

TOGETHER

The magazine of the Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway

FEBRUARY–JUNE 2022



Archbishop Desmond Tutu on his visit to Oslo in 2008.

Photo courtesy of Arne Grieg Riisnæs/NCA

The theme of this issue is
Living well with difference

Who's Who

SENIOR CHAPLAIN	The Revd Canon Joanna Udal c/o The British Embassy, Postbox 4005 AMB, 0244 Oslo oslochaplain@osloanglicans.no	22 69 22 14
ASSISTANT CHAPLAINS	Chaplain Stavanger: Vacant The Revd Sheila Rosenthal (Trondheim) trondheimchaplain@anglicans.no The Revd Dr Kirk Weisz (Bergen) bergenchaplain@anglicans.no	94 86 26 04 41 43 13 21
CHAPLAINCY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER	Sharon John sharon.t.john@gmail.com	
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER BERGEN	Molly Rydström	47 33 41 40
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER STAVANGER	André Durham	
SAFEGUARDING OFFICER TRONDHEIM	Susan J Boyd	93 06 90 68
READER IN TRONDHEIM	Susan J Boyd	93 06 90 68
READER IN BERGEN	Iris Evans-Bjørnø	55 18 67 34
ARCHDEACONRY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES	Andrew Thomas and Jill Almvang (Oslo) Susan Gjerde (Bergen) Mark Hamer (Stavanger)	
CHAPLAINCY CHURCHWARDENS	Terry Bevan churchwarden@osloanglicans.no Barbara McIntosh bergenwarden@anglicans.no	
ASSISTANT CHURCHWARDENS	John Glazebrook (Oslo) Sarah Denieul-Lalljee (Stavanger) Peter Pang (Trondheim)	
CHAPLAINCY ENVIRONMENT OFFICER	Esmé Knagenhjelm	
<i>FORSTANDER</i>	Ingeborg Wörheide forstander@anglicans.no	92 82 68 84
OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS	Andrew Lane (Hon Sec), Sigrid Kvaal (Hon Treasurer), Juliet Chukwuma (Stavanger), Eirik Gjerløw (Oslo), Sabina Larsen (Oslo), Molly Sutphen (Oslo), Laura Sætveit Miles (Bergen), Jane Todd (Stavanger)	
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YOUTH & CHILDREN STAVANGER	Vacant	
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SUNDAY SCHOOL TRONDHEIM	Caroline Cheng	
YOUTH MENTOR TRONDHEIM	Priscilla Ringrose	
ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER	John Chapman chapmanmusic@aol.com	
CARETAKER	Peter Ekeuluabia	
TOGETHER EDITORIAL TEAM	Joanna Udal, editor-in-chief; Ingeborg Wörheide, Roger Martin, editorial assistants	

Persons authorised by the Bishop to assist in administering the sacrament of Holy Communion:

all readers, Ekene Agbalakwe, Abbas Bahiraei, Hilde Chapman, Eirik Duerr, Sigrid I Kvaal, Barbara McIntosh, Penny Miettle, Benn Mugisha, Lynel Aurora Reyes, Philip Ringrose, Betty Short, Owen Thomas, Rune Torsvik, Linda White, Ingeborg Wörheide.

For further information see our websites: www.osloanglicans.no, www.bergenanglicans.net, www.stavangeranglicans.no, and www.trondheimanglicans.net.

The diocesan website is www.europe.anglican.org, and the Church of England's website is www.cofe.anglican.org.

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facilitated discussions in small groups, and the opportunity for feedback through the diocese. More background can be found online: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith>

Our topic *Living well with difference* suggests there is a fruitfulness as well as challenge to be had in the differences and perhaps disagreements amongst us. We are called to engage with each other and the world in which we live so as to proclaim the Gospel afresh in each generation. Our witness will also be noticed for the love and respect with which we relate to one another, and our faithfulness in discipleship.

Referring to the *Kairos Document* issued in South Africa at the height of the apartheid, former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has spoken of the task of the Church's teaching to seek 'to preserve the fullness of what is opened up in Christ to a redeemed humanity.' My hope is that our reflection on living well together with difference may help open us to the fullness of what Christ offers to a redeemed humanity.

*Revd Canon Joanna Udal
Senior Chaplain*

Bergen notes

Warm greetings from all of us in Bergen! The autumn months leading into the season of Advent was a mixture of highs and lows in the life of our congregation. My ordination to the priesthood in September was indeed a high note and was greeted naturally with great excitement and a good bit of relief for a variety of reasons. I was overwhelmed by the love and support shown to me and my family at the ordination and the reception afterward from the Diocese in Europe, the Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway, our local congregation and our good friends in the Bergen Cathedral Parish in the Church of Norway. Thank you! My ordination also marked the conclusion of our five-year stint of receiving communion-by-extension in Bergen. I jokingly shared with the congregation at the reception that we can at least be proud of the fact that we have become 'world experts' at communion-by-extension! The first Sunday I celebrated Holy Communion in Mariakirken coincided with the first rainy day in Bergen in a few months (a very rare period of dryness for Bergen). One of our long-time members said to me before the service started, 'Kirk, it looks like things are finally back to normal in Bergen – we are celebrating communion and it's raining again!' Of course,

having communion celebrated fully has been greatly welcomed by all, and while God sustained us sacramentally nonetheless, I can now see what our congregation had been missing. The full celebration of the Eucharist has a mysterious way of deepening our connection to God, and one another, in a way that communion-by-extension is unable to provide.

