

**THE  
PORVOO COMMUNION OF CHURCHES  
INFORMATION**

***FOR INDIVIDUALS AND CONGREGATIONS***

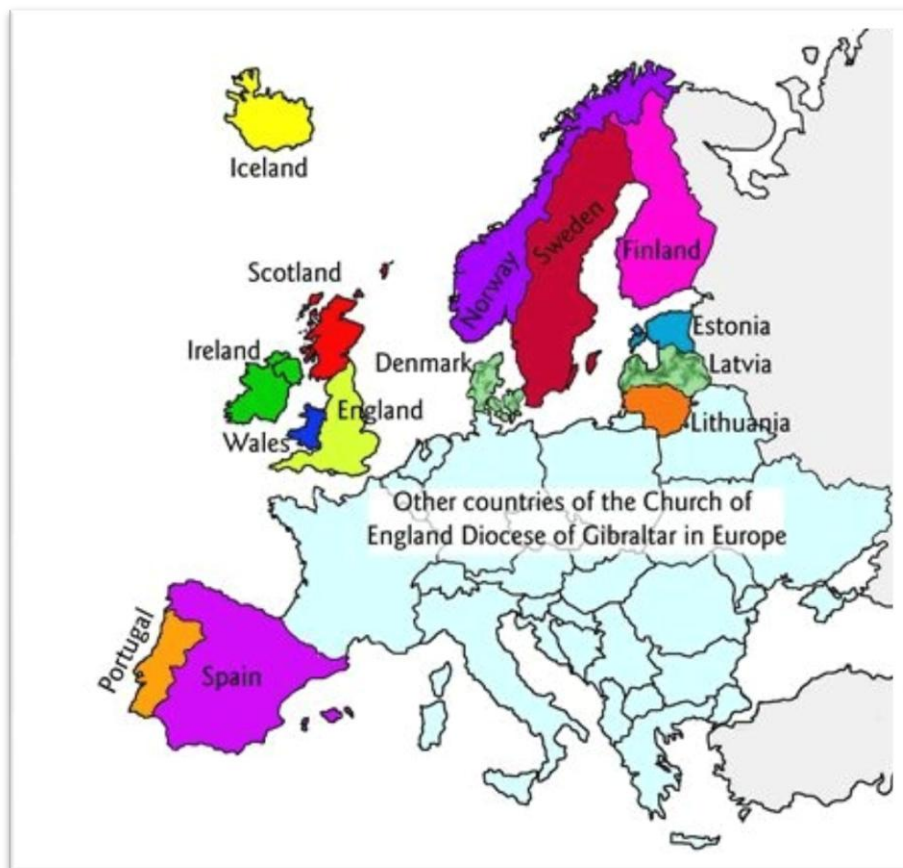
Anglican Churches from Great Britain and Ireland, Portugal and Spain and Lutheran Churches from the Nordic countries and the Baltic States.

*Together in Mission and Ministry*



# THE PORVOO COMMUNION OF CHURCHES

## Countries of the member and observer Churches



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## 1. What is the Porvoo Common Statement and Declaration?

In October, 1992 representatives of the four British and Irish Anglican Churches, the five Nordic Lutheran Churches and the three Baltic Lutheran Churches met in Finland for the final session of their formal conversations, which had begun in 1989. They agreed the Porvoo Common Statement, named after Porvoo Cathedral in which they had celebrated the Eucharist together.

The Common Statement recommended that the participating churches jointly make the Porvoo Declaration bringing them into communion with each other. This involves common membership, a single interchangeable ministry and structures to enable the Church to consult each other on significant matters of faith and order, life and work. The implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration is co-ordinated by the Porvoo Contact Group (PCG)

In 1994 and 1995 the Declaration was approved by the four Anglican Churches, four of the Nordic Lutheran Churches and two of the Baltic Lutheran Churches. In 1998 the Lusitanian Church and the Spanish, Reformed Episcopal Church accepted the Porvoo Declaration. These two Churches, extra provincial dioceses under the Authority of the Canterbury, were integrated into the Porvoo Communion. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark signed the Declaration in 2010.

The Lutheran Church of Latvia continues to have observer status as did the Lutheran Church in Great Britain and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad until October 2013 when they were welcomed as full members by the Primates of the Porvoo Communion of Churches. Their formal signing of the Porvoo Declaration will take place in 2014 once synods and assemblies have ratified the decision of the Primates.

**Why call it *Porvoo*?** (Porvoo is pronounced *Porvoh* with the stress on the first syllable)

The report is named after Porvoo Cathedral in Finland, where the Eucharist was celebrated on the final Sunday of the Conversations. The logo on the front of this information pack is from the front of the Cathedral in Porvoo and you will find it on most Porvoo related information. Porvoo is a few miles to the east of Helsinki in the south of Finland and, as it is in a bilingual Finnish/Swedish speaking area, it is also known as Borgå in Swedish. To find out more about the city itself, look at [www.porvoo.fi](http://www.porvoo.fi)

### **The Purpose of the Statement and Declaration**

To draw the Churches involved into a new and closer relationship for the sake of greater unity and more effective mission.

### **Churches which have agreed to date**

The Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church 19 April 1994  
The Church of Sweden 24 August 1994  
The Church of Norway 15 November 1994  
The Scottish Episcopal Church 9 December 1994  
The Church of Ireland 16 May 1995  
The Church of England 9 July 1995  
The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Lithuania 29-30 July 1995  
The Church in Wales September 1995  
The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Iceland 17-27 October 1995  
The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland 8 November 1995  
The Church of Denmark October 2010

## **Why these churches?**

The churches covered by this agreement have a great deal in common: their history, liturgy, identity and their understanding of the Church's mission today are similar. Most of them are national churches and continue the tradition in their own countries of the historic (western) Catholic Church, and were in turn substantially influenced by the Reformation.

