

**Porvoo Communion Consultation and Meeting of the Porvoo
Contact Group
Minorities and Majorities: A Challenge for Church and Society
Tallinn, Estonia
11-14 October 2018**

Communiqué

Representatives of the Churches of the Porvoo Communion gathered in Tallinn, Estonia between 11 and 14 October 2018 for a consultation entitled 'Minorities and Majorities: A Challenge for Church and Society'. The consultation took place at the Theological Institute of the Estonian Lutheran Church where we were made welcome by the Dean, the Reverend Professor Dr Randar Tasmuth. The relationship of communion between our churches was grounded and made visible in our gathering together for prayer and our celebration together of the sacrament of the Eucharist. In study of the scriptures we sought together the word of God for each of us.

Our churches and people exist in and serve complex societies. Within our societies and churches there are minorities and there are majorities. Sometimes an individual can be part of a majority group and a minority group at the same time. In some of our societies our churches form a majority, in others a tiny minority. In all our churches we seek to be open to all: recognising the sins of prejudice that cause people to fear or reject those who are different.

During the consultation we heard and reflected on stories of the personal experience and the reality of the lives of minorities;

We heard some of the history of those minorities which were created by war or shifting national boundaries and we reflected on the deep memories of enmity and prejudice that linger as a result of this history;

We learned about the growth of minority communities brought about by immigration; their positive and negative experiences; and those of the majority communities alongside which they live;

We heard about communities that had been in a majority but which, in the modern age, are coming to terms with now being effectively a minority;

In all these examples there is a question for the church as to whether it supports the status quo or seeks to be counter-cultural.

All of our learning was grounded in the reality of Estonia with its modern history of external influence, occupation and independence. We were privileged to hear from local Church leaders about the life and growth of the churches in Estonia. We were inspired by the example of creative co-operation between the Church leaders. The solidarity that grew among the churches in Soviet times is being sustained in the present day and is bearing fruit.

Representatives from the churches of the Porvoo Communion, spread across the Nordic and Baltic States, the British Isles, the Iberian Peninsula and beyond learned from one another. At the heart of our learning was the deepening conviction that God who made humankind in his image loves each person he has made and calls us as

individuals, as churches, and as societies to reflect that love and to see the person of Christ in our neighbour.

The consultation concluded in the celebration of the Eucharist at Tallinn Cathedral where the president was the Archbishop of Estonia, the Most Reverend Urmas Viilma, and the preacher was the Bishop of Tonbridge, the Right Reverend Simon Burton-Jones. At this service we commemorated the eightieth anniversary of the agreements of intercommunion between the Church of England and the Evangelical-Lutheran Churches of Estonia and Latvia. These agreements form part of the tapestry of agreements between our churches that predated and prefigured the Porvoo Agreement.

The Porvoo Contact Group expresses its gratitude to the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, to Archbishop Viilma and to the Reverend Tauno Teder and Ms Kadri Pöder for making members so welcome in their beautiful city. This meeting was also the last meeting for the Lutheran Co-Chair, Bishop Peter Skov-Jakobsen, who completes his term of office with the gratitude of all who have worked with him. The Group looks towards its next conference, in 2019 in Portugal at the invitation of the Lusitanian Church, where the topic will be the voice of the Church in the public square.



Participants

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

The Revd Christa Hansen
The Revd Dr Thorsten Rørbæk
The Rt Revd Peter Skov-Jakobsen, Lutheran Co-Chair

Church of England

The Revd Dr William Adam, Anglican Co-Secretary
The Revd April Almaas
The Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones
The Ven Karen Lund

Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Ms Kadri Eliisabet Pöder
The Revd Tauno Teder

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

The Revd Dr Tomi Karttunen
The Revd Dr Niilo Pesonen
The Revd Dr Hannele Päiviö

The Lutheran Church of Great Britain

The Rt Revd Dr Martin Lind

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland

The Revd Dr Sigurður Arni Þórðarson

Church of Ireland

The Revd Suzanne Cousins
The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Anglican Co-Chair

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia

The Very Revd Elijs Godiņš

Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad

The Very Revd Dr Andris Abakuks
The Most Revd Lauma Zušēvica
The Very Revd Kārlis Žols

Church of Norway

Ms Beate Fagerli
The Revd Steinar Ims

Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church – Anglican Communion

The Rt Revd Dr Jorge Pina Cabral
Mr José Serafim Filipe Sequeira

Scottish Episcopal Church

The Revd Dr Hamilton Inbadas
Ms Miriam Weibye

Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church

Mr Ruben Baidez
The Rt Revd Carlos López Lozano

Church of Sweden

The Revd Andreas Holmberg

Church in Wales

The Revd Dr Ainsley Griffiths