As we moved into Advent, the omicron variant did as well ... We were very sad to have to cancel both of our services of Nine Lessons and Carols in Korskirken and Mariakirken, but felt strongly that it was the right thing to do for our particular context at that stage of the pandemic. Our Christmas Day service certainly lifted our spirits with a surprisingly good turnout considering the situation with the virus. Another major highlight to the year came right after Christmas, on 27 December, when we celebrated the birthday of long-time member Hilda Sefton, who turned 80 years old. A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, Hilda has been a faithful member of the Bergen congregation since 1974! In fact, prior to relocating to Bergen from a job assignment in the very far north of Norway, she spent 1964–65 as a member of St. Edmund's Church in Oslo. Hilda is perhaps known best for the beautiful towels that she embroiders. Many of these are used at infant baptisms to dry the baby after being baptised, and then given to the family as a baptismal gift. Hilda held an open house gathering on her birthday and we all gave thanks to God for her friendship, good humour, and her faithful service to Christ. This provided such a wonderful ending to a challenging year in ministry due to all the ups and downs of the pandemic. Mostly, I hope this update finds the rest of the Chaplaincy healthy and well, and wish you and yours every blessing in the new year ahead and into God's future, together.

*Kirk Weisz
Bergen Assistant Chaplain*

Trondheim notes

We continue to enjoy two new ventures here and it's interesting to see what the brew is turning out to be. We have a monthly online chat group discussing prayers we like and find satisfying and a monthly lecture given by one of the members of our congregation on a personal specialist subject. These are open to anyone to come to. We had a good carol service which turned out to be the last big service the cathedral held just before the new covid measures came in. It is

always a blessing to have one of the cathedral choirs sing with and for us and this year, perhaps because the opportunity to sing as a choir was about to be taken away, their choir excelled themselves as did our readers for the Nine Lessons. Our own musicians were in fine fettle on Christmas Day with a sort of pop-up band who were spontaneously joined by a chap with a set of hand drums for Ding Dong Merrily on High which had a distinct jazz feel to it! Excellent fun.

We have had a wedding blessing of a couple from the congregation and a baptism of a young lad both of which services were free from covid regs at the time so we could relax a little. Spring will bring some changes to us as research fellows leave NTNU for other places. This is a sad fact of life here in Trondheim and we will be sad indeed to say farewell to those who have come to the ends of their contracts.

Who knows how Easter will look this year but for sure it will include noting the rites of passage from Lent through to Easter Day, from dark days to the glorious brightness of April as the days lengthen towards the summer solstice. Summer – what a wonderful thought to think on a wet January day with a hurricane approaching and five severe weather warnings in place!

*Revd Sheila Rosenthal
Trondheim Assistant Chaplain*

Stavanger notes

Last autumn the Stavanger congregation entered into an agreement with the administration of the Cathedral and St Petri Kirke which allows us to worship in their parish house on most Sundays. This was not only exciting, but also a considerable relief for us, as we had become homeless at the beginning of the summer! *Menighetshuset* (MHH) is a very modern, architect-designed building with adjustable spaces and ... an eco-green roof! It has high ceilings, an abundance of blond wood, and is flooded with natural light. Those who ventured down into the MHH basement on 12 December may have witnessed something like a whirling Dervish spinning the rods on a football table. As the game came to a close, the Dervish slowed and the blur became a cassock. Joanna! There is a teenage boy who needs a return match ... Anyway, we are settling in nicely and are thankful to *Domkirken* and St.Petri for enthusiastically housing the Stavanger Anglicans.

Another piece of good news last autumn was that André finally received authorization to be a

worship leader! Congratulations to André, as it has taken faith and commitment to get to this point! Thank you also to Joanna for encouraging, challenging and coaching him through this journey. As André does not do things by half, he also achieved his doctorate last year!

In a climate where attendance at the Stavanger Anglican services (in-person or online), has steadily dwindled (root cause contenders are COVID fatigue, the upheaval of moving once again, and the absence of a pastor – our interregnum is well into its third year), we have been uplifted by new folk crossing the threshold and staying! In the same vein, a number of people who had left the congregation years ago returned in the course of last year and immediately got themselves involved in the workings of the church! This has been heartening and shows that our base, although small, is still solid and ripe for growth.

Once again, the highlight of our year was our traditional Nine lessons and Carols service. We did have a rather large wobble in the week of the service (scheduled on Friday 10 December, a couple of weeks earlier than usual) as the government announced new Covid-related constraints. Could we, should we go ahead with the service? What if our service resulted in a dreaded COVID-cluster and ended up in the local news for all the wrong reasons? Or, what if nobody came, anyway?! Fortunately, sound advice came from St. Petri Church administration and from the Dean, via Joanna, and we went ahead, in full compliance with the new regulations (pretty much the same as last year's). No regrets at all! The service brought together the international community that is so representative of Stavanger and of course helped strengthen the ties with the different Christian Churches present in the city. We were blessed and privileged to have Joanna leading.