## **2. A Summary of the Common Statement: see [www.porvoocommunion.org](http://www.porvoocommunion.org) for the full statement**

Chapter I is called 'Setting the Scene', and explains the motivation for the Conversations and for approving of the Porvoo Declaration. The third section discusses our churches' common mission in the new Europe - understanding mission in its broadest sense, including what we would call social responsibility issues, in the social and political context of the new Europe.

Chapter II explains the other motivation for the Porvoo Agreement - the ecclesiological (church order and structure). The churches are called to overcome what has been 'denominational self-sufficiency'. Porvoo is part of the overcoming of the divisions of the Church which resulted from the Reformation. It is a step towards restoring the unity of the Western Church.

Chapter III is a summary of the principal beliefs and practices that the Porvoo churches have in common. It covers our view of Scripture, of God's will, commandment and mercy, justification and sanctification, the Creeds, the role of liturgy, the nature of the Church, the Sacraments, the people of God, ordination, pastoral oversight and Kingdom values.

Chapter IV deals with the question of the historic episcopate. The situation in the churches involved is varied. The Baltic Churches have not always had bishops, but they now not only have bishops, but bishops who stand in the historic succession of the laying on of hands. The churches of Sweden and Finland, like the Anglican churches, had inherited that historic succession. In Denmark, Norway and Iceland the churches had preserved the continuity in the episcopal office, but at the time of the Reformation did so by an occasional priestly or presbyteral ordination.

The Declaration, as it now has been approved by the greater part of the participant churches, has established a communion of episcopal, historic national or folk churches, stretching across Northern Europe from Greenland to the Baltic States. In turn, the agreement leads to practical commitments (para 58 b) affecting all ordained members of the signatory churches, as well as ministers and church leaders.

### **3. Who we are**

#### **The Church of Sweden**

The Church of Sweden has a strong choir tradition. Hymn-singing in general has played a strong part in Swedish piety and still does. Even secularized Swedes hold on to hymns connected with special occasions, such as, Advent, Christmas, summer, baptisms and funerals. Many people will go to church if there are “music services” where the emphasis is on singing such hymns, or listening to choirs singing arrangements of them. This is linked to its role as a national church even today after disestablishment in the year 2000. A majority of the population are still members of the Church of Sweden (even if this is slowly decreasing and varies in different parts of the country, due to secularisation and the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural developments in society). Many of these members go to church several times a year, for example, on All Saints Day, the First Sunday in Advent, Christmas and Midsummer. Many baptize their children and the majority choose church funerals. There is a very positive attitude to the church’s diaconal work and its role during periods of crisis and catastrophe. Another characteristic of the Church of Sweden is its strong lay involvement: many paid lay staff, many elected board members at all levels of the church, and not least all the choir members.

#### **The Church of Norway**

Church of Norway is a majority church in the country, with almost 76 % of the total population as members. Every year approximately 45,000 children are baptized in our Church. 70% of all children are baptised. Participation in confirmation classes has been stable at a percentage of 65 % per date, including an increasing number of young people being baptised. A leadership training programme has been especially developed as a programme following the years after confirmation classes. Current focus is the development of a programme for young grown-ups (18 – 30 years of age).

In 2006 a state-commission recommended a new order for the future relationship between the Church and the State. In 2008 a major agreement in parliament on the relations between church and state was achieved: loosening the relations between church and state. In 2012 changes in the Norwegian constitution was passed in parliament; the increasingly multi-religious community of Norway is no longer denominationally bound to the Evangelical-Lutheran confession through the state; appointment of church leadership to church bodies is done by the church itself; the Church of Norway will remain constitutionally bound as a “Folk Church” and will continue to receive an annual grant within the state budget, and therefore negotiate annually with the government. Great structural changes are expected in the years ahead.

Recently the church adopted a new liturgy, giving some freedom for local adaptations to the main Sunday services. Renewed liturgies for other worship services are also available. A new hymnal came into use in December, 2013. The new material is a combination of songs and hymns which have already been in use for a while, as well as entirely new material. The aim is to provide a wider choice of music and themes for use in the Sunday service as well as in other services.

#### **The Scottish Episcopal Church**

The Scottish Episcopal Church is a welcoming and inclusive Church that traces its history back to the beginnings of Christianity in Scotland. It is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. Within its Church there are seven historic regional areas, called dioceses, covering the whole of Scotland. It is governed by a representative body known as the General Synod which meets each year and which is comprised of the College of Bishops, and equal numbers of clergy and lay people. The leading Bishop is called the Primus because he is *primus inter pares* (first among equals). The Scottish Episcopal Church has voted to allow women as Bishops. Its worship is rich and varied, offering experience of a variety of liturgical and musical styles. At the heart of its worship lies the weekly celebration of the Eucharist.

## The Church of Ireland

The Church of Ireland is one church embracing Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and is able to trace its roots to the earliest days of Irish Christianity. It has 390,000 members - 275,000 in Northern Ireland and 115,000 in the Republic of Ireland and consists of two provinces, Armagh and Dublin, each with an Archbishop. There are 12 dioceses, over 450 parochial units and over 500 stipendiary clergy. It is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, is an apostolic church, maintaining an unbroken link with the early apostles and drawing on the apostolic faith in its teaching and worship and is a Catholic and Reformed church. There are three orders of sacred ministry: Bishops, Priests and Deacons. It has one Prayer Book called The Book of Common Prayer (2004) plus other services authorised for use by the General Synod. It is a representative church, with each diocese electing those who will represent them at the General Synod, the 'Parliament' of the church. In its General Synod there is a House of Bishops which has 12 members and a House of Representatives which has 216 clergy and 432 laity

## The Church of England

The Church of England consists of two provinces, Canterbury and York, with a total 44 dioceses and 13,150 parishes. It covers England, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, some parishes in Wales and congregations and chaplaincies in the Diocese in Europe, Morocco, Turkey and the Asian countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union. It has over 20,000 clergy, Readers and Church Army officers and thousands of authorised lay ministers.

