

Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life



Adopted by the Church of Norway General Synod



NOROGGA GIRKU
Sáme girkkoráde

CHURCH OF NORWAY
Sami Church Council

Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life in the Church of Norway

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Foreword

The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* has provided the Church of Norway with its first comprehensive plan for Sami church life. The plan was passed by the Church of Norway General Synod in 2011 and takes into account the many spheres of ministry in the Church of Norway. Its vision for Sami church life is:

Dynamic and coequal – Sami church life in the Church of Norway.

A dynamic and coequal Sami church life means participation in the life of the church by individual Sami and the Sami people. If this participation is to be real, the Sami must be able to take part in the church on their own premises and be given space to form their own church life within the Church of Norway. A dynamic and coequal Sami church life thus also concerns the church community as a whole – our ability to be a multicultural fellowship which includes Sami church life as an equal and natural element.

The vision of a dynamic and coequal Sami church life is therefore on the bottom line a question of how the Church of Norway perceives its identity as a church. The Church of Norway cannot be Norway's national church unless it contains a dynamic and coequal Sami church life in its midst.

The Christian church is a universal, multicultural and multiethnic community. The word "Christian" was coined first when the gospel spread from the Judaic-Christian church in Jerusalem to the multicultural city of Antioch (Acts 11:26). Already on the Day of Pentecost, the church became multicultural through the intervention of the Holy Spirit: Visitors to Jerusalem from "every nation under heaven" were amazed and asked one another, "What does this mean?" "In our own languages we hear them speaking about Gods deeds of power" (Acts 2:5-12).

Attitudes to Sami languages and culture and to the Sami people have varied historically both in the church and in Norwegian society. The Church of Norway admits that attitudes have too often been negative. As a result, in 1997 the General Synod acknowledged the participation of the church in norwegianisation policies and expressed its willingness to contribute to the cessation of this injustice (General Synod minutes 13/97).

The adoption of the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* means that the Church of Norway more clearly than ever before recognises that the Sami are an indigenous people in Norway and a natural part of the Church of Norway. The strategic plan concludes with an offensive plan of action for the period 2012-2016.

The basis of the strategic plan is that Sami church life is lived first and foremost at a local level. But local churches need support from all levels of the church in order to create favourable conditions for Sami church life. In this perspective we hope that the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* can be a useful instrument for strengthening and developing Sami church life as a dynamic and coequal element in the Church of Norway.

Oslo, May 2011,

Jens-Petter Johnsen,
Director,
National Council of the Church of Norway

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1. PREFACE

1.1. Vision

The Church of Norway's vision for Sami church life is:

Dynamic and coequal – Sami church life in the Church of Norway.

1.2. Background and structure of the plan

In 2006 the General Synod commissioned a plan for developing Sami church life (KM 7/06). The purpose was to contribute to preserving the South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami languages and the diversity of Sami culture. The resolution urged that the plan should emphasise knowledge of Sami language and culture in the dioceses, recruitment issues, Sami-related topics in education, bible translation, hymns and liturgies, programmes for dialogue and reconciliation, practical organisation of Sami church life and coordination with other reforms within the Church of Norway.

The commission from the General Synod involves a review of the Church of Norway's engagement in Sami church life on a broad front. The present document is therefore a strategic plan for comprehensive measures to support Sami church life in the whole of the Church of Norway.

Sami church life is first and foremost a matter of individual Sami's and the Sami people's participation in the life of the church. Genuine participation depends however on the Sami being given the opportunity to participate with their own distinctive characteristics and with space to develop their own church life. Sami church life concerns therefore not only the Sami themselves, but how the Church of Norway as a whole preserves and provides scope for Sami culture and concerns.

The main purpose of the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* is therefore to contribute to a vigorous Sami church life in the Church of Norway, in which the Sami participate on equal terms in the church, and where Sami church life is regarded as an integral part of the Church of Norway's identity. In order to achieve this, awareness of the presence of the Sami in the church will need to be increased, the principles on which Sami church life is based will need to be examined and deliberate actions will need to be taken to strengthen the conditions for Sami church life. This will involve structures, organisation, appointments and specific measures in the church's various spheres of ministry. This strategic plan will contribute to all of this.

The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* is in six parts.

Chapter 1 explains the background and structure of the plan.

Chapter 2 provides a summary of the plan in South Sami, Lule Sami, North Sami and Norwegian (in the English version only in English).

Chapter 3 provides background information on the Sami people and Sami church life.

Chapter 4 explains the principles for concern for Sami church life in the Church of Norway.

Chapter 5 deals with the church's various spheres of ministry and discusses special challenges which these pose for practical courses of action.

Chapter 6 summarises new appointments and spheres of activity which are to be given priority according to chapter 5, and places these in a five year plan of action.

2. SUMMARY¹

Chapter 1 presents the vision for Sami church life in the Church of Norway and explains the background and structure of the plan.

The Church of Norway's vision for Sami church life is: *Dynamic and coequal – Sami church life in the Church of Norway*. The background for the plan is the General Synod's decision on proposition 7/06, commissioning a plan for developing Sami church life in such a way that the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami languages and the diversity of Sami culture are preserved. The chief purpose of the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* is to contribute to a dynamic Sami church life in the Church of Norway, in which the Sami people participate on an equal footing with others and Sami church life is an integral part of the identity of the Church of Norway. The plan will contribute to improving the conditions for Sami church life in the form of structures, organisation and various measures in the church's various spheres of ministry.

Chapter 2 provides a summary of the plan in South Sami, Lule Sami, North Sami and English.

Chapter 3 provides background information on the Sami people and Sami church life.

To begin with, facts about the Sami people and Sami society are presented (3.1). The Sami are an indigenous people in the Northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. There are an estimated 50 000 - 65 000 Sami in Norway. The past decades have seen a strengthening of Sami rights and institutions. The chapter continues with a brief consideration of what constitutes Sami ethnicity (3.2) and an overview of Sami language areas and language groups in Norway (3.3). South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami are official Sami languages in Norway. All three languages are included in the UNESCO list of endangered languages.

The chapter continues with a summary of church history from the Sami's first contact with Christianity a thousand years ago to today (3.4). After a consideration of the term "Sami church life" (3.5.1) and variations within Sami church life (3.5.2), the main characteristics of Sami church life are described, listed according to the language areas (3.5.3.-3.5.5). A brief account is also given of the church's ministry to Sami in Oslo, Bergen (3.5.6) and across the national boundaries (3.5.7), and of international church work among indigenous peoples (3.5.8). Finally, the importance of more study of Sami theology and interpretations of Christianity is emphasised (3.5.9).

Chapter 4 describes the principles on which measures to strengthen Sami church life in the Church of Norway are based.

The chapter refers first to a number of resolutions in the General Synod which give an impression of the church's basic attitude to Sami church life (4.1). Since the Sami are recognised as an indigenous people in Norway, Sami church life must be regarded as a necessary and coequal part of the life of the Church of Norway. The church admits that its

¹ In the original version of this strategic plan this chapter contains summaries in South Sami, Lule Sami, North Sami and Norwegian language.

participation in norwegianisation has made it necessary to contribute to a cessation of this injustice. There are references to recommendations from the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches on work with indigenous peoples and indigenous peoples' issues (4.2).

The chapter continues with references to the following laws and international regulations that bind the Church of Norway in its treatment of Sami church life: The Constitution of the Kingdom of Norway (§ 110a), The Sami Act (1987), The Human Rights Act (1999), The Church Act (1996), The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ILO Convention no. 169 on indigenous peoples and tribal peoples in independent countries, and the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Church of Norway is committed to regulations in state policies concerning the Sami people contained in Sami Policy – White Paper no. 28, 2007-2008 and the Plan of Action to Strengthen Sami Languages (2010) (4.4).

Inclusion is the basic principle in the policy for minorities that governs the Church of Norway's approach to Sami church life (4.5). The term is explained briefly. There is a reference to the General Synod's "resolution on reconciliation" (KM 13/97) and arguments that reconciliation must be understood as the basic approach to the actions urged in the plan (4.6).

Finally, the chapter contains some theological views that are considered relevant for Sami church life and indigenous peoples' issues in the Church of Norway (4.7). After an ecclesiological account of Sami church life, theological lines of inquiry are indicated by the keywords: created in the image of God, the Incarnation, the Great Commission, mother tongue and diversity of languages, cultural conflicts in the early church, reconciliation, justice and righteousness, and humanity's interdependence with the rest of creation.

Chapter 5 considers the church's various spheres of ministry and discusses special challenges in planning and implementing measures to strengthen for Sami church life.

The local church as a starting point is considered in section 5.1. Statistics for Sami participation in the church are needed, and some ideas on the inclusion of Sami church life in the life of the local church are mentioned. Parish councils and parish staff are urged to take a special responsibility for encouraging Sami church life in worship and other church activities in accordance with the guidelines in the plan.

The need for knowledge of Sami languages and culture is considered in section 5.2. Increased competence in Sami languages and culture is needed, both at a local level and in the church as a whole.

In order to ensure sufficient knowledge of Sami languages and culture, the three most northerly dioceses are urged to provide permanent courses in Sami languages for clergy and other church employees. Courses for Sami interpreters are also urged. A minimum of knowledge of Sami languages and culture is required in all relevant training and should be regarded as an advantage when Christian education workers, catechists and deacons seek employment in Sami language areas. Improved opportunities for alternative recruiting for service as clergy, catechists and deacons should also be considered.

Aims for preserving Sami languages are considered in section 5.3. Two levels for preserving the Sami languages are proposed. The first is a national basic/minimum level which in principle can be achieved everywhere in the Church of Norway. There are specific suggestions as to what this entails in practice in the form of regulations and activities (5.3.1). The other level concerns implementation of the Sami Act's regulations for the administrative district for Sami language (5.3.2). The legal requirements for the church at a local, regional and national level language are specified, and some special issues are raised. The church needs to develop an informed policy for the Sami languages, including guidelines for the use of Sami in worship and religious ceremonies (5.3.3). This is related to regulations that are to be established in connection with the worship reform in the Church of Norway and to guidelines in the plans for Christian education, diakonia and church music.

Responsibility and the need for resources at different levels in the Church of Norway are considered in section 5.4. The following appointments should be made: one Lule Sami language worker (100 %), one South Sami language worker (100 %), two North Sami interpreters (2 x 25 %), one Sami minister for Southern Norway (100 %), one deacon for the Lule Sami area (100 %), one deacon in a parish in the Inner Finnmark rural deanery (100 %).

The responsibility of rural deans in the five rural deaneries with parishes in the administrative district for Sami languages is emphasised (5.4.2). They are expected to fulfil the church's duties under the Sami Act and pay attention to the Sami language ministry. Further, they should make provisions for discussing Sami issues in the rural deanery and its meetings. After one year in office, they should be able to read a minimum number of liturgical texts in Sami.

The bishops of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros have a special responsibility for the supervision of Sami church life (5.4.3). They are expected to learn a minimum of liturgical texts in Sami within a year of taking office. Better coordination of supervision and responsibility is needed. An annual meeting for discussion and coordination is proposed for the three bishops, as well as a joint annual meeting for Sami clergy. The bishop of North Hålogaland is urged to hold an annual meeting for interpreters. The Bishops' Conference is urged to take responsibility for discussing coordination within the area. The meeting for Sami clergy mentioned above should be held within the framework of a national conference for Sami church life, also embracing local church employees and voluntary workers.

On behalf of the whole church, North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros diocesan councils are given responsibility for Sami appointments in the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami languages. They need capacity and competence if they are to have responsibility for ministries related to Sami affairs (5.4.4). In the plan, local and national appointments are given priority over consultant resources for the diocesan councils.