The collection taken at this service of Nine Lessons and Carols went towards our annual support to the Samaritan's Purse 'Operation Christmas Child' (OCC). Through OCC we were able to send 30 shoeboxes of presents to children who would otherwise have been without a gift at Christmas.

Joanna stayed on to hold a service of Holy Communion for us on the Sunday following the carol service and we are delighted to say that the service and fellowship were very well attended!

In 2022, we look forward to having Susan Boyd, Morten Grindvoll and Joanna come back

to Stavanger to lead services for us. We are thrilled that we will have a baptism in February (the first for the Stavanger Anglicans in a good few years). We pray that this year will see a pastor who loves a challenge settle down a while with the Stavanger congregation! Last but not least, we look forward to upholding the Chaplaincy Council's commitment to the spiritual growth, well-being and enablement of our church youth.

Sarah Denieul-Lalljee
Assistant Warden, Stavanger

Oslo notes

The ups and downs of the past months remind us of the urgency of Jesus's warning 'We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work.' (John 9.4) The easing of COVID restrictions at the end of September enabled us to resume more church activities through the autumn. It was a special joy to be able to resume Children's Church at St Edmund's after a long break. We are very grateful for an enthusiastic new team of helpers who like the children are enjoying the 'Ryan the Rhino' materials produced by the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. Other joys included the baptism of Chikamso and a Matthew family house blessing which the extended family joined by Zoom from different continents!

The Drammen Ladies' Guild have continued their gatherings in Bragemes Church, meeting for Midday Prayer and Holy Communion in November followed by fellowship over a delicious shared lunch, as they plan to again on 10 February, thanks to the warm hospitality of Bragemes Church. A festive and well-supported carol service was held on 7 December with the choir of St Edmund's and a delicious tea afterwards. The Ladies Guild presented a commemorative plaque to mark the 150th Anniversary of Bragemes Church, while our Senior Chaplain Joanna and the *sokneprest* of Bragemes Per Eirik Brodal together cut the special anniversary cake arranged by Kaye Westing. Special appreciation to Kaye for all her arrangements. (Photo: Ingeborg Wørheide)

Our commitment to justice and reconciliation in the world took public expression in the service for Global Week service prepared ecumenically with our local neighbouring churches on the theme of Modern Slavery. This was held on 17 November in *Trefoldighetskirken* with Abigail

and Ingeborg from St Edmund's helping with refreshments. Our Senior Chaplain Joanna also participated in a Global Week Musical Meditation where both flute and flamenco guitar were enlisted to inspire our prayers and action against the all too prevalent phenomenon of modern of slavery around the world today.



Global Week Service on Modern Slavery
at Trefoldighetskirken. Photo: Joanna Udal

November also retained its character as a season of remembrance, with a well-attended Service of Light in St Edmund's on the evening of 7 November, to which those recently bereaved were invited. We all had the opportunity to light a candle to remember loved ones who have died and for their names to be read out in a moment of peace and recollection. On 14 November St Edmund's held a service at St Edmund's for Remembrance Day, with fitting musical contributions from the choir, trumpet and violin. The British Ambassador was able to read in church ahead of a short Act of Remembrance held at midday at the Commonwealth War Graves in *Vestre Gravlund*.

The absence of the Bazaar this year posed a challenge to find alternative fundraising opportunities. Members of the St Edmund's congregation nevertheless went into overdrive making cakes and mince pies and chutneys with a view to festive sales at our Christmas events and services. We were very fortunate our Carol service was scheduled earlier than usual and that delicious mince pies and *gløgg* could be enjoyed afterwards as well as the purchase of delicious

Christmas fare. But new restrictions soon followed, reducing Christmas footfall though the church considerably. Those who did attend did extremely well on cake and mince pies – consumed of course for the benefit of St Edmund’s!

John Chapman and the choir did wonderfully for the Carol service after a highly disrupted year of rehearsals, and carols were sung outside St Edmund’s on Christmas Eve for a second year – surely that is now a tradition! The Bazaar however was much missed and we will need to consider early in 2022 what can be done to revive that longstanding tradition and what form it should take.

The new year has begun again under COVID restrictions, but we adapt as we can so as to ‘work in the day’. Our Unity Prayers went ahead despite being unable to make our usual pilgrimage to the different churches of our neighbourhood. Instead, the local clergy led a Zoom service from St Edmund’s with our choir there leading all those singing their hearts out while on mute at home. May the Lord send his help that the whole people of God may once again be unmutted and reunited for singing the praises of God.

Revd Canon Joanna Udal, Oslo Chaplain

Sermon at the Service of Thanksgiving for Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Oslo Cathedral, 9 January 2022

Text: Matthew 2, 13–23

The story about Joseph, Mary and Jesus who fled to Egypt, was one of the texts for the second day of Christmas, the Day of Martyrs in our Church. Herod felt threatened when the wise men asked about a king who was born. They followed the star, and the prophecy which said it should happen in Bethlehem. They found the child but did not tell Herod. Herod was afraid people should gather around a new king. All children became a threat. Genocide was the result. As Moses with the people of Israel, the small family returned, but not to Bethlehem – there, the son of the tyrant had taken control of power.