Almost half the population of England claim to belong to the Church of England with around 1 million people attending services each Sunday. About 3 million people attend its services on Christmas Day or Christmas Eve.

Its roots go back to when a Christian church came into existence in what was the Roman province of Britain. The Church of England (the *Ecclesia Anglicana* – or the English Church) was the result of a combination of three streams of Christianity, the Roman tradition of St Augustine and his successors, the remnants of the old Romano-British church and the Celtic tradition from Scotland and associated with St Aidan and St Cuthbert.

At the Reformation the Church of England was among the churches that broke with Rome. The theology that then developed is most authoritatively expressed in its three 'historic formularies,' the *Thirty Nine Articles*, the *Book of Common Prayer* and the 1662 *Ordinal*.

It is a Church that has consciously retained continuity with the Church of the Patristic and Medieval periods in terms of its use of the catholic creeds, its retention of the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons, its buildings, aspects of its liturgy, but which also embodied Protestant insights in its theology and in the overall shape of its liturgical practice. It can be said to be both 'catholic and reformed.'

## The Church in Wales

The Welsh nation, which was Christianised during the Roman occupation of Britain, is the oldest Christian nation in the British Isles. Twenty-eight years before St Augustine landed in Kent in AD 597 to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons, a synod had been held in Wales at which St David, who was later to become its patron saint, had spoken against the Pelagian heresy. St David is the only native born patron saint of the countries of Britain and Ireland. Before him, there were other Christian figures in Wales such as St Dyfrig and St Illtud, St Teilo, St Padarn and St Deiniol.

The Church in Wales remained a part of the Church of England until its disestablishment in 1920. It is now an autonomous province within the Anglican Communion and conducts all its public activities bilingually in Welsh and English. It has six dioceses and is led by its six bishops and overseen by a Governing Body. It works closely with the Welsh government and other agencies for the benefit of the people of Wales. It has 1,430 places of worship, and 29% of the Grade 1 listed buildings in Wales are Church in Wales churches. There are 168 churches in Wales schools, employing 2,978 staff and providing for 21,261 pupils.

It is active in Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales), CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland), the Porvoo Communion, the Anglican Communion, the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches. Being both Catholic and Reformed, it is represented both on ARCIC III and in discussions between the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE).

## **The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI) is a National church with approximately 250,000 members which is close to 80% of the population. The Church is open to everyone living in Iceland regardless of nationality.

The ELCI is independent but with special relations to the state which has its foundation in the history of the nation. The relations are evident in the Constitution which states that “*the evangelical Lutheran church shall be the national church of Iceland and the state as such support it and protect.*” In addition to legislation on religious associations in general, there is also a special legislation on the ELCI. The General Synod is the highest governing body of the church with the Church Council as its executive arm. There are approximately 280 congregations around the country and close to 160 pastors and deacons work in the church, in congregations, hospitals and institutions. Most of the pastorates have varied programmes with children and youth work, pastoral care and counseling and teaching. Many congregations are small, 125 parishes have fewer than 100 members. Services are held every Sunday in parishes of 2000 people or more but less frequently in smaller congregations.

In addition most of the congregations have church choirs and in many of the larger congregations music forms part of the children and youth work. Around 2000 Icelanders are active in church choirs.

## **The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland lives is bilingual (the Porvoo diocese is Swedish-speaking). Another distinction is that there are in Finland two historical folk churches: The Evangelical Lutheran Church (78 %) and the Orthodox Church of Finland (1,1 %). We live between west and east. It is also unique even among the Nordic Lutheran churches that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has in principle at least one deacon or deaconess in every parish - required by the church act. We have a variety of different kind of church workers employed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Until now it has been possible to have so many employed workers, but nowadays we rely more and more on the input of volunteers.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland is also known for the popularity of church confirmation schools. Almost 90 % of the youth take part in the confirmation school. We are also an ecumenically active church and point out the so called faith and order -questions but also international diaconia (aid work) and global mission. Our church is a founding member of WCC, LWF, CEC and Porvoo churches.

## **The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD)**

The ELCD is the national church in Denmark with approx. 2000 congregations divided into 10 dioceses, each presided by a bishop. A bishop is elected by parish council members and pastors in the respective diocese. The role of the bishop is to oversee ministers and congregations in the diocese. The bishop of Copenhagen holds a specific position of honor as *primus inter pares*. There is no office of archbishop. Since 1948 the office has consequently been open to both men and women. In 2010 80.9% of the Danish population (numbering 5,2 million) were members of the ELCD. A vast majority enter into membership as children when they are baptised.

In Denmark there is a strong relationship between the national church and the state. The ELCD is regarded as “the church of the people” as well as an official national church since the institution of the Danish Constitution of 1849 in which is particularly mentioned. As “church of the people”, every parish council has had its own rights to decide on activities in the local context and to select the pastor of the parish. Thus the local congregation is the cornerstone of the church structure as “official national church” the queen or king of Denmark is the supreme authority when it comes to organisation, liturgy etc. whereas the national parliament (Folketinget) is the de facto deciding body with regard to church



legislation. Thus, the ELCD is not regulated by a synod, a national church council, as is seen in most other Lutheran churches. The main part of the church budget comes from a membership fee collected by the national tax authorities and ear marked grants from the state budget. This way the state contributes to the administration of the church.