At the national level, the Church Act makes the General Synod responsible for protecting and promoting Sami church life. The Sami Church Council is to promote, protect and coordinate Sami church life in the Church of Norway and contribute to the acknowledgement of Sami church life as an integral and coequal part of the church. The council is responsible for cooperation on Sami church life across national borders and for the Church of Norway's involvement in indigenous peoples' issues, in cooperation with the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations. In the section on the Sami Church Council's responsibilities and need for resources (5.4.5), the council's far-reaching mandate is described, and the appointment of one consultant for young people (100 %) and one for

diakonia/culture/ indigenous peoples (100 %) are recommended, as well as an increase in the operating budget. Relocating the Sami Church Council's secretariat to Tromsø is also recommended, and the reasons and requirements for doing this are described.

Translating the Bible into Sami languages is considered in section 5.5. The status and need for bible translations into North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami are considered. The Bible Society is urged to maintain the progress in completing the Bible in North Sami and to strive to increase resources for the South Sami translation project, with a view to translating all the texts in the new lectionary for the Church of Norway. The Swedish Bible Society is urged to commence translating the Old Testament into Lule Sami in cooperation with the Norwegian Bible Society, initially in connection with the new lectionaries in the Church of Norway and the Church of Sweden. The Swedish Bible Society is also urged to make Lule Sami bible passages available on the internet. Church workers are urged to contribute to the use of Sami bible texts in schools and churches.

Hymns and liturgy (related to the present worship reform in the Church of Norway) are considered in section 5.6. The status for hymns and liturgies in the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami languages is reviewed (5.6.1). While there are two hymn books in North Sami and one in Lule Sami, there is no hymn book and only a few hymns in South Sami. In the case of North Sami, a tune book for *Sálbmagirji* I-II is required. Hymns and spiritual songs that already exist in Lule Sami should be collected, and new ones should be translated and written, especially for children and young people. The on-going work of developing hymns in South Sami should continue. A new booklet with hymns in the Sami languages should be prepared for the Sami Church Days in 2013. It is expected that plans to include hymns in the three Sami languages in the new hymn book for the Church of Norway will be followed up.

The present status and future challenges and requirements in composing liturgies in the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami languages are explained (6.5.2). A strengthening of the Sami Church Council's secretariat must be seen in light of the need for following up work on liturgy in no fewer than three languages. The Sami Church Council has chosen to complete the translations of the 1977 liturgies, since these will be included as optional alternatives when the worship reform is implemented. It is expected that the authorised North Sami liturgies will be published in 2011 and that the Lule Sami liturgies will be completed and submitted for authorisation and publication in 2011. The South Sami liturgy project will be completed with a view to authorisation in 2012 and publication in 2013.

The basic principles of the worship reform, *indigenisation, involvement and flexibility*, open the way for continuous creative work on liturgy, also in a Sami context. The preparation of Sami liturgies should be encouraged within the framework of the worship reform, Sami liturgical material should be made available in the worship reform data base, the development of Sami cultural forms in church art and church music should be given priority and the Liturgical Center, Church of Norway, should play a part in following up work on Sami liturgies.

Christian education is considered in section 5.7. The section begins with an overview of appointments and publications concerning Sami Christian education. Projects and activities related to the Sami within the framework of the Christian education reform in the Church of Norway are described. The annual conference for Sami Christian education should be continued and efforts should be made to continue the course on *Faith and philosophy in*

Sápmi. The web site for Sami Christian education (www.osko.no) should also be maintained and developed. A church book to be distributed to four-year-olds should be produced in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami, adapted to Sami church life.

The *Plan for Sami Christian Education* shall ensure that Sami children and young people receive Christian education in which the contents and context are adapted to their Sami identity, within the framework of the plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway, *God gives – we share* (2010). Efforts are required to ensure that parishes and dioceses implement the Sami perspective in *God gives – we share* and *Plan for Sami Christian Education*. Web-based resources related to *Plan for Sami Christian Education* should be produced and made available on www.osko.no. An annual camp for Sami confirmation candidates should be established in order to ensure a minimum provision for Sami confirmees throughout the country.

Youth work is considered in section 5.8. The need to improve Sami youth work in the Church of Norway is emphasised, since such youth work hardly exists today. Important aims are to strengthen identity, language and Christian fellowship among Sami young people, develop their participation in and responsibility for Sami church life and create more space for young people's cultural expressions within Sami church life.

Camps and other gatherings for Sami young people should be established and coordinated at a national church level, a Sami youth committee for the Church of Norway should also be established at national level, in order to support local and regional Sami youth work. A Sami youth consultant should be appointed on a permanent basis, with responsibility for national Sami youth work. The three most northerly dioceses are urged to focus on Sami youth work, and parishes in the administrative district for Sami languages, the Sami congregation in the South Sami area and Inner Finnmark rural deanery are urged to pay special attention to Sami youth work. The possibility of establishing a Sami youth team is discussed, but not recommended within the time scope of the plan.

Diakonia is considered in section 5.9. Appointments and earlier work on Sami diakonia are described. Relevant problems for Sami diakonia are related to the aims of the *Plan for Diakonia* (2008). Increased attention should be focused on Sami diakonia in years to come, and more resources should be allocated. A new appointment providing resources should be made under the Sami Church Council and two new deacons appointed at a local level. A conference on Sami diakonia should be held and further work done on the *Plan for Diakonia* within Sami church life.

Reconciliation and dialogue are considered in section 5.10. The General Synod resolution in the so-called "reconciliation case" (KM 13/97) is mentioned. The reconciliation project in North Salten (2005-2007) has been the most concrete result of the resolution and has provided valuable experience. Ways should be found to preserve this experience and extend the process started by the project. Many important questions regarding Sami rights in Norway are still not settled, and it is natural that the Church of Norway should recognise its responsibility and pay attention to these. This requires background knowledge and awareness of the church's responsibility and role in such issues.

Church and culture is considered in section 5.11. The report on culture, *The Art of Being Church*, 2005, is the basis of cultural activity in the Church of Norway, along with the *Plan for Church Music* (2008). The report on culture contains a comprehensive section on work

with Sami culture, and the Plan for Church Music has a section of a chapter on church music from a Sami point of view. Resources should be made available for work with Sami culture, with a special emphasis on church art / church textiles and Sami church music. The Sami Church Council should be granted financial and human resources in this sphere. The consultants on culture in North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros dioceses and the National Council's consultant should be given definite commitments concerning cultural work related to Sami church life.

Recruitment is considered in section 5.12. Vacancies and the situation for recruitment in Inner Finnmark during the past decade are described. Vacancies for clergy have been between 20 and 60 per cent throughout the period, and during the past four years the average has been a little over 50 %. The workforce situation here reveals a problem for Sami church life that affects the church as a whole. Special efforts at recruitment and language teaching are needed. Funds should be made available to stimulate recruitment. Information should be gathered through research in order to provide a basis for recruitment campaigns. A number of recruitment strategies and stimulus packages are outlined, and the establishment of a project to work on this is proposed.

The development of professional competence in the church is considered in section 5.13. The Sami people have the right to have their culture, tradition and history reflected in the educational system. A three-year project to increase competence should work out a national minimum standard for subjects affecting the Sami in professional studies related to the church. The project should also include a programme for increasing competence in teaching subjects related to the Sami at national church educational institutions. A Sami church history project should be initiated with a view to writing a Sami church history. In addition, a three-year project in the sphere of Sami theology and studies of Christianity is proposed. In the longer term, a Sami church pedagogical centre is proposed, in order to spread competence to the parishes, for example in connection with the Church Educational Centre in the North (KUN).

Sami church life across national borders is considered in section 5.14. Throughout Sápmi there is a long tradition of church gatherings across the borders, both locally and regionally. Sami Church Days have been established in recent years as an ecumenical gathering for all Sami in Sápmi and were arranged for the second time in 2009. The next Sami Church Days will be arranged in 2013 in the South Sami area of Norway. It is proposed that the event is implemented as a two year project. Annual consultative meetings are needed following an agreement between the national Sami church bodies in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Project funding should be granted to strengthen Sami church life across the borders both locally and regionally. The Cooperation Council of the Christian Churches in the Barents Region (SKKB) is urged to continue its work for indigenous peoples in the Barents region, with special emphasis on the Sami.

Indigenous peoples' issues are considered in section 5.15. Support for the rights of indigenous peoples, nationally and internationally, is part of the Church of Norway's engagement for indigenous peoples. Participation in international church programmes for indigenous peoples has given important impulses to Sami church life. The practice of ensuring Sami representation in the Church of Norway's delegations to important international/ecumenical events should be continued. Part of the Church of Norway's annual economic support for the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation should be earmarked for these organisations' work with indigenous peoples.

In the sphere of international diakonia and mission (aid), the Sami Church Council should extend its cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid, for example by following up projects for indigenous peoples in Southern Africa and Northern Russia. Joint action should be considered for profiling indigenous peoples in Norwegian Church Aid's PR material internally in the Church of Norway, for example in connection with the lent fund-raising campaign. Norwegian Church Aid is urged to maintain a clear focus on indigenous peoples in the future.

The state/church reform is considered in section 5.16 based on the so-called state/church agreement in the Norwegian parliament in 2008 and the process of changing the relationship between the state and the Church of Norway. In considering Sami church life in relation to the state, it is necessary to distinguish between "state-church-relationships" and "state-Sami people-relationships".

The General Synod's guidelines (KM 8/07) regarding protection of Sami church life in the drafting of new church laws should be followed up (5.16.1). The state's fundamental responsibility for supporting Sami church life will continue, also after the relationship between state and church are changed (5.16.2). This is maintained through combining a policy of active support for the Sami people and a policy of active support for religious and life stance organisations. The church-related aspects of the Sami Act language regulations should be examined with a view to the use of Sami languages in church activities. The directives in the Sami Act language regulations should be continued when relations between church and state are changed (5.16.3).

Sami democracy in the church (the democracy reform) is considered in section 5.17. At the suggestion of the Sami Church Council, the General Synod 2008 urged the appointment of a committee to suggest new rules for the election of representatives for Sami church life to diocesan councils and the General Synod by 2011 (KM 11/08). The section contains reflections on the basis for Sami democracy within the Church of Norway and describes the work of the committee and the subsequent discussion in the synod. Because of doubts about compiling ethnic-based electoral rolls, the Sami Church Council has requested that the establishment of a Sami general synod should be considered, with some roles connected to the election of Sami representatives (SKR² 30/10).

Expectations to employees' and employers' organisations are considered in section 5.18. Organisations for employees and employers within the Church of Norway are urged to ensure competence in Sami affairs in their operations and services.

Cooperation with Laestadian congregations and Christian organisations is considered in section 5.19. In addition to a general call to cooperate with relevant Christian organisations in furthering Sami church life, Laestadian congregations, the Norwegian Mission to the Sami people and the Norwegian Sunday School Union are specially mentioned.

Chapter 6 summarises new appointments and measures from chapter 5 and places these in a time schedule in a five year plan of action (2012-2016). The plan of action only mentions appointments and measures that entail new requirements. Reasons are given for priorities and the synchronisation of individual appointments and spheres of activity.

² SKR = minutes of the Sami Church Council

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. Sápmi, the Sami people and Sami society

The Sami are an indigenous people in the Northern areas of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula in Russia. The traditional Sami region is called Sápmi (see the map below). The Southern boundary of the Sami area of Norway is Elgå in Hedmark.

No official registration is made of those who are Sami or have a Sami identity or background. The draft of the Nordic Sami Convention (2005) estimates that the Sami population numbers approx. 80 000 – 100 000, of which approx. 50 000 – 65 000 live in Norway.

Even though there is cultural and linguistic diversity among the Sami people, they regard themselves as one people across the national boundaries. The collective Sami identity is related to a common history and culture, shared Sami symbols, the relationship to nature, *yoik* (traditional Sami chant/song), Sami music etc. It is also related to their situation as an indigenous people, a situation that they share with other indigenous peoples (“Indigenous peoples”, see the text box).

