

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL SYNOD of THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN GREAT BRITAIN
On APRIL 25th 2009 at St. Anne's Church, Gresham Street, London EC2V 7BX

1. The Synod was opened with prayers.
2. Rev. Reg Quirk (Chairman, ELCE) and Rev. Dearhamer (new Pastor of St Anne's) were welcomed.
3. **Verification of Delegates:**
 - a. St. Anne's: Sarah Farrow, Grace Kusiluka
 - b. St Anne's Swahili congregation: Daniel Kiunsi, Lucie Shigikile
 - c. Eritrean: Bereket Woldeslassie, Akilu Tesfai
 - d. St. Mark's: Wellu Shilla, Mtindo Shilla
 - e. St. Paul's: Yvonne and David Whyte
 - f. St. John's: Jurek Kolorz, Helmund Hunneberg
 - g. Christ the King: Anna Mach, Vera Erdman-Sudol
 - h. Chinese: Carly Chan
 - i. Trinity: Elaine Barnabas, Ulrike Ellis
 - j. St. Luke: Annette Higgins
 - k. St. Matthew's: Halina Martin
 - l. St. Martin's: Ellada Titane

Pastors:

Bishop Jana Jeruma-Grinberga
Bishop Emeritus Walter Jagucki
Dean Tom Bruch
Rev. Dr. Roy Long
Rev. Paul Chong
Rev. Tumaini Kallaghe
Rev. Mark Hardy
Rev. Libby Toomsalu
Rev. Robert Wojtowicz
Rev. Barnabas Daniel

4. **Minutes** of the last Synod meeting were accepted unanimously with one spelling correction:
Patricia Luk – not Luke
Proposed by Marja-Liisa Morgan and Pastor Long

5. **Bishop's Report**

The Bishop reported on the foundations laid for the LCiGB. She gave grateful thanks, particularly to Dean Patkai and Bishop Walter. She sees her role as an "enabler", part of a team that does the work for the church. The Bishop pointed out that we come from different backgrounds and cultures, speak different languages and even have different styles of worship. As the Lutheran Church in this country grows, we must remember that Christ is the foundation of all work.

Our new website has been very successful and a first seminar is planned. A Lay Ministers Conference on bereavement is planned for the autumn. We established our new office thanks to the help of the Norwegian Church and we are now working on our new Constitution.

The Bishop was elected Co-Moderator for the Anglican-Lutheran Society and is a Trustee of the Lutheran Council. She takes occasional services for the Latvian Church and once a month a service for the Eritrean Church.

The Bishop ended her report by saying that she wants to see the LCiGB develop in accordance with our Lutheran heritage.

6. Discussion on the theme of the Synod: Taking Stock (SWOT analysis)

The delegates were split into four groups, led by: Sarah Farrow, Akilu Tesfai, Elaine Barnabas and Annette Higgins

Feedbacks from Groups:

Group 1:

Strength: diversity of people, common faith, open, approachable leadership, Growing church

Weakness: difficulties in finding us, lack of structure, Diaspora situation, lack of funds/facilities

Opportunity: share and teach, strengthen links with world-wide Lutherans

Threats: as many people are transient, they are always leaving.

Group 2:

Strength: diversity, unity in same faith

Weakness: communications, outreach negligible

Opportunity: fellowship within our groups, education, outreach

Threats: funding, not enough permanent clergy, secularization

Group 3:

Strength: people, different cultures

Weakness: lack of communications

Threat: must go with the law of the country

Group 4:

Strength: as we are small we are more like a family, diversity, generosity of our funders

Opportunity: steady stream of Lutheran immigrants, economic crisis brings more people into church, getting gift aid through Charity status

Threats: lack of pastors living in congregations, no services every Sunday.

7. Newsletter

The possibility was discussed of having an electronic newsletter. Sarah and Robin Farrow were approved as editors of the newsletter.

8. Financial Report

Discussion of Appendix B of financial report produced by the Treasurer:

High Wycombe should be taken out of the budget, as the group no longer exists.

St Mark's congregation stated that they will not be able to manage £300 as their subscription, but will be able to contribute £200.

Discussion on Appendix C - Budget 2010

The budget is based on a 2% increase on 2009

Fundraising will be vital for this year to the sum of £12000. All congregations should be encouraged to have fund raising events for the LCiGB.

All accounts for 2008, 2009 and 2010 had been previously accepted by the Council and were received by the Synod.

A special vote of thanks was given to the treasurer, Mrs. Linda Bruch, for all her hard work

The Synod broke for lunch.

8. Report by Emeritus Bishop Walter Jagucki on his last 3 months in Office

9. Report by Dean Tom Bruch

The Dean gave a short report on the work of the Lutheran Council for information to new members of the Synod

10. Report on Charity Laws by Dean Tom Bruch

The first charity laws came in under Elizabeth I. It is a legal requirement for any charity with an annual income of over £5000 to apply for registration. This applies also to churches and congregations. Advancement of religion is a charitable purpose and all charities must provide a public benefit. The Charity Commission must approve the constitution of the charity as part of the registration process.

a) Governance:

Members of Church or congregations or their appointed representatives must attend General meetings and must elect trustees. The trustees (about 4 – 10) are responsible for managing the affairs of the charity, financial, programmes, etc.

b) General Meetings

The role of representatives at an AGM is to:

- Elect trustees

- Receive and consider annual reports and audited / examined accounts

- Amend the Constitution, if necessary

- Provide advice to trustees

- They cannot determine the running of the charity.

c) Companies

It is advisable for many charities to be registered as a company, which gives protection to the trustees and is an advantage in terms of property ownership and contracts.

d) Constitution

To help with the new constitution, the LCiGB has engaged a charity expert (accountancy and governance expert)

The LCiGB will keep the Statement of Faith and the Lutheran character, but the new constitution will comply with charity and company law. Some rules from the current constitution will be kept, but they will form a separate document.

e) Urgent matters for congregations with an income of over £5000

Each of these congregations must apply for registration. This can be done in their own right, or they need to be included in the registration of the LCiGB. The congregations need to have a constitution, which meets the requirements of the Charity Commission. If congregations have an income of under £5000, they still have to have appropriate structures in place.

f) **Membership**

All congregations not registered under the auspices of the LCiGB for charity purposes can still be members of the LCiGB.

All above items were discussed by the delegates.

11. Elections

Bishop Emeritus Walter, Margaret Pickford, Marja-Liisa Morgan and Rev. Paul Chong were retiring from the Council. A vote of thanks was given to all the retiring members of the Council for all the work they had done over many years

Nominations for the Council vacancies were:

Dean – Tom Bruch

Clergy Representative – Mark Hardy

Lay Representative – Angela Gawlikowski

Annette Higgins

Aklilu Tesfai

All the above nominees were duly elected to the Council.

12. Congregational Reports

All congregational reports were accepted as read by a majority vote.

13. Application by Reading Swahili Group

The Reading Swahili Group had applied to be accepted as a Mission Congregation.

The Synod officially accepted the application.

14. Pilgrimages

Sarah Farrow spoke about planned pilgrimages.

15. Theological Committee

The committee will be headed by Rev. Dr. Roy Long, who will function as Convenor.

16. Date of next meeting

April 24th, 2010 hosted by the Eritrean congregation in Finchley

The Synod meeting ended with a Eucharist Service, led by Pastor Barnabas Daniel with Pastor Libby Toomsalu preaching.