## **The Lutheran Church in Great Britain (LCiGB)**

The Lutheran Church in Great Britain (LCiGB) is a very diverse church, worshipping in 7 languages (English, Polish, Tigrinya, Amharic, Swahili, Mandarin and Cantonese). The LCiGB has a long history of serving immigrant communities in the UK often offering a 'home away from home'. In serving a variety of cultures and traditions, LCiGB member churches have been able to conduct worship services that include everything from Swahili and a cappella choirs to Bach organ preludes. The rich diversity of the LCiGB has created strong connections with national Lutheran churches around the world such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In 2009, the LCiGB had the honour of installing the first woman bishop to serve in a British church, Rt Revd Jana Jeruma-Grinberga. In 2013 the Rt Rev Martin Lind replaced +Jana.

## **The Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (LELCA)**

The LELCA began work in 1945 when the first Archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Prof. Teodors Grinbergs with nearly all the members of the Church council and half of the pastors and about 200,000 Latvian refugees were living in Western and Northern Europe. After 1990 a close relationship between LELCA and the current Church in Latvia was established. Nevertheless, both Churches are independent, mostly due to different positions in some areas of theology, for example on the ordination of women. Half of the 70 pastors of LELCA, serving 120 congregations with over 25.000 members, are female, and the bylaws of LELCA say, that *all duties in the LELCA can be fulfilled by male or female*. The current archbishop of the LELCA is the Most Revd Elmars Ernsts Rozitis, consecrated 1994 in historic succession by Bishop Henrik Svennungsson of the Stockholm diocese of the Church of Sweden.

Due to the difficult economic situation in Latvia many Latvians now are emigrating to Western Europe. This represents a huge challenge for LELCA. The work of providing support for Latvians abroad is done in close cooperation with the embassies and consulates of the Republic of Latvia.

LELCA is a founding member of the Lutheran World Federation and a member of WCC and CEC. The archbishop is assisted by an 18-member Church council with equal numbers of clergy and lay members, which has executive powers. Modern media is a welcomed help in Church life, but also the tradition of printed media is carried on, for example with the LELCA yearbook.

## **4. How we work together**

The Porvoo Communion of Churches has no costly central managing body. Instead in every church there is a **contact person** and these contact persons meet once year as the **Porvoo Contact Group (PCG)** Two bishops are co-moderators of the PCG, one from the Lutheran family and one from the Anglican family and two co-secretaries, also from each church family.

The PCG implements the decisions on the future content and direction of the work of the Porvoo Communion of Churches which are formed at the **Church Leaders' Consultation** held every 4 years and to follow up any topics which may have resulted from the discussions at the **Primates' Meeting** which is held biannually. The first of this regular series of gatherings of Primates and Presiding Bishops of the Porvoo churches was held at Lambeth Palace in 1999. At such occasions, church leaders consider key issues facing the churches and the particular role of Primates and Presiding Bishops as the focus of unity for their churches. The Porvoo Agreement also provides for bishops of all the Porvoo churches to participate in consecrations, ordinations and confirmations, therefore providing a further outward sign of the communion we share.

There have been theological consultations which are held every 4 years as well as inter-faith consultations which prepared Guidelines for Inter-faith Encounter; consultations on the Diaconate which is an on-going topic for the Porvoo Communion of Churches; a consultation for youth leaders;

a conference for lay learning specialists; a consultation about how to respond to conflict; sharing of ideas and resources, exchange of publications; co-operation and collaboration on the Porvoo website: [www.porvoochurches.org](http://www.porvoochurches.org). Future consultations shall be on marriage, the diaspora and other topics related to Porvoo life.

Thus by working together the Porvoo Agreement can help strengthen confessional identity by bringing systematic theology to the fore with lots of new positive energy released. Porvoo has not left many stones unturned and thus has been instrumental in giving our confessional identities both a spring clean and a welcome health check. Lutherans have not been weakened in their Lutheran identity nor Anglicans in theirs, but through discussions and deliberations we have got to know ourselves better, thus becoming better partners to all our friends. Many of those who lived under the illusion that confessional differences are most significant between churches have finally realised the distressing truth that opinions clash just as much internally. Porvoo helped the Danes reconsider their decision making system and when Norway was approached on the issue of presbyteral ordinations by cathedral Deans they found it to be much more of a stumbling block than initially anticipated. The introduction of female bishops in Scandinavia put the searchlight on the threefoldness of ministry as does the long winding discussion on the diaconate. Some of these discussions would, no doubt, have arisen irrespective of Porvoo, but some would not. We can count ourselves fortunate to have such a potent catalyst of theological re-examination as Porvoo.

Through membership of the Porvoo Communion of Churches Anglicans are challenged to examine the role of Deacon within their tradition and there has been some progress on this in the past few years but much work remains. However, having the opportunity to discuss the role of Deacon with Lutherans has helped Anglicans get a clearer sense of what that means for them.

At every Porvoo meeting or consultation the member churches and the observer churches each play a part. Being part of the life of Porvoo Consultations from the beginning helped the Church of Denmark, which had retained observer status, to become a member in 2010. Thus there is room within the Porvoo Communion of Churches for new partners to join the circle.

Therefore, the Porvoo churches recognise that their commitments to one another can be worked out only in the light of basic questions about the mission and priorities of the Church as a whole.

The biggest challenge lies in how we speak of, and communicate, the direction in which we feel God is leading us. The most urgent area of this challenge lies in how the Church meets the charge of irrelevance to the younger generation. The charge has fundamental significance for our approach to Christian formation. In so doing, the Church must be outward-looking, and consider the danger of setting up unproductive and damaging boundaries. A key feature of the future mission of the Church lies in the servant role to which we are called by Christ. This *diakonia* underpins both the individual Christian life and the diverse forms of ministry existing and developing within our Churches.