What does “indigenous peoples” mean?

”Indigenous peoples” is an established term in international law (see ILO Convention 169 paragraph 1). The term presupposes the following characteristics: (1) The people must have “inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present state boundaries”. (2) They must have retained “some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions”. It is implicitly assumed that they have become a minority, numerically or politically, in the country. It is generally accepted that the Sami people fall within the definition of the term “indigenous people” in international law, a fact that Norwegian authorities have repeatedly affirmed in recent years.

The Sami’s legal status has improved considerably during the past decades, partly because of the Sami Act 1987 and later additions, the Norwegian Constitution § 110a (1988) and the Finnmark Act (2004). A series of official reports from the 1980s onwards have prepared the way for a new perception of the Sami’s political and cultural rights as an indigenous people – including the right to land and water, which are often described as the natural basis of Sami culture.

In the development of the modern Sami community, the focus has been on developing Sami languages and culture on the Sami’s own terms. In 1989 the Sami Parliament (*Sametinget*) was founded as the Norwegian Sami’s national elected body. Sami kindergartens and schools play an important part in strengthening Sami identity, and the improved status of Sami languages and culture has increased individuals’ awareness of their Sami origin. The establishment of Sami institutions has for the most part been limited to the North Sami area in Inner Finnmark, but a number of these have branches in other language areas. In addition, some institutions have been established in the Lule Sami and South Sami areas.

In contemporary Sami policy, Norwegian authorities have emphasised that the Sami’s right to develop their own language, culture and community life is not a private but a public responsibility and should be incorporated in planning and law-making and considered in all services rendered by public bodies (Sami Policy – White Paper no. 28 (2007-2008)).

3.2. Sami ethnicity. Who is a Sami?

Ethnicity can be defined as a collective identity connected to a cultural community based on an assumed common origin. The formation of an individual's ethnic identity occurs through the interaction between the person's own conception of him/herself and other people's conception of him/her.

While it is relatively easy to speak of the Sami people as an entity, it can be more complicated to answer the question, who is a Sami, at the individual level. One reason is that the assimilation process that the Sami have been exposed to has made individuals unwilling to acknowledge their ethnic identity.

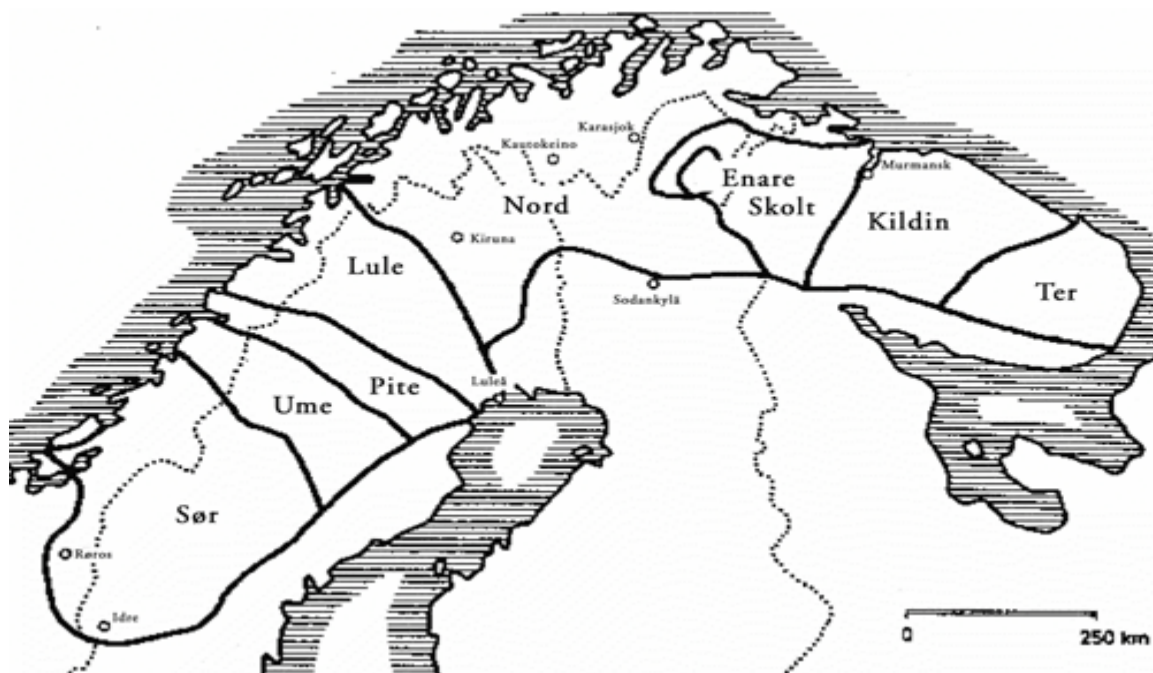
There is no clear definition of who is a Sami, but the Sami Act lays down criteria for being registered in the electoral roll for the Sami parliament. Registration is based on both a subjective and an objective criterion. You must be able to affirm that you (1) regard yourself as a Sami and (2) that you yourself or at least one of your parents, grandparents or great grandparents have spoken Sami at home (the language spoken in the home is regarded as a relatively clear indication that a person is of Sami lineage), alternatively that one of your parents, grandparents or great grandparents is registered in the electoral roll. The conditions for being registered as a Sami are thus located at the intersection of kinship and self-perception.

3.3. Sami languages and language communities in Norway

It is not necessary to speak a Sami language in order to be considered a Sami, nor is it necessary for a local community to speak a Sami language in order to further Sami culture and traditions. Even so, the Sami languages are an essential foundation for Sami culture and identity and it is common to regard a person as belonging culturally to a Sami language group, even though he or she does not speak the language concerned.

The Sami languages belong to the Finnish-Ugrian family, and the boundaries between them do not coincide with the boundaries of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia (see the map below). There are ten Sami languages, and all of them are on the UNESCO list of endangered languages. (Akkala Sami, which was spoken in parts of the Kildin Sami area of the Kola Peninsula, is regarded as extinct.) North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami are the official Sami languages in Norway. Skolt Sami is regarded as extinct in Norway (a few hundred speak it in Finland), Pite Sami has altogether about 20 users in Sweden and Norway. Within all the Sami language groups, a number of people have ceased to speak their Sami language without necessarily losing their Sami identity or cultural adherence.

In Norway, an *administrative district for Sami language* has been established. This is restricted to nine municipalities in the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami areas. The most comprehensive Sami policy measures apply in this district. The traditional areas for Sami settlement or languages are considerably larger than the administrative district for Sami language and consist of 40 % of the Norwegian mainland. Today, many Sami live outside the traditional areas of Sami settlement.



The map is from <http://www.regjeringen.no>

The South Sami: The South Sami area extends from the Norwegian side of the Saltfjellet mountain in Nordland county to Engerdal in Hedmark county and in adjacent areas of Sweden. The South Sami have a long tradition of contact and even close family relations across the border. Important characteristics of South Sami identity are reindeer husbandry and *duetjie* (home industry/handicraft). These two ways of livelihood are the two most important elements for preserving the language and culture. Altogether around five hundred persons in Norway and Sweden speak South Sami, and it is regarded by UNESCO as a severely endangered language. Since 2008, *Snåsaen tjielte* / Snåsa municipality has been included in the administrative district for Sami language.

The Lule Sami: The Lule Sami area in Norway consists Northern Salten in Nordland county and especially *Divtasvuona suohkan* / Tysfjord municipality. The Sami in Northern Salten have combined smallholdings, forestry, reindeer husbandry, fishing and hunting. Traditionally, they have had considerable contact over the border. It is estimated that there are around 2-3000 Lule Sami on the Norwegian side of the border, of whom around four hundred speak the language. An estimated total of around two thousand speak Lule Sami in Norway and Sweden. As with South Sami, Lule Sami is regarded by UNESCO as a severely endangered language. *Divtasvuona suohkan* / Tysfjord municipality has been included in the administrative district for Sami language since 2006.

The North Sami: The North Sami area of Norway extends from Ballangen in Nordland county to Kirkenes in Finnmark county. The North Sami are the largest Sami community, inhabiting the northern parts of Sweden, Finland and Norway. The language is spoken by around thirty thousand people, of whom more than half live in Norway. Whereas South Sami and Lule Sami are regarded by UNESCO as “severely endangered languages”, North Sami is regarded as “definitely endangered”. In some areas – especially in Inner Finnmark – Sami language and culture is conspicuous, in others it has disappeared from the public arena as a result of the norwegianisation policy. Since 1991, the municipalities of *Gáivuotna/Kåfjord*, *Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino*, *Kárásjohka/Karasjok*, *Porsáŋgu/Porsanger*, *Deatnu/Tana* og

Unjárga/Nesseby have been included in the administrative district for Sami language and on 1st October 2009 *Loabát/Lavangen* municipality in South Troms was also included.

The North Sami area contains a considerable diversity of cultures and dialects. Whereas the dialects are first and foremost geographically defined, the cultural variations can be linked to the demands of various occupations (in some cases also within a local community). Coastal Sami, reindeer Sami, forest Sami (*markasamer*) and river Sami traditions are examples of this. At one time a continuous coastal Sami dialect area existed in the coastal districts of Troms and Finnmark counties. A large proportion of the North Sami population belongs to the coastal Sami culture. However, it was along the coast that the norwegianisation process was most intense, and the coastal Sami dialect is only preserved in a few places. Inland Sami culture is mostly connected to reindeer husbandry and a sedentary Sami culture (a combination of smallholdings and gathering from outfields and forests). The forest Sami (*markasamisk*) culture in Southern Troms and Northern Nordland are variations of the latter. In the forest Sami (*markasamisk*) area, *Jukkasjärvi* Sami is spoken, a North Sami dialect which differs considerably from the dialects further north. Within the so-called “Finnmark Sami” language, there is a clear division between the eastern dialect (from Karasjok and eastward) and the western dialect (from Kautokeino and westward).

The Pite Sami: The Pite Sami area in Norway is in Nordland county, in the municipalities Beiarn, Saltdal, Meløy og Gildeskål and in parts of Bodø and Fauske. According to UNESCO, Pite Sami is spoken by around twenty persons in Sweden and Norway and is regarded as a critically endangered language. In recent years some individuals have attempted to revitalize Pite Sami traditions, and courses in the language and culture have been held in cooperation with Pite Sami in Sweden.

The Skolt Sami: The Skolt Sami area in Norway is connected with Neiden in South Varanger municipality. According to UNESCO, Skolt Sami is spoken by around three hundred persons in Finland, has almost disappeared in Russia and is defined as extinct in Norway. Since the 1500s, Skolt Sami have belonged to the Russian Orthodox faith, and Orthodox Christianity is an important part of the Skolt Sami identity. In the 1500s a chapel under the monastery in Petsjenga was built in Neiden. The chapel is still in use and is served today by Holy Nikolai Orthodox Church Norway. In 2009 an Eastern Sami museum is to be established in Neiden and will be important for developing the language and culture.

3.4. An outline of Sami church history

The Sami people’s contact with Christianity goes back a long way and it is a moot point when the Sami were converted to Christianity. Archaeological finds show that there was contact with Christianity in some areas more than a thousand years ago. While several medieval sources refer to the Sami as Christian, no post-reformation sources do so. There are thus grounds for asserting that Catholic tradition – and Orthodox tradition in the north east – have influenced Sami religion over a long time span.

In the 16th and 17th centuries the building of churches and establishment of a national church institution among the Sami was part of the different countries’ colonising of the Sami areas. The most intense missionary period in Norway was in the 1720s, with Thomas von Westen as the driving force. His mission emphasised the use of the Sami languages and education and schools for the Sami. Another characteristic of this period was the demonising and

persecution of Sami religious concepts and practice. Sami cultic drums were confiscated and Sami holy places desecrated. After von Westen's era, the church's official attitude to Sami languages has varied in time with contemporary ideological trends.