People with unlimited power are always on guard against those who can challenge their control. The regime in South Africa was on guard against all who gathered – church, trade unions or students. As Herod and all tyrants, they knew that fellowship and organization give

strength to organize resistance against oppressors and occupants – in people at that time in Palestine and in South-Africa.

Archbishop Tutu died, peacefully, on the Day of Martyrs. He was a witness against persecution and injustice, and for the equal dignity of all persons. When he talked about that, which needed to happen in South Africa, he told the story of how God liberated the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. It was a story about power and politics. As it also was a story about power and politics when Jesus was crucified as a criminal, sentenced by a political leader.

Mary, Joseph, Jesus, yes God, are always involved in political events. The Holy God loves all humans and creates us in his/her image. For this reason, the dignity of all persons is holy. And, precisely for this reason, the church must care about politics, about oppression, freedom, and protection of the dignity of humans. If not, Tutu said, we neither care about God nor about people.



Candle lighting at the memorial service for
Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Apartheid violated the dignity of humans by depriving them of legal rights because of the colour of their skin. They were banished, could not move freely, and had no influence on the laws which governed their lives. They had passes which were used to control their movements. These were papers which gave them no security. They lived in a society which did not secure the rights of everybody to always be taken care of. The Church can never keep silent when anybody is without legal rights because they do not have, are not given papers to show who they are, or are given papers which say they do not belong. The rule of law is the fundamental safeguard around the dignity of humans.

Daily eucharist and reading of the Bible was the source of Archbishop Tutu’s commitment. He said: ‘When I see injustice, I cannot keep

		Oslo			Bergen		Readings		Stavanger		Trondheim	
FEBRUARY												
Sun	06	4 before Lent	11:00	All-Age Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Isaiah 6.1-8/9-end Luke 5.1-11	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	11:00 18:00	Zoom/Facebook Holy Communion Chapter House	
Sun	13	3 before Lent	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Jeremiah 17.5-10 Luke 6.17-26	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	11:00 18:00	Worship Vår Frue Evening Prayer Chapter House	
Sun	20	2 before Lent	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Genesis 2.4b-9,15-end Luke 8.22-25	10:30	Holy Communion w Baptism Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Cathedral	
Sun	27	Next before Lent	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Exodus 34.29-end Luke 9.28-36,37-43a	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Chapter House	
MARCH												
Wed	02	Ash Wednesday	19:00	Sung Communion	18:00	Ecumenical Holy Communion	Joel 2.1-2,12-17 Mathew 6.1-6,16-21		No service	18:00	Joint service with Cathedral	
Sun	06	Lent 1	11:00	All-Age Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Deuteronomy. 26-1-11 Luke 4.1-13	10:30	Family Service zoom	11:00 18:00	Zoom Service Holy Communion Chapter House	
Sun	13	Lent 2	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Genesis 15.1-12,17-18 Luke 13.31-end	10:30	Family Communion Menighetshuset	11:00 18:00	Vår Frue Evening Prayer Chapter House	
Sun	20	Lent 3	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Isaiah 55.1-9 Luke 13.1-9	10:30	Holy Communion Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Cathedral	
Sun	27	Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	11:00	All-Age Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	1 Samuel 1.20-end Luke 2.33-35	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Chapter House	
APRIL												
Sun	03	Lent 5	11:00	All-Age Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Isaiah 43.16-21 John 12.1-8	10:30	Family Service Zoom	11:00 18:00	Zoom Service Holy Communion Chapter House	
Sun	10	Palm Sunday	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Luke 19.28-40 Isaiah 50.4-9a Luke 22.14-end of 23	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	11:00 18:00	Worship Vår Frue Evening Prayer Chapter House	
Thu	14	Maundy Thursday	19:00	Sung Communion	18:00	Ecumenical Holy Communion	Exodus 12.1-14 John 13.1-17,31b-35		No service	18:00	Joint service with Cathedral	
Fri	15	Good Friday	10:00	Joint service w ALC	11:00	Good Friday Tenebrae	Isaiah 52.13-end of 53 John 18.1-end of 19	13:00	Good Friday Service St Petri	TBA	Good Friday procession	
Sun	17	Easter	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Ecumenical Holy Communion	Acts 10.34-43 John 20.1-18	10:30	Family Communion Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Cathedral	
Sun	24	Easter 2	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Service of the Word	Acts 5.27-32 John.19.1-20	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Chapter House	
MAY												
Sun	01	Easter 3	11:00	All-Age Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Acts 9.1-20 John 21.1-19	10:30	Service of the Word Zoom	11:00 18:00	Zoom Service Holy Communion Chapter House	
Sun	08	Easter 4	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Acts 9.36-end John 10.22-30	10:30	Service of the Word Zoom	11:00 18:00	Worship Vår Frue Evening Prayer Chapter House	
Sun	15	Easter 5	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Acts 11.1-18 John 13.31-35	10:30	Family Communion Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Cathedral	
Sun	22	Easter 6	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Acts 16.9-15 John 14.23-29	10:30	Service of the Word Menighetshuset	18:00	Holy Communion Chapter House	
Thu	26	Ascension Day		No service	18:00	Holy Communion	Acts 1.1-11 Luke 24.44-end		No service		No service	
Sun	29	Easter 7	11:00	Sung Communion	11:00	Holy Communion	Acts 16.16-34 John 17.20-end		No service	18:00	Holy Communion Chapter House	

quiet, for as Jeremiah says, when I try to keep quiet God's word burns like a fire in my breast.' The word of God clearly protects the dignity of persons and the equal worth of all. The Church's baptism and the eucharist tell the same – we are all equal when receiving these gifts. Nobody has precedence over others. Archbishop Tutu said: 'If God is for us, who can then be against us?' This is the way the Church has to speak when humans are oppressed and their dignity is violated. But only then!