The Porvoo churches have identified a number of key areas for their work together in the years to come. Many of the following headings and tasks could, of course, apply to more than one context (individual, specialist, local, regional, national and so on). In addition, a number of these areas are already under development through our common membership of other ecumenical bodies, national and international, for example, the Conference of European Churches.

- *Diakonia and diaconate – further work on a common understanding*
- *Translation and Reception of reports and research*
- *Communicate Porvoo stories and telling of holy places, including places of pilgrimage*
- *Recognise the different ways of celebrating our identity and being open to creativity in worship and liturgy*
- *Integrate diaspora congregations within local churches where appropriate*
- *Exchange views on key issues facing individual Churches*
- *Regular invitations to specialist consultations held by individual Churches*
- *Share experience of Church structures and administration including stewardship of financial and other resources*

**Central to the Porvoo ethos is Prayer for our partners. The annual Porvoo Cycle of Prayer** produced by the Church of Sweden in downloadable format from [www.porvoocommunion.org](http://www.porvoocommunion.org) on

behalf of the Porvoo Contact Group, provides a resource for all the Porvoo churches to pray in turn for each other and can be incorporated into diocesan prayer calendars, and it is increasingly common to hear the dioceses and bishops of the Porvoo Communion mentioned in the general prayers for the church in regular Sunday worship in local congregations. But it is not only congregations who can use the Porvoo Prayer Cycle, individuals can as well. Praying for each other is one thing we can each do and by praying for each other regularly, on Sundays or on other days of the week, we realise that we are all part of the Porvoo family!

This connection is encouraged through The Porvoo Agreement which emphasises the need to welcome members of the other churches into our local congregations. This may happen where people have moved abroad to work, study or retire, or for family reasons. A few dioceses are in the fortunate position of welcoming members of the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches into their parishes on a regular or temporary basis. In the Diocese of Europe, some members of these churches regularly worship with local Anglican congregations, often partners of mixed marriages, or people who feel particularly at home with Anglican worship, whether modern or traditional.

After more than a decade of the Agreement it is fair to say that different dioceses are at different stages on their 'Porvoo pilgrimage'. Some dioceses have not yet had the opportunity or the resources to develop relations with the Porvoo churches, but are committed to the Agreement, perhaps through use of the Prayer Diary in local parishes and cathedrals. Other dioceses have established formal links with Porvoo churches, with a wide range of contacts.

As you can see there are numerous opportunities for groups, institutions and individuals to benefit from Porvoo first hand making the whole project not in the least a concern only for bishops but for clerics, lay people young and old, choirs, theologians, canon lawyers, inter-faith specialists, youth leaders, educationalists, lay learning specialists, dioceses, congregations and individual friendships borne out of shared working together. For example, sharing buildings is a further outward sign of the growing relationship between the Porvoo churches. An Icelandic Lutheran congregation use a parish church in Grimsby several times a year and, on occasions joint Anglican/Lutheran services are held. The Diocese of Newcastle also hosts services for Danish Lutherans in the Cathedral. In the Diocese of Southwark, ministers from the local Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish churches are also licensed. In Edinburgh a congregation of the Church of Norway worships regularly in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral.

Or, when Nils, Kelvin and James went to Sweden to study at one of its Faculties of Theology they did pretty much the same thing as Eva, Kenneth and Olof had done when going in the other direction to complete their pastoral studies outside of their own educational system. Claes, Lisbeth, Maria and Marianne attended courses in Uppsala for those wishing to take up a permanent position in a Church of England parish. Tim left Norwich for the Diocese of Luleå and since retiring Canon John has been of great help both to the Diocese of Lund and of that of Skara. Nine Swedish Dioceses have added Anglican twinning links to their already existing bouquet of inter-Lutheran contacts and when the resourceful diaconal, social and educational institution of Ersta entered into cooperation with the Church in Wales a new and visionary form of partnership involving teachers, ordinands and permanent deacons was formed.

## **5. Setting up a partnership link at diocesan or congregational level**

If you have been inspired or challenged by the opportunities described in the previous section you may wish to consider setting up a partnership link with a member of the Porvoo "family" from another tradition to your own. At the outset consult the Porvoo Contact Group member from your own Church and also be in touch with the two Co-Secretaries.

- *Establish a working group to oversee the link. Share out the tasks, so that the link doesn't become the 'property' of a few individuals.*
- *This enlisting could also be ecumenical.*
- *Think carefully about the location of a potential partner.*
- *If you are considering a church involvement in a civic twinning arrangement, you may find it useful to ask for information about the existing links from your local town hall.*
- *Liaise with local schools/colleges and industry.*

- *Contact other links organisers. But remember that what works or fails in one context may not do the same elsewhere.*
- *Check whether there is a Church of England Diocese in Europe congregation in the area where your partner is situated. If so, make contact. Anglican ministers working in Porvoo countries can probably give you some useful advice, and would almost certainly be interested to be kept abreast of your plans.*
- *See that your visits and exchanges involve more than just 'ecclesiastical tourism'. Enjoy each other's company, pray and worship together — but study, discuss and work together too.*
- *Make a realistic assessment of how the link is going. Ensure that you and your partner church decide when to periodically review whether the link should continue, or whether new priorities lie in other areas.*
- *Have fun!*

### **What a partnership link can do:**

- *Spread information about the Porvoo countries and Churches, and stories of links already established.*
- *Make sure the Porvoo Cycle of Prayer is included in intercessions*
- *Encourage exchanges of, and visits by, clergy, students and lay people and explore the possibility of school, college and cathedral exchanges and church music links.*
- *Compare developments in lay and ordained ministry*
- *Explore the potential of civic twinnings – a good area for witness and mission.*
- *Encourage links between sector ministries, e.g. prison, school, university, hospital and industrial chaplaincies.*
- *Share information and experience about developments in ministerial and other training, both lay and ordained.*
- *Learn about oversight and government in each other's churches, including funding and stewardship issues.*
- *Identify clergy and lay people with relevant linguistic skills or potential, and encourage them to take part in exchanges.*
- *Ensure that invitations to important diocesan events such as clergy and lay conferences, the consecration of a new bishop or the installation of a dean are always sent to the leaders of the partner church.*

### **Drawing up a Covenant: see Appendix 3 for examples of 2 covenants**

A covenant-style agreement can be drawn up between dioceses, deaneries, or individual congregations. It is advisable to build in a review every 3-5 years.

