. In his sermon, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "Justice faints and hope fades when the church looks in on itself. The Kingdom of God is proclaimed by a church that is caught up in the glory of God and the reality of the world around..... If we are to continue to grow closer, so that our [Porvoo] communion becomes family, and that family becomes the transforming influence in our society, which is so desperately looking for a new way, after the decades of reliance on material growth have betrayed us; if that family is to become what it should, then we need each other more than ever, not for comfort in the cold, receding tides of Christian faith, but to stretch and challenge each other to an ever closer walk with God and evermore passionate fulfilling of his mission."

The Bishops closed the meeting with a commitment to meet again in two years in Edinburgh, hosted by the Scottish Episcopal Church, and to extend the duration of the meeting to enable a deepening of their engagement with each other.

List of participating Presiding Bishops:

1. Rt Rev'd Peter Skov-Jakobsen, Bishop of Copenhagen, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
2. Most Rev'd Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, Church of England
3. Most Rev'd Andres Pöder, Archbishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estonia
4. Most Rev'd Kari Mäkinen, Archbishop of Turku, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
5. Rt Rev'd Walter Jagucki, Bishop, Lutheran Church in Great Britain
6. Rt Rev'd Agnes M Sigurðardóttir, Bishop of Iceland, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland
7. Most Rev'd Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, Church of Ireland
8. Most Rev'd Jānis Vanags, Archbishop of Riga, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia
9. Most Rev'd Elmārs Rozītis, Archbishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Abroad
10. Rt Rev'd Mindaugas Sabutis, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania
11. Most Rev'd Helga Haugland Byfuglien, Presiding Bishop, Church of Norway
12. Rt Rev'd Jorge Pina Cabral, Bishop, Lusitanian Church, Portugal
13. Most Rev'd David Chillingworth, Primus, Scottish Episcopal Church
14. Most Rev'd Barry Morgan, Archbishop, Church in Wales

The Archbishop of the Church of Sweden was represented by Rt Rev'd Ragnar Persenius, Bishop of Uppsala; Rt Rev'd Carlos Lopez-Lozano, Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain was unable to attend.

The full text of the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon can be found at www.tru.is
The website of the Porvoo Communion of Churches is at www.porvoocommunion.org