In the latter half of the 19th century the policy of norwegianisation developed as a deliberate state policy towards the Sami and Kven peoples in Norway. This continued until the 1960s. As the state's religious body, The Church of Norway collaborated to a large extent in norwegianisation. In some parishes in the North Sami area, North Sami was retained as the liturgical language (see the text box on the royal decree of 1848). The church was thus the most important public arena for Sami languages during the norwegianisation period. For most of the 20th century, Sami church life was given little priority in the church of Norway and was regarded as a regional matter for the bishop of North Hålogaland.

The one single factor that probably has meant most for Sami church life is the Læstadian movement. The Læstadian revival began in Karesuando in Sweden in 1845 under the Swedish Sami minister Lars Levi Læstadius (1800-1861). It was a rebellion against "dead faith" among the clergy and drunkenness in the population as a whole. The revival spread to Norway through the reindeer Sami, who crossed the border when travelling between their summer and winter pastures, and was soon spread throughout the Cap of the North (*Nordkalotten*). The Læstadian movement became a spiritual home for the majority of the North and Lule Sami populations. The movement used Finnish and the Kven and Sami languages and thus preserved Kven and Sami culture throughout the norwegianisation period. On the whole, Læstadianism accepted the church's administration of the sacraments but criticised its preaching. Preaching and spiritual life has for the most part been catered for in Læstadian congregations. In parishes where the institutional church actively opposed Læstadianism and all things Sami, there are examples of the Læstadian congregation more or less functioning as a local "Sami folk church". In Norway, Tysfjord may be the best example of this. The Læstadian movement, which is today divided into a number of branches, is still a powerful factor in the identity of North Sami and Lule Sami church life (see the text box on Læstadian groups).

The royal decree of 24th February 1848 with later amendments and a related document from 1872 secured the use of Sami languages in worship and religious ceremonies. The 1848 decree ruled that clergy appointed to a number of parishes in North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros dioceses must be proficient in Sami languages (the original area stretched south to Grong). From 1859 this requirement was limited to Finnmark and the parish of Lyngen in Tromsø rural deanery, with the result that the Lule Sami and South Sami areas were no longer included. For many years the decree gave newly appointed clergy leave of absence with pay in order to learn Sami. At the end of the 1980s, the scheme covered six parishes in Finnmark. It has never been repealed. In a letter of 10th March 2009, the Ministry of Church Affairs stated that it is up to the Church of Norway's own bodies to determine how the scheme is to be practised.

The Læstadian movement did not affect the South Sami area. Here, Baptists, Pentecostals and Adventists have had some influence, but most South Sami belong to the Church of Norway. The Norwegian Sami Mission arranged camps, outreach and a school until the state took over. It was not until the 1990s that the Church of Norway focussed especially on the South Sami population.

The Norwegian Sami Mission was founded in 1888 as a counterbalance when the official church supported norwegianisation. The main activity was evangelisation among the Sami, and in 1895 the mission contributed to the publication of the Bible in North Sami. In addition

to evangelism, the society ran health institutions in several places in Northern Norway for many decades. The Sami junior high school (later folk high school) in *Kárášjohka*/Karasjok (1936-86, 1992-2000) was for a long time the only school where Sami young people could learn about Sami languages and culture. The school was an important partner for the Sami Church Council in the 1990s. Attitudes to and the relationship with Læstadianism have been a subject of debate in the Mission, and the relationship between the two vary from place to place. In Inner Finnmark, the relationship seems to be one of cooperation and mutual confidence, whereas the Læstadians in North Troms and Tysfjord seem to have less confidence in the Mission. In the 1970s and 1980s, the political and cultural awakening which occurred especially among young Sami posed a challenge to the Mission, which became controversial in parts of the Sami community. Parallel with this, the Mission's evangelism was appreciated in some circles, not least among older Sami in Inner Finnmark. Today, evangelism, diakonia and social work among Sami in the Kola Peninsula (1995-) and the bilingual Christian local radio station Radio DSF in *Kárášjohka*/Karasjok (1990-) are the Mission's most important evangelical activities. Since 2001 the Mission has also employed a South Sami diaconal worker.

The conflict over the damming of the Alta-Kautokeino water system (1979 and 1981) led to Sami rights becoming a matter of public interest in Norway. The issue was the basis for reports and actions that led to a change in the status of the Sami languages, culture and communities in Norwegian society. As a natural consequence of this, Sami church life was relatively quickly placed on the agenda of the General Synod when the synod was established in 1984.

In 1986 the General Synod appointed "a committee to consider practical and principle questions concerning the work of the Church of Norway in the Sami population". A working party formulated a draft of a plan of action for Sami church life which was presented to the synod in 1990 (*Sami church life in the Church of Norway: Draft of a plan of action. By a working party appointed by the National Council*).

The debate on the proposal (*KM³ 15/90 Plan of action for Sami church life*) represents a watershed in the Church of Norway's attitude to Sami church life. At the time, Sami church life had for many years been regarded as a regional matter for North Hålogaland diocese, associated only with the North Sami language. With the decision in KM 15/90, new principles were established.

The equal status of Sami church life, the Church of Norway's special responsibility for the issue and the goal of giving the Sami the right to decide on their own church life were established. In addition, Sami church life was now defined in relation to the three official Sami languages in Norway – North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami – and not just to North Sami. KM 15/90 contributed also to Sami church life being organised as part of the church as a whole. A central body for Sami church life was to be established (the Sami Church Council was finally appointed by the General Synod in 1992). The three most northerly dioceses were urged to take on responsibility for the whole of the church's ministry in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami, and to appoint diocesan Sami committees. This paved the way for the organisation of Sami church life that exists in the Church of Norway today.

³ KM = minutes of the General Synod (*Kirkemøtet*)

Branches of Læstadianism in Norway

The three main Læstadian groups in Norway are the Firstborn branch, the Alta branch and the Lyngen branch. They all emphasise that faith comes of hearing the Word of God proclaimed by word of mouth. Proclamation of the law awakens the conscience and the gospel imparts boldness to accept the forgiveness of sins and grace in Christ. They emphasise consensus in their leadership. They do not have registered members, and most of those who take part in their meetings are members of the Church of Norway. Even so, their congregations are critical to some of the teaching of the Church of Norway.

The Firstborn Branch: The "Firstborn" originate in Læstadian circles in Northern Sweden. They were originally nomadic Sami from the area of Jukkasjärvi who brought Læstadianism with them when they moved to their summer pastures in South Troms and Ofoten at the end of the 1850s. Responsibility for leading the revival rests on one congregation. The different congregations are in practice linked to a community led by the congregations in Northern Sweden. This community is regarded as "the mother congregation".

In Norway, the Firstborn are strongest in Ofoten, the area around Narvik and Lofoten, as well as around Tysfjord. The community in Ofoten and Lofoten has a leadership role for the congregations in Norway. Congregations have also been established in Finnmark, Tromsø, Bodø, Mo, Malm (North Trøndelag), Trondheim, Bergen, Porsgrunn and Oslo. Preachers are sent out twice a year to these localities, and in some cases also to other places in Norway. Outside Norway, there are Firstborn congregations in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Germany, England, Holland, Belgium, Russia, USA and Canada. In North America, the Firstborn are organised in an independent denomination, The Old Apostolic Lutheran Church.

In their meetings, Lars Levi Læstadius' sermons are read. Landstad's revised hymn book is used without instrumental accompaniment. Preaching emphasises apostolic-Lutheran doctrine. "Rørelsen", a kind of extatical behaviour, is regarded as a sign of grace. The hearers are exhorted to reject a life of sin, while grace in Jesus Christ is emphasised.

The branch teaches that children are God's children also before they are baptised. Baptism is regarded as God's first calling and indicates that the child is a member of the Body of Christ. Recent developments in the Church of Norway have led to baptism, the Eucharist and confirmation being administered in the Læstadian congregations. Christian education is carried out at a "weekday school" for children and in confirmation classes.

The Alta branch: An independent sub-group has been established with its main Norwegian congregation in Alta. While some sources date its origin to the 1930s, other important sources in the Alta congregations trace their origins to the late 19th century. There are congregations in Tornedalen in Sweden and in Finland. Preachers are sent out to South Troms and Eastern Finnmark. There is a large gathering every summer in Elvebakken church in Alta. Women participate in the planning.

Researchers call this sub-group "the Small Firstborn". Their organisation as an independent group is partly the result of conflict over the organising of Læstadian congregations in America. The Alta branch belongs to the Eastern Læstadian branch of Læstadianism. Petter Posti (d. 1918) was the first leader. The Alta branch publishes its own magazine, *Sions blad*, and has its own hymn book, *Aandelig Sangbok*. The Alta branch shares the same theology as the Firstborn, but rejects the localising of leadership and its authority. They maintain that every congregation is independent, but can participate in the other congregations' meetings. The Alta branch rejects the Lyngen branch's theology of baptism.

The Lyngen branch: Around the year 1900, the preacher Erik Johnsen from Lyngen was involved in a dispute with the Firstborn's preachers who were under Swedish leadership. The Lyngen branch places less emphasis on the Læstadian doctrinal tradition and instead emphasises its basis in Lutheran theology. Its name has therefore been "The Lutheran-Læstadian Congregation" and the Lutheran confessional documents have been important for it. The Lyngen branch is entirely Norwegian, with local leadership. It is located mainly in the coastal Sami districts in Lyngen, North Troms and westward to Tromsø. Preachers are sent out among other places to Kautokeino and Vadsø. Their special characteristic is their teaching on the relationship between baptism and salvation. Luther's works are more important than those of Læstadius. The *Book of Concord* is of special significance as a doctrinal source for the Lyngen branch. The book contains the most important doctrinal documents from the time of the Reformation. Congregations use Landstad's old (unrevised) hymn book. They have also published a hymn book of their own, *Vekter-ropet*, containing spiritual songs written by Northern Norwegian, Finnish and Swedish Læstadians. There is also a collection of sermons by leaders who through the years have had a special status in the Lyngen branch. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Lyngen branch was split into a "conservative" and a "liberal" wing. These hold separate meetings today. The schism is due to views on the account of Creation, divorce and re-marriage and authority and leadership. The "liberal" wing has its own children's and youth work in the Tromsø area.

Source: Kristiansen, Roald: <http://www.love.is/roald/lestad01.htm> Læstadianismen: fremvekst og utbredelse.

3.5. Sami church life in the Church of Norway

3.5.1. What is Sami church life?

Sami church life in the Church of Norway is primarily expressed through the participation of Sami in congregational life locally and in Christian education in the home. It is also expressed when Sami meet for Christian fellowship across parish, diocesan and national borders.

Sami church life presupposes the presence of a Sami collective dimension within the church. This does not mean that Sami church life is only expressed where the Sami are in the majority. It makes for instance sense to say that Sami church life is present when Sami language is spoken in the baptism ritual of a Sami child, in an otherwise ethnic Norwegian congregation. This is evident because it demonstrates the wish of this family to participate in the church from the starting point of their collective identity as Sami.

In other words, Sami church life is not expressed in isolation from the life of the rest of the church, but is found where Sami participate in the universal church of God with their own response to the gospel.

Sami's "own response to the gospel" represents the cultural and indigenous aspect of Sami church life. This is a matter of language, particular church traditions etc. Even though the gospel is the same for all people, Christianity will always be influenced by the fact that people's response to the gospel varies from place to place and from time to time. No-one should be forced to respond to the gospel with someone else's voice, and the Sami must respond with theirs. Not always, but sometimes, that response will have a distinctive character. Lutheran ecclesiology makes room for this cultural dimension: "Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike" (AC VII). Understood as a Sami *response* to the gospel, it is possible to speak of "Sami interpretations of Christianity" and "Sami theology" (see 3.5.9).

There are inner variations in Sami church life that make it difficult to describe it in a way that does justice to all areas and traditions. What follows describes characteristics that are relatively widespread.