Since all humans have the same worth, Tutu wanted dialogue with defenders of the apartheid system. This is because of 'ubuntu', the African wisdom which says that 'I am because you are'. We are part of each other's lives with the history we carry in ourselves. Only dialogue makes reconciliation possible, but it presupposes that someone seeks, and someone gives forgiveness. This is the way it is in daily life and in politics. A sustainable fellowship is only possible when everybody knows what should be forgiven.

'The Rainbow people' was Archbishop Tutu's dream for South Africa. A rainbow is only visible



Archbishop Desmond Tutu on his visit to Oslo in 2008.

Photo courtesy of Arne Grieg Riisnæs/NCA

when the sun, through the raindrops in the atmosphere shows all the colours. Later, Tutu added that the people of the rainbow include all irrespective of the colour of their skin or their sexual orientation. The rainbow was God's message to Noah and his people that the earth should never be destroyed. It is the symbol of hope, the hope that the dignity of all will be respected, that we have a future together. The death and resurrection of Christ assures us that compassion and care, laughter and joy, reconciliation and forgiveness can defeat everything which is against the will of God. So that we together can give our 'Glory to the Father, the

Son and the Holy Ghost who were, are and ever will be from eternity to eternity. Amen.'

Revd Canon Dr Trond Bakkevig

Desmond Mpilo Tutu is amongst us no more

2008: I find myself standing inside the doorway at Norwegian Church Aid's Head Office in Oslo. I am on the welcoming committee to greet the Arch on his arrival – the only Anglican NCA employee at that time. Also present was our then Assistant Chaplain Sammy Masemola. The Arch arrived – a diminutive figure with a great sense of humour, and an enormous presence. He shared with us his thoughts about the struggles during apartheid and since and his take on world peace efforts. Listening to him I was in no doubt that I was experiencing a great man of our time.

2016: I was travelling back to my home in Haiti from a wedding in Lusaka, Zambia. My flights were via Johannesburg, where I had the opportunity to stay with Sammy. My one tourist request was a visit to Soweto, including a visit to Mandela House. Little did I know until then that the Arch also had a house just down the road – 2 Nobel Peace Prize laureates having lived almost across from one another on Vilakasi Street, Soweto.

2022: New Year's Day and I had set my alarm for 8 am. – an hour before the funeral in St. George's Cathedral Cape Town. I saw the simple pine coffin with ropes for handles, heard the tributes from a myriad of people from his daughter, Reverend Nontombi Naomi Tutu, to Archbishop Justin Welby and President Cyril Ramaphosa extolling his work for his country (in particular for the Truth and Reconciliation Committee that has become a model internationally), the global LGBT+ community and others around the world. I listened to the music which ranged from traditional Anglican hymns to Lizalis' idinga lakho (Fulfill your promise) and Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika, the South African National Anthem. The whole service flowing seamlessly between elements in English, isiXhosa, and Afrikaans just as it did between the traditional funeral liturgy and the personal wishes of the Arch for something other than the state funeral that would otherwise be his fate.

A great man has surely departed this earthly world. We are left behind to try to live and work by the example he showed us. I was privileged to meet him.

Jill Almvang, Oslo

Hospitality given or received?

One of the great joys and challenges of being a priest in the Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway is leading an increasingly diverse congregation. Many of our newcomers are people who are relocating to Norway from abroad and adjusting to Norwegian life and culture, including myself and my family for that matter. One of the many challenges that we encounter is that we are moving into an already established context with its own norms, values, beliefs and behaviours and its own unique history of responding to people who are 'different.' In addition, countries have ways of coping with people of difference coming from abroad. Sometimes these ways of coping are welcoming to the difference newcomers bring while others prefer they just leave their difference at the door before they are welcomed to come inside.

One of the things that I love to hear most as a priest, is when a newcomer says to me that they feel like our congregation is a place where they can belong. Acculturation theorist John Berry believes that at the heart of the process of acculturation (moving from one foreign context into another) is to find a place of belonging. Berry also explains that finding a place of belonging can be a formidable challenge especially when the receiving country does not welcome the newcomer or at worst pressures them to become 'more of the same.' A common story that I have heard over the past six years of leading the Bergen congregation is that many members felt unwelcome and excluded by various organisations, and even other churches, before they found a place of belonging among us.