## **6. Ministry in each other's Churches**

Another key aspect of the Porvoo commitments becoming reality in the life of the church is the interchangeability of ministers. A growing number of clergy from the Porvoo churches have been given permission to officiate in the Diocese in Europe of the Church of England. In some instances, clergy from Church of England dioceses are serving short-term appointments in their link diocese, which in turn strengthens the bond between each side.

The most obvious obstacle to the interchangeability of ministers is, of course, language, and both the Porvoo Contact Group and the Church of England Porvoo Panel are concerned that adequate linguistic training and preparation for pastoral work should be available. The process of induction and continuing ministerial education is important for Porvoo as for any other area of ministry, both before and after appointment. Detailed information on ministry issues can be found on the website: [www.porvoocommunion.org](http://www.porvoocommunion.org).

The Porvoo Declaration commits the signatory churches 'to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination.' *The Porvoo Declaration, paragraph 58 b (v)*

A number of dioceses have gained experience in the appointment of clergy from other Porvoo Churches and the appointment of clergy from Porvoo Churches to posts in other member churches has proved to be an enrichment all round. A number of key issues need, however, to be addressed, coming from the experience of those who have been involved in such initiatives.

Local parishes and clergy need to be adequately prepared for the arrival of a minister from abroad, and be clear about the expectations on both sides. Is the minister to gain experience which will be taken home, or to do a permanent job; is s/he here to 'help out' or is this a form of sabbatical or vacation? The questions of line management and seniority must be addressed. Issues concerning the quality of accommodation need careful assessment.

- *How do we make available relevant information for both the applicant and the receiving church?*
- *What stages are in the application and selection procedure and how do you assess training needs and other necessary preparation before the appointment commences?*
- *Check that adequate induction and support systems are in place*
- *Provide assistance for the next career move*
- *Evaluate the appointment when it comes to an end*
- *There may be different perceptions on the following, seen from the perspectives of the parish/senior clergy on the one hand, and of potential applicants from abroad on the other:*
  - *Local parish culture – the history and the main features*
  - *Day to day professional activity and image of the clergy*
  - *The range of pastoral encounters*
  - *Skills needed (including language), and what skills/previous experience being brought*
  - *Expectations about the role/job; aims of the appointment*

## **7. Discussion topics for all levels within the Porvoo Communion of Churches**

There are many the issues which might profitably be taken up and discussed within diocesan and parish partnership links. Choose one or more which is relevant to your partnership link and which will enable the relationship to grow in understanding.

- *Spirituality: understanding each other's spiritual history and practice.*
- *Worship, prayer, pilgrimage, retreats.*
- *Church music and the liturgy. Can we learn from each other? How can young people be involved?*
- *Comparison of training for the ministry, lay and ordained. Life-long learning.*
- *Adult organizations within the churches; social activities; fund-raising.*
- *Children and young people in the Church – mission, belonging, participation.*
- *How far can/should the churches be involved in the Christian education of the next generation?*
- *Look at the preparation of candidates for confirmation in our churches.*
- *Social welfare issues — how far can the churches be involved in these? What is our understanding of diaconal ministry?*
- *Ethical issues – sexuality, sanctity of life, bioethics.*
- *How far are the churches involved in environmental matters?*
- *How do our churches demonstrate their concern for the two-thirds world?*
- *Issues of work and unemployment.*

- *Peace and reconciliation work*
- *Mission and outreach; 'process' evangelism.*
- *Finances — how is the local Church financed? The role of giving and stewardship.*
- *Church government and synods; parish councils*
- *Relations between Church and State*
- *The place and responsibilities of bishops in our systems of church government*
- *How ecumenical are our links within our immediate areas?*
- *Sunday observance in our two countries.*
- *Life in a multi-cultural society, and the links between churches and communities of other faiths.*
- *Media representation of, and attitudes to, the churches in both countries.*
- *How can our experiences of links following the Porvoo Agreement be profitably fed back to ecumenical 'conversations' and 'agreements'?*

## 8. General Information

### Porvoo Communion of Churches Website: useful resources and information

#### [www.porvoocommunion.org](http://www.porvoocommunion.org)

This **official web site**, is now hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland on behalf of the Porvoo Contact Group (contact [jenny.sjogreen@svenskakyrkan.se](mailto:jenny.sjogreen@svenskakyrkan.se)) contains full details of the Porvoo Contact Group, the text of the Porvoo Common Statement in a number of languages, the current prayer diary, background and comment on the Porvoo process, some stories of partnership links and ministry in the Porvoo churches as well as papers from a variety of consultations and theological conferences.