Throughout the Sami region, godparents play an important role. It is important that a child has many godparents. Whereas baptism in the congregation is usual in the Lule Sami area, the tradition of baptism at home is strong in the North Sami area. In addition to emphasising the importance of baptism early in the child's life, this also acknowledges that the home is a place for worship. The affirmation of the baptism in the Sunday service of the local congregation is an important part of the tradition of home baptisms. In many places, the Sami national costume, *kofta*, is widely used in church, and in many Sami areas the custom of wearing white robes at confirmation has never been introduced. In many places there are special traditions connected with weddings. There is also a long tradition of prayers for peace in troubled dwellings. The Lord's Prayer is important in Sami tradition, and to perform tasks "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit / in Jesu name" is a custom connecting prayer to different aspects of daily life.

3.5.2. Variations and tension in Sami church life

As in the whole of the Church of Norway and the rest of Norwegian society, Sami church life contains variations and areas of potential conflict. It is relevant to point out some of these with respect to the recommendations and expectations outlined in this plan.

Læstadianism's critical attitude to the preaching and teaching of the church has already been mentioned. During the past two decades, considerable tension has arisen in its relationship to the Church of Norway because of the debate on homosexuality. This applies also to the leadership of the Mission to the Sami People. Among Læstadians in North Hålogaland, freedom to use the old liturgy of 1920 has been important, and still is. Wounds still remain unhealed after the conflict over the introduction of the 1977 liturgy, and the present reform of worship in the Church of Norway raises this question anew.

Friction over changes in the Church of Norway are however not always a question of theological conservatism, but of the pace of change in two different cultures and the felt need for change. Generally speaking, the pace of change and the felt need for change seem to be faster and stronger in the majority Norwegian society than in the Sami community. This can explain why it is difficult to keep in step when changes are introduced.

There are strong ties to Læstadianism in many North Sami and Lule Sami areas, also among young people. But the picture is not unambiguous. People have different attitudes to the Læstadian tradition within Sami communities and from area to area. Some will feel a cultural connection with Læstadianism without identifying themselves with Læstadian congregations. In some areas, Læstadianism will have created a frame of reference for Christian faith, although the life of the church there is no longer explicitly Læstadian.

The South Sami do not belong in the Læstadian tradition, a fact that creates a gap between church traditions in South Sami and North/Lule Sami areas. This is probably an important reason why there is more room and a greater willingness to take up traditional Sami symbols and forms of culture in the South Sami area than further north. While the traditional Sami chant *yoik* is regarded as sinful or worldly in Læstadian circles, South Sami traditions are more favourable to its use. In recent years there have been experiments with the use of *yoik* in worship and liturgies. This is an issue of considerable internal tension within Sami church circles and is a question of how the relationship between faith and culture is perceived. Among the North Sami there are also those who sympathise with this approach. This shows how difficult it is to present a description of Sami church life that all Sami approve of and identify with. In some cases, one group's definition of "Sami church life" will cause another group to feel themselves excluded.

The situation in which one Sami population speaks a Sami language while another does not, is also a challenge for the Sami community. Sami who do not speak a Sami language – and who may come from areas subjected to intense norwegianisation – can feel that they are not fully acknowledged as Sami by society as a whole and internally in the Sami community. Sami who speak a Sami language and live in an area with a Sami majority can on the other hand feel that others do not appreciate how vulnerable they feel their language and culture to be. The intention of this plan is to safeguard the interests of both groups and not to play them off against each other.

In a number of areas there will be ethnic tension in local communities over Sami issues. This can for example involve resistance to the introduction of Sami language in church contexts. This is often clearest in areas that are adjacent to but not a part of the central Sami areas. And it concerns areas that have been exposed to intense norwegianisation. In these areas it is necessary to find effective strategies for including Sami church life in the life of the church as a whole.

3.5.3. North Sami church life

The whole of North Hålogaland diocese and the northernmost parts of South Hålogaland diocese are part of the North Sami settlement area, and Sami church life is thus a relevant issue for local churches in the whole of this area.

Several parishes in North Hålogaland have a more or less unbroken tradition of using Sami languages in worship and church life (see the royal decree of 24th February 1848). Most of the parishes in the administrative district for the North Sami language belong to this category (see the next paragraph). There are also areas outside the administrative district where the Sami languages are spoken, either by local Sami populations or by Sami who have moved there from the central North Sami area. As a result of norwegianisation, the vast majority of the Sami population will not have learnt Sami. Some use of Sami languages in the church will usually be regarded as a positive symbol also by those who do not speak the language. Sami culture should also be preserved by other means than use of the languages.

Parishes in the administrative district for Sami language:

Kárášjohka/Karasjok, Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino, Porsáŋgu/Porsanger, Buolbmát/Polmak, Deatnu/Tana and Unjárga/Nesseby (which together comprise *Sis-Finnmárku proavassuohkan/Inner Finnmark rural deanery*) and *Gáivuotna/Kåfjord* (North Troms rural deanery) were included in 1991. In these parishes, Sami church ministry is largely associated with providing services *in a Sami language*. But even here, the service can be inadequate. *Loabát/Lavangen* (Inner Troms rural deanery) was included in the administrative district on 1st October 2009. Attention to Sami church life has been more limited here. In all these parishes the congregation has a special duty to preserve the North Sami language, in accordance with language regulations in the Sami Act. Clergy in permanent employment are for example expected to learn the language.

Sis-Finnmárku proavassuohkan/Inner Finnmark rural deanery:

Inner Finnmark rural deanery was established in 1991 in order to invigorate Sami church life. While the parishes concerned were formerly divided between three rural deaneries, the new rural deanery coincided with the local authorities comprising the *administrative district for Sami language* when the language regulations in the Sami Act were implemented. With a basis in the special needs of Sami church life, the parishes in Inner Finnmark were strengthened by the appointment of a catechist in Karasjok (1990), a deacon in Karasjok (1998) a catechist in Tana and Nesseby (2003). In 2004, the rural deanery was also allocated a Christian education project with special focus on the Sami Christian cultural heritage and Sami languages.

In the first seven years, the rural deanery was fully staffed when it came to clergy, but the period 1999-2009 has seen a permanent shortage of staff (see chapter 5.12). This is an important reason why expectations that the rural deanery would be a showcase for Sami church life in the Church of Norway have only partly been fulfilled.

It is natural to see a connection between the significant change in clergy staffing around 1998-1999 and the unrest in connection with the so-called “consecration of a bishop” in Kautokeino (1998) and the Lyngmo case in the courts (1999 and 2001). Even though the case only to a limited degree affected life in the rest of the rural deanery, there are reasons to believe that it became associated with Inner Finnmark itself and gave the Inner Finnmark rural deanery an unfortunate reputation, strengthening negative perceptions of Læstadianism and Sami church life generally.

In august 2010, *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan* / Indre Finnmark rural deanery was fully staffed by clergy.

North Hålogaland diocese

Since the 1970s the bishop of North Hålogaland has had a minister appointed to serve Sami living in scattered settlements. Since the mid 1980s, this has been a Sami diocesan curate. The post has been vacant for long periods. A comparison of experience from times when the post was vacant and times when it was filled, show that the work of the committee for Sami church life and the diocesan office’s general treatment of Sami church life suffer when the post is vacant. The post was filled in 2007-2009. The committee for Sami church life was active in 1991-2006 and was re-established in 2008. The committee was expanded by giving each of six “Sami regions” in the diocese a representative. In addition, the committee was given a special mandate in relation to the diocese’ work on the plan for Sami church life. Both of these measures seem to have been favourable for the work of the committee.

It has not been uncommon for the bishop of North Hålogaland to have some knowledge of Sami. The present bishop both speaks and writes North Sami.

3.5.4. Lule Sami (and Pite Sami) church life

As early as 1859, the Lule Sami language area fell out of the area covered by the royal decree which authorised the use of Sami languages in the church. In 1994 the bishop of South Hålogaland stipulated guidelines for the use of Lule Sami in worship in *Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord*. This caused local opposition, but was undoubtedly important for the re-establishment of Lule Sami as a liturgical language in the Church of Norway.

In the Lule Sami language area it is first and foremost the local church in *Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord* and in some degree Hamarøy that have contributed to preserving Lule Sami church life. The local church in *Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord* has a special responsibility for Lule Sami church life, because it belongs to the administrative district for the Lule Sami language. It is natural to regard the church in Tysfjord as a distinct entity in Lule Sami church life. There is only one minister in the Lule Sami district who speaks Lule Sami. This person is due for retirement in a couple of years.

Drag/Helland parish, Kjølsvik parish and Korsnes parish (*Divtasvuona suohkan/Tysfjord municipality*):

In 2005, *Divtasvuona suohkan/Tysfjord* municipality was incorporated into the administrative district for the Lule Sami language. As a result, Drag/Helland, Kjølsvik and Korsnes parishes and the clergy serving them were given a special responsibility for preserving the Lule Sami language in accordance with the language regulations in the Sami Act. Lule Sami is a severely endangered language. As a consequence of the Sami Act, the parish priest in *Divtasvuona*

suohkan/Tysfjord is required to have proficiency in Lule Sami. The post of catechist in *Divtasvuona suohkan*/Tysfjord was established in 1997 with special grounds in the needs of Lule Sami church life (see SKR⁴ 36/96).

The dialogue and reconciliation project in North Salten:

The dialogue and reconciliation project in North Salten (2005-2007) is the only explicit reconciliation project in the Church of Norway following the “reconciliation resolution” at the General Synod in 1997. This has brought Lule Sami church life into focus also in Hamarøy parish (see 5.10).

South Hålogaland diocese:

The diocese has no-one employed at the diocesan office to attend to Sami church life, but one of the office’s consultants is responsible for following this up as part of her job. The diocese has had a committee for Sami church life since 2004. In 2008, South Hålogaland diocese informed the Ministry of Church Affairs of the need for a new employee at the diocesan office to ensure competence in issues related to Sami church life. In addition to its Lule Sami population, South Hålogaland diocese has South Sami, North Sami and Pite Sami populations. Nidaros and North Hålogaland dioceses have the overall responsibility in the church for the first two of these, so coordination with these dioceses is necessary.

Pite Sami church life:

The whole of the Pite Sami area is in South Hålogaland diocese, and in the past couple of years the diocese has made contact with Pite Sami communities.

3.5.5. South Sami church life

As is the case with the Lule Sami, those parts of the South Sami area which were covered by the royal decree of 1848 (from Grong and northwards) fell out of the district where the decree came into force in 1859. It was only at the end of the 1980s that South Sami began slowly to be re-established as a liturgical language in the Church of Norway.

Today there are two local church bodies with special responsibility for South Sami church life: *Saemien Áålmegearaerie* / the Sami Church Council for the South Sami Language Area (SÅR) and the parish of *Snåase*/Snåsa. These are described separately in what follows. In addition, the question of ministry to the South Sami will be relevant for a larger number of parishes in the South Sami area.

The Sami congregation in the South Sami language area:

Following a request from *Áarjelhsaemien Gærhkoejielemen Moenehtse* – the committee for South Sami church life (ÅGM), the Nidaros diocesan council proposed the establishment of a Sami categorical congregation. By a royal decree of 15th May 2008 the Ministry of Church affairs established *Saemien Áålmege* / the Sami Congregation in the South Sami Language Area (SÅ). This is an experimental scheme for the period 2009-2012. The congregation is a categorical congregation with the aim of furthering South Sami church life. South Sami is a severely endangered language, the South Sami are few in number, are spread over a large area and are in a minority in all the parishes in which they live. The aim of the congregation is to create a distinct church arena in which South Sami fellowship and identity can be

⁴ SKR = Minutes of the Sami National Council (*samisk kirkeråd*)

strengthened and developed. This is an extremely important experiment for Sami church life in the Church of Norway.