These experiences of exclusion are what New Testament scholar John Koenig observes as the 'dark side of hospitality.' Koenig writes, 'Competition, prejudice, ostracism – all of these occur with regularity in our attempts to be hospitable.' Hospitality is a simple concept in theory, but in practice it requires a commitment to openness and willingness to embrace without change. Moreover, we often think that offering hospitality is a gift that we give to others. This may be the case initially, but in the long run I have found it to be quite the other way around. For example, within the biblical narrative, strangers are viewed and received as one coming with a blessing or challenging people with direct communication from God. Again

Koenig is particularly insightful in this regard. He writes:

The biblical sources tell us that, stranger received will enlarge our total wellbeing rather than diminish it. It is no accident than, I think, that the three major festivals of the church – Christmas, Easter and Pentecost – all have to do with the advent of a stranger. In each case the stranger offers blessings that, at first glance, cannot be comprehended. The child in the manger, the stranger on the road to Emmaus, and the mighty wind of the Holy Spirit all meet us as mysterious visitors, challenging our beliefs systems even as they welcome us to new worlds.

A dear mentor of mine once said to me, 'Kirk, be suspicious of any church that claims to be perfect at welcoming the stranger.' Every church has its moments when the darker side of hospitality creeps its way in. Living well with difference, the theme for this edition of *Together*, begins, I believe, with the more challenging work of being open to the differences the stranger brings, and then, to delight in letting them bless us and welcome us into new worlds. As Jesus says to his disciples as they prepare for their ministry which will depend greatly upon the hospitality of others, 'Those who receive you, receive me, and those who receive me, receive the One who sent me' (Matt. 10:40).

Revd Kirk Weisz, Bergen

Living with difference

'difference' from the Latin meaning
'not the same'.

John 1.14: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

John 21.18: Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go."

Philippians 2.5–8: Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

Fridge magnet: Intolerant people should be shot.

What do we do with difference? It is a terrifying thing that can come from left of field or from under our noses; the difference we fear is when our lives go out of our control whether it's unexpected price rises or an accident or diagnosis that we cannot alter the effect of on our lives. As Jesus said to Peter 'when you are old ...' and when we are old there are things that will be done to us in our own interest that we will feel we have no control over. We will become like kids again and have things done for and to us.

What do we do with difference? We celebrate it and revel in it. Warm sand between our toes or cold snow under the skis, a new home, job or partner: zillions of things excite and please us because they break the mundane run of things and bring difference. We become like kids again and play in the joy and fun of newness and 'other'.

'Difference and diversity' seems to have come to mean sexuality and race in the church context but this focussing of definition does no one any favours. It makes fuzzy boundaries through fudged definitions: it suggests that we should spot the difference and then wonder what to do with it 'properly'. Policies must be made so we can be seen to be dealing adequately and in a morally beneficent way. There is merit in this when it challenges what might be called miscreant behaviour and as Christians we do need to look at ourselves and repent of our sins.

There is a word 'entelechy' which is useful here. It means 'realizing potential'. The bar set for Christians, or the plumb line if you prefer, with which we measure ourselves is the life of Christ of course. Whatever else we make of the life of Christ, one thing is evident, the only son of God (so we are not of the same essence as He is) nevertheless found time and place to engage with us different beings. He came with grace and love and forgiveness and challenging words at times to and reshape us. The difference we have to live with then is not those people in the same stew as we are, but God who asks us to be something that doesn't crawl about on the earth, hiding from inspection. Instead God asks us to stand in God's presence and serve God by offering the same levels of grace and love and forgiveness and challenging words at times to those we mistakenly think are different from us. **Romans 8, 22-23**, 'For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short

of the glory of God'. Difference then is about changing from what we are to what we can be, not about how to treat those who are different from us but how to be differently gracious towards those whom we are not like. It's the job of a lifetime, a change of scenery and partner and perspective, it is at once terrifying and exhilarating, it is falling into the hands of the living God which, depending on how we choose to respond, can be either a 'wheeeee' or an 'o both-er' moment! You choose, God does not impose.

Revd Sheila Rosenthal, Trondheim

Deanery Synod report

It took bit of explaining when we told Norwegian friends that because we are members of the Church of England we were going to Helsinki for a meeting. This was for most of the Norwegian delegation our first deanery synod in the diocese of Europe and some of us were a little shaky on the details in any case. The deanery is an organisational level between chaplaincy and diocese, and ours is called the Nordic and Baltic deanery, encompassing close neighbours like Gothenburg as well as such exotic locations as Iceland and Latvia.

So for a few days, clergy and lay people living in Northern Europe donned facemasks and brushed shoulders in Helsinki while discussing official business such as what are we to do about training budgets and less official topics such as what is the most environmentally friendly way of travelling to Copenhagen. Whether this was meant as a metaphor or not, the location for our meetings was a converted prison: the instrument of uncompromising justice transformed into a place of generosity and hospitality. Bread was broken, meals were shared, friendships formed and minutes taken.

One highlight was the Saturday: that morning we mixed important minutable business with an emotive session with the Chaplain in Copenhagen, Revd. Canon Smitha Prasadam, about singing the Lord's song in a foreign land, and a Finnish voice from Oman, as Revd. Aaro Rytönen told us of interreligious dialogue and practice in the Al Amana centre. In the afternoon however the scene change was dramatic as we all, masked up, piled into a bus that took us from urban Helsinki to provincial Porvoo, the very symbol of Anglican-Lutheran relations. After an ecumenical Eucharist to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Porvoo agreement, ecumenical hospitality

was expressed further when the bishop invited us to his home for dinner together with local clergy and diocesan employees. The table conversation, drawing Anglicans and Lutherans together from all over Europe, was immensely enjoyable, and the initial polite murmur was



soon punctuated more by laughter.