### The Porvoo Contact Group

The members of the Porvoo Contact Group are the official representatives of the body which oversees the overall agenda of the common witness and mission of the Porvoo churches.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 Text of the Porvoo Declaration

*From: "The Porvoo Common Statement", Council for Christian Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England, London, 1993, Copyright © 1993 by David Tustin and Tore Furberg, pages 30-33. (Paragraph numbers are from the original text)*

#### TOWARDS CLOSER UNITY

##### A: Joint Declaration

58. We recommend that our churches jointly make the following Declaration:

#### THE PORVOO DECLARATION

We, the Church of Denmark, the Church of England, the Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Iceland, the Church of Ireland, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Lithuania, the Church of Norway, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church of Sweden and the Church in Wales, on the basis of our common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, fundamental agreement in faith and our agreement on episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church, contained in Chapters II-IV of The Porvoo Common Statement, make the following acknowledgements and commitments:

(a) (i) we acknowledge one another's churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God;

(ii) we acknowledge that in all our churches the Word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist are duly administered;

(iii) we acknowledge that all our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith;

(iv) we acknowledge that one another's ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ's commission through his Body, the Church;

(v) we acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episcopate) is embodied and exercised in all our churches in a variety of forms, in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry;

(vi) we acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in all our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church's unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.

(b) We commit ourselves:

(i) to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources;

(ii) to welcome one another's members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations;

(iii) to regard baptized members of all our churches as members of our own;

(iv) to welcome diaspora congregations into the life of the indigenous churches, to their mutual enrichment;

(v) to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination;

(vi) to invite one another's bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church;

(vii) to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry;

(viii) to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work;

(ix) to encourage consultations of representatives of our churches, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters;

(x) to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement.

[Section B: referred to the initial celebrations marking the signing of the Agreement in 1996]

### **C. Wider Ecumenical Commitment**

60. We rejoice in our agreement and the form of visible unity it makes possible. We see in it a step towards the visible unity which all churches committed to the ecumenical movement seek to manifest. We do not regard our move to closer communion as an end in itself, but as part of the pursuit of a wider unity. This pursuit will involve the following:

strengthening the links which each of our churches has with other churches at local, national and international level;

deepening relationships within and between our two world communions and supporting efforts towards closer communion between Anglican and Lutheran churches in other regions, especially in relation to agreements being developed in Africa and North America;

developing further existing links with other world communions, especially those with whom we have ecumenical dialogues and agreements;

supporting together our local, national and regional ecumenical councils, the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

61. The common inheritance and common calling of our churches, spelt out in this agreement, makes us conscious of our obligation to contribute jointly to the ecumenical efforts of others. At the same time we are aware of our own need to be enriched by the insights and experience of churches of other traditions and in other parts of the world. Together with them we are ready to be used by God as instruments of his saving and reconciling purpose for all humanity and creation.

## APPENDIX 2

### LIST OF CURRENT PORVOO PARTNERSHIP LINKS

KEY: D: diocesan  
P: parish  
C: cathedral

#### DENMARK

Copenhagen	Visby	D
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#### ENGLAND

Portsmouth	Stockholm	D
Diocese in Europe	Visby	D
St Albans	Linköping	D
Wakefield	Skara	D
Truro	Strängnäs	D
Gloucester	Västerås	D
Oxford	Växjö	D
Lincoln	Härnösand	D
Chelmsford	Karlstad	D
Manchester	Tampere	D
Newcastle	Moere	D
Carlisle	Stavanger	

#### ESTONIA

Estonia	Rochester	
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#### FINLAND

Tampere	Strängnäs, Manchester	D
Lappo	Härnösand	D
Oulu	Luleå	D
Espoo	Edinburgh	D

#### IRELAND

Dublin and Glendalough	Bangor	D
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#### LATVIA

Latvia	Salisbury	
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#### NORWAY

Moere	Newcastle	
Stavanger	Carlisle	
Trondheim	Norwich	
Hamar	Karlstad	D
Bergen	Southwark	
Nidaros	Härnösand	D
Nord-Hålogaland and Sör-Hålogaland	Luleå	D
Tunsberg	Strängnäs	D

## SCOTLAND

Glasgow and Galloway	Gothenburg	D
Edinburgh	Espoo	D

## SWEDEN

Uppsala	Llandaff	D
Harmanger Jattendal och Gnarp	Abercyon	P
Linköping	St Albans	D
Skara	Wakefield	D
Strängnäs	Truro, Tampere, Tunsberg	D
Västerås	Gloucester	D
Växjö	Oxford	D
Gothenburg	Glasgow and Galloway	D
Karlstad	Chelmsford and Hamar	D
Härnösand	Lincoln, Nidaros and Lappo	D
Luleå	Oulu and Nord-Hålogaland and Sör-Hålogaland	D
Ovansjo	Ewenny and St Brides Major	P
Valbo	Benefice of Pontpridd St Mathew and Cilfynydd	P
Visby	Copenhagen and Diocese in Europe	D
Stockholm	Portsmouth	D

## WALES

Llandaff	Uppsala	D
Abercyon	Harmanger Jattendal och Gnarp	P
Benefice of Pontpridd St Mathew and Cilfynydd	Valbo	P
Ewenny and St Brides Major	Ovansjo	P
Bangor	Dublin and Glendalough	D

## APPENDIX 3: 2 EXAMPLES OF A COVENANT

### 1. DIOCESE OF VÄXJÖ, SWEDEN AND THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD, ENGLAND

#### COVENANT

We, the Diocese of Växjö in the Church of Sweden and the Diocese of Oxford in the Church of England, rejoicing in the faith which we share and recognising

- that we are part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ,
- that, as members together of the body of Christ, we share in God's mission to the world for which his Son died,
- that our situations (as national churches in secularised western societies), our histories and our structures are similar and that we have much to learn from each other as we face the challenges and opportunities that we share,

commit ourselves to a covenant of partnership within the Porvoo Communion and to making the provisions of the Porvoo Common Statement concrete reality within the life of both dioceses.