The congregation is under the supervision of the bishop of Nidaros, but its activities reach further out. The special church ministry to the South Sami within and outside the South Sami language area is the responsibility of the *minister for the South Sami*, who leads the pastoral ministry and ensures necessary coordination with the activities of the congregation council, the South Sami deacon and other state employees who may have tasks connected with South Sami church life. The church administrator for the congregation (50 % appointment) was employed in 2009, and an election to the congregation council was held in the autumn of 2009. Reports complain of too small financial resources for the SÅR.

The congregation in Snåase/Snåsa:

Snåasen tjielte / Snåsa municipality became part of the administrative district for Sami language in 2008. The congregation and the clergy in the parish then received special responsibility for preserving the South Sami language in accordance with the Sami Act.

Other congregations in the South Sami area:

Little attention is generally paid to the South Sami in the area, but there are exceptions. A Christian education project in North Rama parish has created interest for South Sami church life among the local staff. The establishment of the Sami congregation does not exempt local congregations from paying attention to South Sami church life. Sami who join the categorical congregation will still be members in their respective parishes, and South Sami church life should benefit from good cooperation between the categorical congregation and the local congregations.

Nidaros diocese / diocesan office

The South Sami area reaches into South Hålogaland and Hamar dioceses, but Nidaros diocese has been given the overall responsibility for Sami church life. *ÅGM / Committee for South Sami Church Life* was appointed by the Nidaros diocesan council in 1991.

The diocese has no-one employed at the diocesan office to attend to Sami church life, but one of the office's consultants is responsible for following this up as part of her job. In 1998 the diocese was granted a post as *minister for the South Sami*, and this has been filled since then. This minister, who is himself a South Sami and speaks South Sami, has been involved in the work of the committee from early in the 1990s. This ministerial appointment has contributed to the success of the *ÅGM / Committee for South Sami Church Life* at a regional level in Nidaros. The minister and the ÅGM – with the support of the bishop and the diocesan council – have improved work on South Sami church life. In 2003 a full time deacon was appointed for South Sami church life in Nidaros diocese. When the South Sami categorical congregation was established in 2009, the diocese thought it fitting to dissolve the committee at the diocesan level.

The post of minister for the South Sami is a pastoral appointment at a local level, not a consultative appointment at the diocesan office. The establishment of the Sami congregation has made this even more important. The categorical congregation will have the same need as all others for a regional body to give it support, and the need for more competence in Sami affairs at the Nidaros diocese office remains.

3.5.6. Sami church life in Southern Norway

Today, the Sami live in all parts of the country, and outside the Sami settlement areas in Southern Norway, the larger towns have a larger Sami population. This applies to several towns, but most of all to Oslo.

White Paper no. 28 (2007-2008) – Sami Policy contains a paragraph on city Sami, in which Oslo is specially mentioned among the towns of Southern Norway. The White Paper makes it clear that “as an indigenous people in Norway, the Sami have the right and can demand to be able to develop their own culture and language. This right and demand apply also to Sami who live in cities.” The White Paper emphasises that “the government is concerned to create good and safe conditions for the education of children and young people and to secure good and equal welfare provisions for all inhabitants of Norway.” It stresses how important it is that “the municipalities, in cooperation with local Sami organisations and the Sami Parliament, provide their Sami population with kindergartens, Sami language in the schools, health and social services, care of the elderly and arenas for Sami language and culture”. This argument can easily be applied in the church sector, where the need also exists. This can already be seen in Oslo and Bergen, where the Sami themselves have taken the initiative to hold Sami services.

The tradition of Sami services in Oslo has existed from the beginning of the 1980s. The initiative came from the Sami community and for many years was coordinated by individuals from that community. In 1998, the Oslo diocesan council established a Sami resources committee. The committee’s main task is to coordinate four annual Sami services (three in North Sami and one in South Sami).

The attendance at ordinary Sami-Norwegian services in Oslo has varied from 15 to 40, but with better organisation the potential attendance would probably be much higher. Annual services marking the Sami national day have had considerably better attendance, and one service that coincided with a death in the Sami community was attended by 120-130 persons, the majority of whom took communion. The felt need for diaconal care among the Sami in Oslo has been raised on several occasions in the Sami resources committee in Oslo diocese. The Oslo diocesan office was on one occasion approached by a nursing home where a Sami speaker had lost the ability to communicate in Norwegian.

For some years now, the Oslo diocesan council has sought to have a Sami minister appointed in Oslo to have pastoral care of Sami in the whole of Southern Norway.

Bergen has had one or two annual Sami services since the middle of the 1990s. Here too, the initiative came from the Sami community in the city. During the past few years, a committee has had responsibility for these services.

The practice has been that Oslo and Bjørgvin dioceses have covered expenses for the services, with the exception of the salary of the ministers (and interpreters) who are paid by North Hålogaland (North Sami services) and Nidaros (South Sami services) dioceses. There have so far not been any Lule Sami services in Southern Norway.

3.5.7. Sami church life across the borders

The national borders cross the boundaries of language and culture in the Sami area. In the whole of Sápmi there is a long tradition for Sami church gatherings ignoring the national borders, both at a local and regional level. In Norway, this applies to all the language groups. In the North and Lule Sami areas, the Læstadian movement has provided a stable setting for Sami church fellowship across the borders. In the South Sami area, church weekends have attracted South Sami across the borders. The Orthodox Skolt Sami in Neiden have close connections with Skolt Sami in Sevettijärvi on the Finnish side of the border, who are also Orthodox.

Sami church days have recently been established as an ecumenical gathering for Sami in the whole of Sápmi. The church days have been held twice, in 2004 in Jokkmokk in Sweden and in 2009 in Inari in Finland. There were 500-1000 participants.

3.5.8. Indigenous peoples' issues

As is the case with other segments of the Sami community, contact with other indigenous peoples has been important for Sami church life. In 1995 the World Council of Churches (WCC) established an indigenous peoples' programme, with a consultant on indigenous peoples' affairs based in Geneva. Since then, the indigenous peoples programme has been the Sami Church Council's chief arena for international church work for indigenous peoples. After being suspended for some years, the WCC programme was re-established in 2008 after pressure from the Church of Norway and others. Church networking, support for indigenous peoples' rights and indigenous theology and spirituality are the chief areas of the WCC's activities. The Lutheran World Federation has also passed resolutions on indigenous peoples at its general assembly in 2003 and 2010. The Sami Church Council has also had contact with indigenous peoples through some individual projects, partly in cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid. Some congregations engaged in Sami church life have or have had contact with indigenous peoples through missionary projects or friendship agreements.

3.5.9. Sami theology and interpretations of Christianity

The past years have seen important developments in Sami identity and awareness in the life of the church. Early on, the Sami Church Council focused on the need for work on Sami theology and interpretations of Christianity. Awareness that the Sami bring with them a special understanding of Christianity grew through the project *Theology of Life* (1994-1996), discussion on the gospel and culture in the Church of Norway (1995-1996) and the resource group for Sami theology and interpretations of Christianity (1997-1999). This also revealed a need for making the Sami aware of their own history, traditions and experience as the basis for reflection on theology and Christian faith.

In the past decade, this development has continued and been expressed in various writings and creative work on worship, liturgy, Christian education and theology. A number of persons with different professional backgrounds have contributed. Today, "Sami theology" has begun to be recognised as a form of contextual theological reflection based on Sami perceptions of Christianity and existence and relevant themes from Sami history, culture and community life.

Within the Church of Norway as a whole, there is a growing acknowledgement that Sami church life provides the rest of the church with important stimuli in the understanding of faith and identity and the connection between nature and our philosophy of life.

Examples of the Sami interpretation of existence and of Christianity

Nature or the creation is and always has been a source of inspiration for spirituality. As is the case with for example Celtic spirituality, nature has been important for the Sami people. Most of the examples given here will be familiar in most Sami circles, though customs can vary from place to place.

Sami spirituality or ways of thinking are often part of an unwritten and unspoken cultural capacity. It is usually passed on without words, has its source in tradition and comprises a basic way of thinking with deep roots in Sami culture and language. It has been formed by earlier generations' dependence on the elements and other things that they could not control, in their daily tasks of reindeer husbandry, fishing, farming and gathering. Sickness and suffering among people or animals was something that they had to tackle themselves, or seek help to tackle from those who had skills or gifts of healing. Traces of these traditions live on, in addition to other customs and ideas with their roots in basic Sami thinking.

Rituals related to the most important days in our life, such as birth, baptism, affirmation of baptism, confirmation, marriage, burial – as well as to sickness – often reflect ideas, values and morals rooted in this basic Sami thinking. Some examples of these customs and rituals are:

Baptism in the home/godparents: It is common for children to be baptised at home and for the baptism to be affirmed later in church. The child has more godparents than is otherwise the case in Norway. This is a consequence of the extended family structure which is common and important in the Sami community. Another consequence is the large number of guests at Sami weddings.

Šiella: It is common to hang a *šiella*, for example in the form of a silver ball or a steel knife in a sheath in an infant's *komse* (cradle) in order to protect it from being exchanged by denizens of the underworld or infected with illnesses with supernatural causes.

Buorádallan/healing: *Buorádallan*/healing by the laying on of hands, recitation or blowing is common. This is carried out without publicity, so that the gift will not deteriorate – something that also can happen if the gift is used commercially. This healing is carried out in God's name, and is much in demand.

At funerals: One shakes hands with everyone, even though one may have shaken hands with them earlier in the same day.

At a wake: At a wake or viewing, one looks first at the deceased's feet, and thereafter lifts the eyes up towards the face. It is believed that this will prevent the image of the deceased from being fixed too vividly in the memory and will protect against fear and anxiety.

Sami conceptions such as the conviction that the underworld exists and *diiddat*, omens/maxims, live on and are put into practice. For the church to be able to meet this aspect of the indigenous Sami culture with respect, it is important for the church to be aware of the values and morality that are expressed in basic Sami thought.

The blessing of houses: In many Sami contexts it is not uncommon that a minister or another person with spiritual authority is called in if people experience disturbances in a house (or move into a new house). Hymns are sung, God's word is read and a simple devotion is held. There are prayers for peace, the sign of the cross is made, the Lord's Prayer is said and the benediction pronounced. Experience shows that the cause of disturbance disappears and there is peace in the house. The Sami National Council has written a liturgy for this purpose.

4. PRINCIPLES

The principles governing the Church of Norway's concern for Sami church life are of various kinds. This chapter shows how this concern is juridically based on a series of resolutions that are binding under Norwegian and international law, and politically based on the state's official Sami policy. It also explains how inclusiveness and reconciliation are key words in the church's approach to Sami church life. Finally, some theological viewpoints on Sami and indigenous peoples' issues are presented. The chapter as a whole provides a theoretical basis for the recommendations and measures that are proposed in chapters five and six.

4.1. General Synod Resolutions

During the past two decades, the General Synod has passed resolutions that together embody the Church of Norway's basic approach to Sami church life. What follows is a selection of these, with a reference to the first time the General Synod issued the statement. Most of the statements were repeated by later synods.

Norway is built on the territory of two peoples – Sami and Norwegians, and the Sami are an indigenous people of Norway (KM 11/03). The history of Christianity in Norway stretches back over a thousand years and is woven into the history of both the Norwegian and the Sami people (KM6/07). Sami church life must be strengthened as a necessary and equal part of the Church of Norway (KM 12/92). Since most of the Sami in Norway belong to the Church of Norway, the church has a duty to facilitate a church life for the Sami (KM 15/90). Conditions must be created to enable the Sami themselves to take responsibility for and form their own church life (KM 15/90). The Church of Norway has a special responsibility for the South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami languages, which are the official Sami languages in Norway (KM 2/92). The Church of Norway has acknowledged its participation in the norwegianisation of the Sami people and will contribute to the cessation of this injustice (KM 13/07). The Sami people have cultural rights, including the right to the natural basis of their culture (KM 11/03).