On our return to Helsinki, the informal part of the Synod continued in various parts of the hotel and it is rumoured that some youthful-spirited members of the group didn't get to bed until the early hours of the morning, so engaging were the evening conversations about issues that were never too far from the official programme either: does following Jesus commit us to particular stances in debates on racism, should the church condone or condemn particular practices regarding climate action? It was enriching to listen to the experiences of our fellow Anglicans based all over Northern Europe, but who have lived all over the world.

Minutes were circulated and progress was made concerning how we collaborate and organise our life and ministry together, but for us the main results were the friendships formed, and the certainty that when we as the chaplaincy in Norway need a neighbour, we are blessed with many. We hope for more interaction between our chaplaincies in the near future.

Andrew Thomas, Oslo

In praise of Zoom

Zoom has been a godsend to many people, churches and organisations, since having to isolate and keep away from your friends and relatives could have meant not being able to join in celebrations, funerals or meetings. We have been extremely lucky here in the Anglican church, as we have held many zoom-only services. Even when a few brave people have been in Mariakirken, other members of our congregation – for whatever reason including ill health, or

difficulties with travel – have joined us faithfully time after time online.

I grew up as a Methodist and since the pandemic I have been invited to join in Zoom meetings with the Methodist Ladies' Group based in the Midlands in Britain. There have been some excellent speakers; in November, one in particular, who comes from the church to which I used to belong, talked about my home town's hospice, a place where sick people are cared for and their pain alleviated. As a few of my friends and a couple of family members ended their days in Compton Hospice, it has a very special place in my heart.

In the December meeting we were all asked if we would like to read a poem or piece of prose which would help us to understand and appreciate the birth of the Christ Child. I found two lovely poems, one called *Why a stable Lord?* and the other about the many loved carols we sing at this time, called *Carols*. We heard of traditions which were unknown to us, there was a recipe for a special cake and stories of past nativity plays with all the fun and laughter they bring. We sang (muted) several well-known and beloved carols, we prayed for each other and the world, and read from the Holy Bible the story of when Jesus was born. Many people took part, and I am beginning to recognise many of them as friends whom I hope to meet in person in the future.

For many years now the Anglican church St Philip's and my old church Beckminster Methodist church, both near where I used to live in Wolverhampton, have regularly enjoyed joint services and social events together, and I have been asked if I would take a service during one of my visits in Beckminster, which is certainly something I could only have dreamed of. Blessed I certainly am with all my many friends from both churches over in Britain and also in Mariakirken, and I praise God daily for all his goodness to me and mine.

Iris Evans-Bjørnø, Bergen Lay Reader

Andre
Durham
receives
his doctorate –
Congratulations!



Celebrating
Ascension
Day and
125 Years of
St Olaf's
Church,
Balestrand
Sung
Eucharist
at 11:00
on
Thursday
26 May
2022



Upcoming events



Balestrand

Thu 26 May Sung Eucharist at 11:00: Celebration of 125 years of St Olaf's Church – a homage to Margaret Sophia Green Kvikne.

27–29 May Chaplaincy Retreat, praying for the Gift of the Holy Spirit for God's mission in Norway

For young people

Wed 2–Sun 6 March Taizé Weekend in Norway's deep forests

Children's corner

THE ANGLICAN CHAPLAINCY IN NORWAY, SUSAN, IRIS & NORAH INVITE ALL CHILDREN TO:

Choom, Children's Zoom

SUNDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 0940 - 1015



Jesus as a child

images: www.lambsongs.co.nz

Welcome to Choom – the Chaplancy-wide Sunday school on zoom, where children aged 1–12 enjoy learning about God's love and God's word in a fun way.

- Date: usually the 3rd Sunday of each month
- Time 9.40–10.15 – so a very full programme!
- Led by the Sunday School team: Iris, Norah and Susan.
- Topics for the next 3 months:

- * Jesus as a child
- * The Lord's Prayer
- * He is risen indeed!
- The programme includes
 - * opening and closing prayer
 - * a movement song
 - * a short video to illustrate the topic
 - * a craft.

We invite families with their children to come and join in and see if this is something for your child. Welcome.

The Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway
Chaplaincy Retreat
Thy Kingdom Come
27–29 May 2022 in Balestrand
 Praying for the Gift of the Holy Spirit
 for God's mission in Norway



For booking details, contact the Senior Chaplain
oslochaplain@osloanglicans.no



Taize Weekend
in Norway's deep forests
for youth and young adults
Wednesday 2 March – Sunday 6 March 2022
 Getting to know others and seeking God
 in the music and prayer of Taize,
 in teaching and in silence.



Details? See liagard.no/program/taizehelg2022
 Interested? Contact your chaplain.