#### COMMITMENTS

Accordingly, we commit ourselves:

- to form a fellowship of prayer, through which specific deaneries or parishes pray for each other, enabling particular congregations or individuals to form friendships, to which they would then find ways of giving concrete expression.
- to identify common challenges and issues facing both dioceses.
- to explore issues of mission and ministry where one partner has good experience to share with the other.
- to provide opportunities for groups from each diocese to study the other's pastoral methods in particular situations.
- to make provision for the use by one diocese of experts from the other to utilising the competencies that each diocese has, both locally and regionally.
- to provide opportunities for candidates for the priesthood and diaconate in each diocese to do pastoral work in the other's parishes during the summer break, or to spend time studying at theological college in the other country.
- to offer appropriate opportunities for those who have tasks of responsibility at diocesan or parish level in each diocese to engage in shadowing and sharing.
- to look at ways in which theological education and training for ministry in each diocese can be brought into the link.
- to send representatives to special occasions in each other's diocese, whether as observers, or simply to share in a special moment of joy or importance.
- to have a process of evaluation at regular intervals to reflect on experience to date, and to decide on the future of the partnership.
- to accept that this partnership does not involve any financial responsibility for each other.

## 2. Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway, Scotland and the Diocese of Gotheburg, Sweden

### COVENANT

The character of the church is universal. Contact between Christians in different places and in different contexts has therefore always been natural. The explosive development of communications during the last decades has made it easier than ever to deepen and maintain close relations between countries even at considerable distance.

We, the Diocese of Gothenburg in the Church of Sweden and the Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway in the Scottish Episcopal Church, rejoicing in the faith which we share and recognising

- that we are part of the one, holy, universal, and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ,
- that, as members together of the body of Christ, we share in God's mission to the world for which his Son died,
- that our situations (as churches in secularised western societies), our histories and our structures are similar and that we have much to learn from each other as we face the challenges and opportunities that we share,

commit ourselves for three years from the date of signing to a covenant of prayer, partnership and companionship within the Porvoo Communion, and to making the provisions of the Porvoo Common Statement concrete reality within the life of both dioceses.

The comprehensive purpose of the partnership is the development of a friendship, a friendship between our dioceses and organizations, but above all a friendship between individuals. Out of this friendship we hope that new understandings and knowledge will grow. The friendship will hopefully last beyond the time designated for the partnership project itself.

Nathan Söderblom said that "every church has its own gift of grace". It is a way of saying that we have a lot to learn from each other. By meeting another context, that at the same time is like and has a lot in common with our own context, but that also differs from it, one can learn a lot. In that way one can "see with new eyes" one's own context and learn from it.

Contacts with colleagues and Christians in other places in the world also give us new knowledge and understanding, deepened through confiding conversations.

### COMMITMENTS The Porvoo statement

The Porvoo statement, signed in 1994 by the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden, *inter alia*, states:

We commit ourselves:

to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources;

to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work;

to encourage consultations of representatives of our churches, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters.

*Details of how we intend this covenant to unfold and be reviewed over the three years are found in the Appendix.*

### APPENDIX

Accordingly, to make these Porvoo commitments concrete in the life of our dioceses, we commit ourselves:

1. To form, first and last, a fellowship of prayer. As churches and individuals we

commit ourselves to intercede for each other in various ways, for example through *The Porvoo Churches Invitation to Prayer*. Once a year prayer for one another will be included in the intercessions in all the churches of the two dioceses according to the date provided each year in *The Porvoo Churches Invitation to Prayer* or on some other mutually agreed date should that prove necessary. In the diocese of Gothenburg, the partnership will be mentioned from time to time during the weekly diocesan Eucharist in the cathedral. A similar arrangement will be made in the Cathedral of the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway. The Diocese of Gothenburg and its Bishop will be included in the monthly Glasgow and Galloway prayer diary, used in all churches. Individuals will also be invited to pray for one another and our friends in the partnership will be informed of certain urgent matters for intercession.

2. To inform one another about the life of each diocese and to put information about the partnership on our respective websites and to add links to one another's websites. Glasgow and Galloway will email the monthly *Diocesan News Service* to appropriate persons in the Diocese of Gothenburg. The Diocese of Gothenburg will email to appropriate persons in the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway a translation of regular news items.
3. To invite and send representatives from the two dioceses to attend important events, such as ordinations of priests and deacons, diocesan synods, conventions, etc.
4. To enable particular congregations to form friendships, to which *they* would then find ways of giving concrete expression. It is intended that the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway will identify at least one congregation in each of its seven regions which would like to form a friendship link with a parish in the diocese of Gothenburg. The Diocese of Gothenburg would then seek to identify a partner parish in each case.
5. By encouraging exchanges between colleagues in ordained or lay ministries in each diocese, with a view to sharing in training opportunities, retreats and parish life.
6. To explore our common life of prayer and worship through sharing our respective traditions of liturgy and church music. We hope that this would be of especial relevance to our two cathedrals.
7. To explore our common life in pastoral care in parish life, prisons, schools, universities and hospitals.
8. To set up a joint working group of two persons from each diocese to plan activities for each year of the partnership.
9. To review how each year has worked out in practice.
10. After three years to decide whether the partnership continue for a further three years or not as the case may be. The official partnership project may last no longer than nine years. When the partnership comes to an end a comprehensive joint evaluation will be performed and presented to the respective synods or diocesan councils.
11. It is understood that from time to time there will be contacts beyond those planned by the working group.
12. Each diocese or congregation will be responsible, from its own funds, for meeting the expenses of visits to the other. It is expected that visitors will be hosted in private homes and appropriate hospitality offered.

This covenant is re-signed for a second three year period. Goteborg and Glasgow February 2010