4.2. Guidelines from the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches

The issue of indigenous peoples has for many years been on the agenda of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and in recent years also of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) (see section 5.15.2 below). Both the WCC and the LWF have passed resolutions on the issue, laying down premises for their own work, and for their member churches' inclusion of indigenous peoples and the rights of indigenous peoples in their ministry.

At the LWF Assembly in Winnipeg in 2003, indigenous peoples were mentioned several times in the Assembly's "Message", and a special resolution on indigenous peoples was passed. In addition to the establishment of an indigenous peoples programme under the auspices of the LWF, the resolution contained a general recommendation to member churches of the LWF:

“The LWF and its member churches are also asked to support a process at the national, regional and international levels of protecting human rights of Indigenous peoples, including land rights.”

The LWF Assembly in Stuttgart 2010 reiterated the recommendations in the resolution on indigenous peoples that was passed in Winnipeg 2003.

At the WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre 2006, the Assembly passed the following resolution proposed by the WCC’s Policy Reference Committee (PRC):

“16. The PRC affirmed the recent actions of the Central Committee on human rights, Indigenous Peoples and language loss. The Assembly *recommends* to strengthen the participation and visibility of Indigenous Peoples within the WCC. The Assembly *considers* this an essential step for deepening the relationships among WCC member churches. The Assembly in particular *urges* the WCC to address the main areas which are problematic for Indigenous churches in its policy directions. The Assembly *considers* strengthening relationships with Indigenous Peoples an opportunity for the fellowship to gain new insights on the importance of place, land, language and theology of creation, as well as creative perspectives on grace and transformation.”

4.3. Norwegian law and international law

Sami rights have been strengthened considerably during the last two decades both in national and international law. From the church’s point of view, this should be regarded as specifying the implications of the church’s faith and values in the juridical sphere. Some national and international laws that bind the Church of Norway in its work with Sami church life and indigenous peoples’ rights are mentioned below.

4.3.1. National law

The Norwegian Constitution § 110a states: “It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life.” This clause gives Norwegian authorities a juridical, political and moral obligation to create conditions for the Sami themselves to be able to preserve and influence the development of the Sami community. This is very relevant for the Church of Norway as a state church, and will continue to be so also after the relationship between church and state is changed (see 5.16).

The Sami Act makes the principles established by the Constitution §110a more specific. The Act provides directives on the Sami Parliament, Sami language and the Sami flag. The Sami Act’s language regulations are especially important for the Church of Norway. § 1-5 determines that Sami and Norwegian “are languages of equal worth” and shall have equal status according to the regulations in chapter 3 of the Act. Chapter 3 provides language rights when encountering various public bodies, including the Church of Norway. Regulations in the Sami Act, including the language regulations, are regarded as a minimum.

Several regulations in the Sami Act concern the Sami language administrative district, which today comprises of the municipalities Kárášjohka/Karasjok, Guovdageaidnu/ Kautokeino, Porsáŋgu/Porsanger , Unjárga/Nesseby and Deatnu/Tana in Finnmark county;

Gáivuotna/Kåfjord and Loabát/Lavangen in Troms county, Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord in Nordland county and Snåase/Snåsa i North Trøndelag county. South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami are all covered by the regulations. For the church, this means that ten parishes and three dioceses are directly affected by the law. The administrative district has been expanded with three municipalities since the language regulations were passed, and more will probably be included in the future.

The Sami Act establishes certain general rules for all public bodies in the administrative district concerning the right to answers in Sami, both locally and regionally. At the regional level – in the three most northerly dioceses – written applications in Sami must be answered in Sami, while at the local level, spoken and written applications in Sami must be answered in Sami, by word of mouth or in writing (§ 3-3). Certain statutes must be available in Sami, announcements must be made in Sami and Norwegian, and forms must be available in Sami and Norwegian, subject to more detailed regulations (§ 3-2).

In addition to special regulations for the use of Sami in the judicial system (§ 3-4), the health and social sector (§3-5) and in primary and secondary schools (§ 3-8), The Sami Act contains a directive on the right “to receive individual church services in Sami” within the administrative district (§ 3-6). Preparatory work on the text of the Act shows that this provision only gives the right to the use of Sami in the case of ministry to individuals (pastoral care, baptism, Holy Communion, marriage) and not in public services in the church.

The provision of the “right to leave of absence for educational purposes” (§ 3-7) also applies to the Church of Norway. The Act states that “Employees in a local or regional public body in the administrative district are entitled to leave with pay in order to acquire knowledge of Sámi when the above-mentioned body is in need of such knowledge.”

The question as to which directives in the Sami Act language regulations affect the various spheres of ministry in the Church of Norway is considered in Appendix 1.

The Human Rights Act gives the UN Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child the force of Norwegian law (more about this in section 4.3.2). This is relevant for the Church of Norway’s approach to Sami church life and indigenous peoples’ issues.

The Church Act contains regulations that apply specifically to Sami church life. The Act stipulates that the General Synod shall “protect and promote Sami church life” (§ 24) and that there shall be a Sami representative in each of the three most northerly diocesan councils (§ 23).

The Royal Decree of 24th February 1848 with later amendments directs ministers in certain parishes to learn Sami. An appended letter from the Ministry to the bishop of North Hålogaland on 16th September 1872 laid down regulations for the use of Sami in services and church ceremonies in these parishes. After the last amendment, the decree is to apply to the parishes of Kautokeino, Karasjok, Porsanger, Lebesby, Tana and Nesseby.

The Royal Decree of 24th February 1848 has never been formally repealed, and the practice that has been established on the basis of the decree can be regarded as part of the Church of Norway’s measures to preserve the Sami languages. The Ministry seems to presume that this practice shall continue. By referring to the fact that employer responsibility for clergy has

been transferred to the dioceses, the Ministry has indicated that the Church of Norway's own bodies are now responsible for this.

4.3.2. International law

The rights of indigenous peoples are collective human rights, and the following instances of international law are especially relevant for the Church of Norway's approach to Sami church life and indigenous peoples' issues.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child which was incorporated in Norwegian law by the Human Rights Act applies to the Sami in that it decrees that a child who belongs to a minority "or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language" (article 30).

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulates that "in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language" (article 27). With regard to the Sami as an indigenous people, the common interpretation is that the article also applies to the material basis for the Sami's total practice of their culture, also described as the natural basis for Sami culture (i.e. lands and waters). States are instructed to protect minorities against intervention from others, for example other public bodies or private interests. Article 1 in the Covenant stipulates that all peoples have the right to self-determination. United Nations organisations have later determined that this right also applies to indigenous peoples. The Human Rights Act has incorporated the Covenant in Norwegian law, and the Act stipulates that the Covenant has precedence over other Norwegian laws if a conflict arises.

The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, also known as the ILO Convention 169, establishes minimum standards for the juridical protection of indigenous peoples and is ratified by Norway (1989). The basic principle of the Convention is the right of indigenous peoples to preserve and develop their own culture, and the authorities' obligation to take action to enable this. The Convention includes directives on the right of indigenous peoples to determine their own economic, social and cultural development, to learn their own languages and to establish their own bodies to represent them in contact with the authorities. The Convention recognises indigenous peoples' wish to preserve and develop their own identity, language and religion within the context of the national states in which they live. The Convention also contains directives on the right to land, employment and working life, education, social security and health.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly in 2007, determines minimum standards for the rights of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination is basic, and the Declaration contains directives with regard to land, water and resources, culture, religion, education, health, institutions etc. In principle, the Declaration does not establish new rights compared to earlier UN conventions, but clarifies how these rights shall be upheld *in relation to indigenous peoples*, taking into consideration their special circumstances. The Declaration thus represents the latest development in the protection of indigenous peoples' rights under international law, and is the most comprehensive expression of the international rights of indigenous peoples. It states:

“Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin”. (Article 2)

The Declaration is not legally binding, but commits the nations politically and morally.

4.4. Regulations determining the government’s Sami policy

In Sami Policy – White Paper no. 28 (2007-2008), which received widespread support in parliament, the government has provided general regulations governing public bodies’ protection of Sami languages and culture, with more specific regulations for the various sectors. The White Paper contains a chapter on Sami culture in the Church of Norway. It points out that the church has a special responsibility for Sami church life, and that “an overriding consideration in preserving Sami church life in the Church of Norway is that it must develop in keeping with Sami self-awareness and Sami traditions” (page 178).

The underlying principle of the White Paper is that the Sami’s right to develop their own languages, culture and community life is not a private but a *public* matter (page 69).

“Public bodies at all levels are responsible for safeguarding Sami interests in their activities. This involves making provisions for Sami-speaking users of services and ensuring that the body has sufficient competence in Sami culture to be aware of how its services can be adapted to ensure that Sami users are served in a good and equal manner.”

All public bodies are responsible for taking Sami policy into consideration in carrying out their duties. The scope of this responsibility will vary from body to body, but all must be aware that these considerations must be taken. This involves a systematic and planned approach based on a knowledge of those Sami interests which affect the body’s services (page 70).

The government’s directives in the White Paper correspond with the Church of Norway’s own ambitions in the issue. The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* can therefore be regarded as the church’s efforts to follow up the government directives.

In order to follow up the White Paper, the government issued the Plan of Action to Strengthen Sami Languages in 2009. This is part of a long-term effort to preserve living Sami languages (South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami) and is a priority issue for the government. The main part of the plan of action has the following keywords: (1) “Learn”: concentrated teaching of Sami languages, (2) “Use”: increased use of Sami in as many public contexts as possible, and (3) “See”: making the Sami languages visible in the public sphere. The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* relates to all three main parts of the Plan of Action to Strengthen Sami Languages.

4.5. Inclusion as the basic minority policy principle

This strategic plan assumes *inclusion* as the basic minority policy principle of Church of Norway with respect to Sami church life.

Segregation and integration have been the two main approaches to minorities in the course of history. While segregation involves separating and isolating minorities from the majority community, integration involves the opposite: attempting to bring the minority into the majority community. Although segregation and integration represent two very different political strategies, they have a common ideological starting point. Both have *homogeneity* or *similarity* as the norm for a community, with a consequent low tolerance of differences and diversity. Segregation happens because some people are perceived to be different from the homogenous norm, and it is therefore thought necessary to separate them from the rest of the community. Integration occurs in a similar way, in that people are perceived as being different from what is considered normal in the community. In this case “the strangers” are to be assimilated into the majority community, that is to say, made to be like the majority. Norwegianisation was a form of integration policy.

A third alternative, which takes into account the rights of indigenous peoples is *inclusion*. Inclusion begins from the opposite end to segregation and integration, because it acknowledges that diversity exists, and assumes *differences* and *diversity* as the norm for a community. People are therefore given the right to participate in the life of the community without having to relinquish their distinctive characteristics and differences.

The obvious starting point of Church of Norway is that the state of Norway is established on the territory of two peoples, the Norwegians and the Sami, and that the Sami are an indigenous people of Norway. Therefore the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* assumes that *inclusion* is the basic principle for Sami participation in the Church of Norway. As an indigenous people, the Sami have the right to be given a genuine opportunity to participate in the church’s national fellowship with their own characteristics. Sami church life must not be segregated in the Church of Norway, that is to say, restricted to some Sami church enclaves in the wider church landscape. Nor should Sami church life be integrated, that is to say, be streamlined and made identical with the majority’s norm. Sami church life must be *included*, that is to say, given room to exist with its distinctiveness as a necessary and equal part of the church of Norway.

This should not be understood as an argument against the necessity of also creating special Sami arenas in the Church of Norway. If a minority is to participate fully, it will sometimes be necessary to provide it with its own special space. This will not serve the purpose of encouraging segregation, but inclusion, that is to say the possibility of full participation in the church on the basis of the minority’s special characteristics.