From the registers

BAPTISM



Chikamso Chinonso-Obiora
St Edmund's Church, Oslo
 7 November 2021

Elias Sebastian Christopher Matre
Trondheim
 14 November 2021
 Sophie Obike
St Mary's Church, Bergen
 21 November 2021

DEATHS



Oslo

Margaret Beckett Austad
 Peter Bilton
 Jennifer Mary Grønning
 Helen Daphne Rosemary Lødrup
 Helene Jane Shaw
 Per Åge Sørby
 Jennifer Ann Ask, Jar

Bergen

Davina Dolby Johannessen
 Rose Angulene Thompson

Trondheim

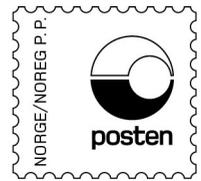
James Ragnar Johnsen

Stavanger

Fiona Mary Nesse, Sandnes
 Muriel Eileen Hansen, Hafrsfjord

Elsewhere

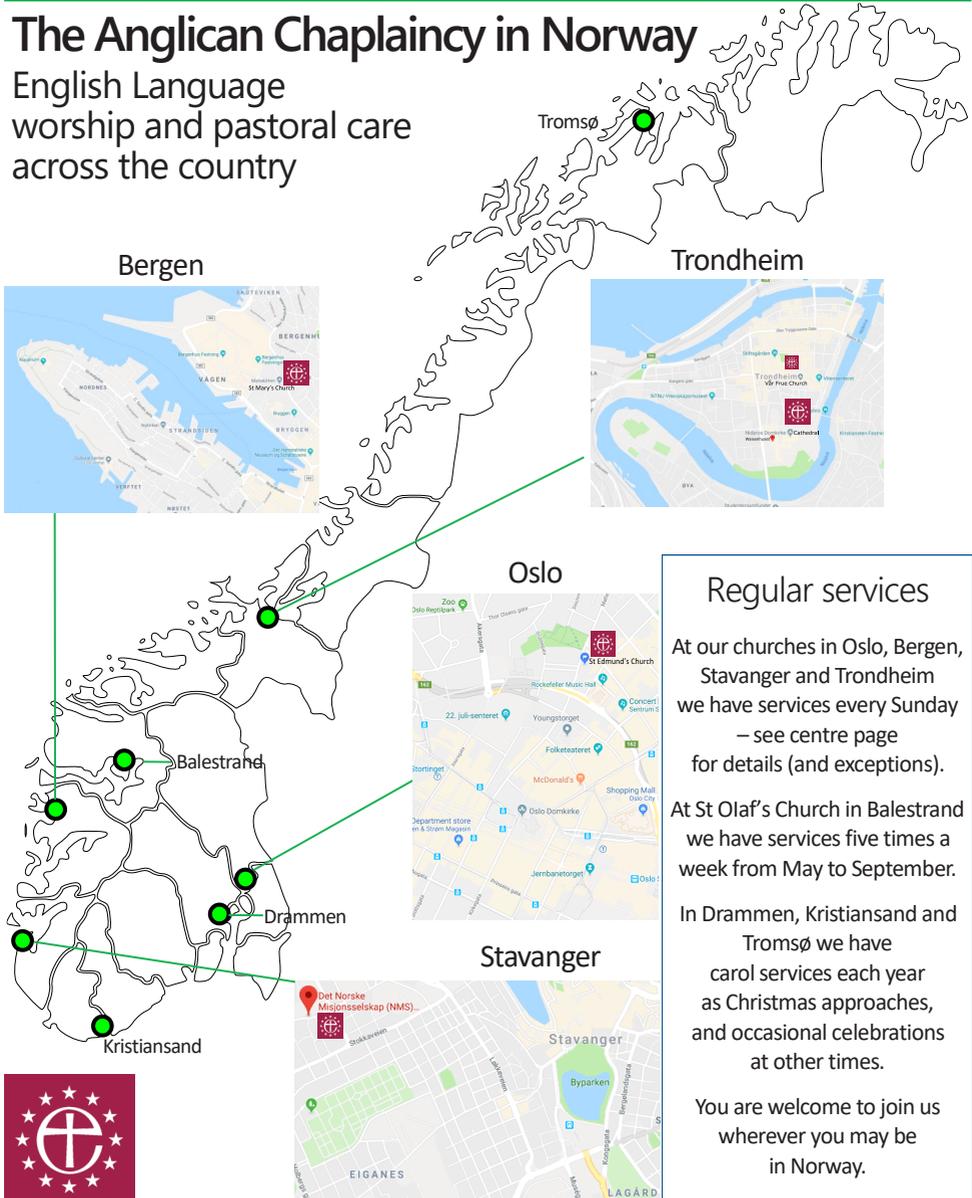
Joseph Ashcroft, Svarstad
 Alec Mawditt, England
 Thelma Murray Nielssen, Åsgårdstrand
 Peter John Wright, Tjodalyng
 Mary N Vinge, Skedsmokorset



Retur: British Embassy,
Postbox 4005 AMB,
0244 Oslo

The Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway

English Language
worship and pastoral care
across the country



Regular services

At our churches in Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim we have services every Sunday – see centre page for details (and exceptions).

At St Olaf's Church in Balestrand we have services five times a week from May to September.

In Drammen, Kristiansand and Tromsø we have carol services each year as Christmas approaches, and occasional celebrations at other times.

You are welcome to join us wherever you may be in Norway.