4.6. Reconciliation as a basic approach

The General Synod proposed reconciliation as a basic approach to Sami church life and to the Sami people in general (KM 13/97). Acknowledgement of the church’s participation in Norwegianisation and its desire for a new future were important in the decision: “The General Synod acknowledges that the authorities’ Norwegianisation policy and the Church of Norway’s role in this have led to injustice toward the Sami people. The General Synod will contribute to the cessation of this injustice.” The General Synod has later emphasised

reconciliation in connection with several issues concerning the Sami people, for example the Finnmark Act (KM 11/03).

The Church of Norway's concern for dialogue and reconciliation cannot be reduced to isolated events, but must be seen as a comprehensive approach in which dialogue and reconciliation are applied to all aspects of the Church of Norway's consideration of issues related to the Sami people. When the General Synod requested a new plan for developing Sami church life (KM 7/06), the committee took this approach as its starting point:

“The committee wishes to emphasise that concern for justice and reconciliation in the church requires the will to provide resources, if necessary on a long term basis. If injustice towards the Sami population is to cease, the church must make Sami church life a priority. This will also benefit the church as a whole.”

The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* takes therefore a *structural approach* to the church's concern for dialogue and reconciliation, where the most important point is so create settings, relations and structures which can have a reconciling effect and can encourage equality in the church. Norwegianisation has made the Sami people invisible, and this will continue unless efforts are made to change the structures that cause it. To face this challenge, all parties must be aware of the historical background and must want to establish new structures that will secure a new future together. The Church of Norway has taken important steps in this direction, and it is expected that the process will continue.

The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* presupposes that reconciliation will be a constant element in the measures that are proposed in the plan. Specific reconciliation and dialogue projects are considered in section 5.10.

4.7. Theological reflections

The Church of Norway's doctrinal basis as an evangelical Lutheran church is the obvious starting point for the Church of Norway's approach to Sami church life. A selection of theological perspectives assumed relevant to Sami church life and indigenous peoples' issues are mentioned below.

Section 3.5.1 already contains rudiments of a theological account of Sami church life. With this as a basis, the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* proposes the following ecclesiological account of Sami church life:

Sami church life in the Church of Norway is manifested when Sami, in the setting of the Church of Norway, rooted in the Sami people, and nurtured by Word and sacraments, participate in God's universal church with their own response to the gospel.

This description resonates with the Augsburg Confession's article VII Of the Church, which states that (1) there is one universal church, that (2) the gospel and the sacraments constitute the church, and that (3) there is room in the church for a variety of human traditions, rites and ceremonies.

Also they teach that the one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered. And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc.” (CA VII, Of the Church.)

Following this ecclesiological account of Sami church life, what follows will suggest some reasons for being concerned with Sami church life and indigenous peoples’ issues generally.

All human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). From the point of view of creation theology this establishes the inviolable worth of all human beings. But the human experience of worth and dignity is closely related to concrete social and cultural fellowships. When people are denied the possibility of feeling worthy on the grounds of their language, cultural traditions and ethnic fellowship, their human dignity is violated. Indigenous peoples have been especially exposed to this violation. The affirmation that a person is created in the image of God should therefore protect his or her need for human dignity within the context of his or her own language, culture and history.

The incarnation, that God became a human being (flesh, Latin *incarnatio*) and dwelt among us (John 1:14) confirms the fundamental value of creation. That God became a human being reveals both the creation’s need for salvation and its ability to contain the presence of God. In this way the incarnation builds a bridge between the first and second articles of the creed. The incarnation shows us that God does not meet us outside our reality, but “dwells” in it. “Indigenisation”, that Christian faith is expressed differently from place to place and from culture to culture, is therefore a natural consequence of belief in the incarnation.

The Great Commission, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) shows that the gospel is given to all peoples, and that all peoples therefore have the right to a place in the church.

Native languages and the diversity of languages are important elements in the New Testament, linked to the Holy Spirit and the identity of the church, as in the account of *Pentecost* (Acts 2). That linguistic diversity has been a part of the Church’s identity from the beginning is a point that is often overlooked. The account of Pentecost is a “counter narrative” reversing the linguistic confusion of Babel (Genesis 11). As a contrast to Babel’s confusion, the miracle of Pentecost did not enable everybody to understand the same language. Quite the reverse: people from “every nation” were amazed that they could hear about “God’s deeds of power” in their *own* language. Pentecost is therefore the Holy Spirit’s affirmation of native languages.

In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, languages are an element in the songs of praise before the throne of God in heaven. “A great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” participate in this *heavenly liturgy* (Revelation 7:9).

It should also be noted that translations and use of the Bible, hymns and liturgies in the vernacular are an important part of the Lutheran heritage.

The New Testament also describes the cultural dilemma that occurred when the church changed from being a Jewish movement and began to include people with other ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds (see for example Acts 10). This is partly parallel to the questions arising from missionary activity in the past centuries, where the impression could be given that the gospel is only available via Western culture and values.

An important issue in the *cultural dilemma in the Early Church* was to what extent gentiles should be compelled to accept Jewish laws and customs, for example be circumcised and follow the Jewish code of purity (see for example Acts 15). Paul claimed that gentile (i.e. non-jewish) Christians were not bound by Jewish customs in these cases. His reason was the belief that all are equal in Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11). In other words, those who have faith in Christ are free to be Christians in continuity with their own culture. This does not involve an uncritical acceptance of all forms of culture, but liberty to take with them whatever is good and worthy in their own culture (Philippians 4:8).

The message of *reconciliation* is central in the New Testament. This is first and foremost a question of the reconciliation that is necessary between God and humankind, which is made available in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Romans 5:10). The reconciliation brought by Christ however also has implications for the ethnic and cultural divisions between peoples. When Paul writes that “he (Christ) made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us” (Ephesians 2:14), the “dividing wall” is probably a reference to the wall between the forecourts and the sanctuary in the temple in Jerusalem. This wall divided gentiles and Jews. Only Jewish men had access to the sanctuary. It appears that Paul interprets this wall as a symbol of the “hostility” dividing the two groups. The wall is now broken down, spiritually speaking, in the new spiritual temple (Ephesians 2:21f) which is being built in Christ, who “reconcile(s) both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death the hostility” (Ephesians 2:16).

The reconciliation brought by Jesus also brings an acknowledgement of injustice that has been done and the desire to seek reconciliation with others through restorative actions (Luke 19:8-9). The process of reconciliation between the church and the Sami, described in section 4.6, can be understood as an example of such reconciliatory activity.

The call to *justice* at the human level is an important biblical theme. This can clearly be seen in the Old Testament prophetic tradition (see Isaiah 58:6-8; Amos 5:12) and is continued in the gospels’ account of Jesus (Luke 1:47-55; 4:18-19). The Bible paints a picture of a God who is especially concerned for those who are oppressed and vulnerable. This motivates the church in its commitment in social issues.

The Bible relates that human beings are formed from the earth, just like other creatures (Genesis 2:7-19) and that God has made a covenant with all creation (Genesis 9:9-11). In the Bible, the whole of creation is the object of God’s care, both in creating and saving. Atonement in Christ is for the whole of creation (Colossians 1:20-23), the whole of creation longs for deliverance (Romans 8:19-22) and every creature takes part in the cosmic song of praise to the Lamb (Revelation 5:13). These themes have their parallels in the spiritual traditions of indigenous peoples, also in Sami Christian traditions.

5. NECESSARY ACTION

5.1. The local church as the starting point

Sami church life is first and foremost lived locally. Sections 3.5.3-3.5.6 above provide an introduction to Sami church life at a local level. But Sami church life involves congregations in the whole of the Sami settlement area. And wider still, Sami church life can be found anywhere in the Church of Norway, wherever Sami participate in church activities. Local churches everywhere share therefore responsibility for supporting Sami church life.

The need for church statistics related to the Sami

No statistics related to Sami church life have so far been gathered. The Sami Church Council and the National Council have suggested incorporating questions relating to the Sami in the forms for annual church statistics, but this has not been done. In the letter of allotment for 2011 from the Ministry of Church Affairs to the dioceses, the dioceses of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros are asked to incorporate an account of Sami church life in their annual report, accompanied by relevant statistics. The Sami Church Council has asked the diocesan directors in these dioceses to coordinate their statistics, since the church as a whole needs control data on Sami church life. The indicators were determined late in 2010 and the gathering of data will begin 1st January 2011.

- It is important for the Church of Norway to gather control data for Sami church life, and it is expected that the work of developing relevant statistics for Sami church life will be followed up.

Some views on Sami church life at the local level

At the local level, Sami church life is for the most part suspended between recognition and lack of recognition, visibility and invisibility. The church and the worship space of a local congregation are associated with symbolic power. What becomes visible in this space is given value in the local community. The local congregation carries therefore a responsibility with respect to how this space is used. The local church has great potential for affirming the presence of the Sami, but also a corresponding potential for making them invisible and marginalised.

In areas of Inner Finnmark, where the Sami are in the majority, Sami language, clothing customs and hymns have traditionally been conspicuous in the life of the church. Because of this, the church for many is taken for granted as a Sami arena. They have regarded the local church as “their” church, and the congregation as a “Sami congregation”. This creates expectations that Sami influence will continue.

In areas where the Sami are a minority (from north to south), the situation is often very different. The local church has been regarded as a Norwegian arena, defined by the Norwegian-dominated local community and in the hands of Norwegian officials. The result has often been that the Sami are invisible in the church. Because of the stigma brought about by norwegianisation, many generations of Sami in these areas have “chosen” invisibility in order to survive.

The past decades have seen a revitalisation of Sami culture and identity, and a Sami awakening is taking place in areas where the Sami have previously been invisible. In many cases this makes itself known when individuals begin to wear the Sami national costume, or begin to learn a Sami language. In other cases, the process of a growing Sami identification takes place without necessarily being visible. A local community can therefore not always be said to be without a Sami presence, even though that presence cannot be seen in the way people dress etc. In some areas, the Læstadian congregation can be a centre of Sami identity.

The church is a public place where pride over being Sami can be made visible. For many young people, confirmation can be a golden opportunity to acknowledge their Sami identity. Other similar occasions are baptisms, weddings, funerals and the Sami National Day. Many have worn the Sami national costume for the first time on such occasions. Other opportunities for including the Sami presence in the local church are afforded by Christian education, school services, pastoral visits and devotions at institutions for the elderly. Sami language, music, cultural symbols and indigenous religious traditions can be included on all these occasions.

Local churches need to be aware of how to react to this. Do the church building and the various forms of ministry (worship, Christian education, diakonia, church music) make Sami elements in the local community visible or invisible? In all areas where the Sami live, and in the Church of Norway as a whole, it should be natural for local churches to make the Sami presence visible, and they should enable Sami to feel accepted when they participate in the church on their own premises.

- Parish councils and local church employees are urged to assume a special responsibility for including Sami church life in worship and other church activities, in accordance with the guidelines in the plan for the church's various forms of ministry.

5.2. The need for knowledge of Sami languages and culture.

A vital question for the Church of Norway's approach to Sami church life is: to what degree can the church ensure that its employees have adequate knowledge of Sami languages and culture? To quote *Sami Policy – White Paper no. 28 (2007-2008)*: “In addition to professional competence in church-related subjects, knowledge of Sami languages and culture is necessary for most church appointments in Sami areas. This applies at all levels of the church.” (Page 181)

Local congregations need to have employees with a sound knowledge of Sami languages and culture (see 5.1), but these (including clergy) are often also involved in tasks at a national level such as Bible translation, hymns and liturgies or the production of other material. This applies also to other sections of the church, but in Sami church life there are fewer persons to share the burden. As a result, developments at a national level are affected by staffing problems at a local level. It is therefore important that increasing knowledge of Sami languages and culture among church employees be seen both as a local and a national issue, so that the needs of the church as a whole can be met.

Recruiting more people with a knowledge of Sami languages and culture to training and service in the church is an important goal. This must be seen as part of a long-term need for recruitment (see section 5.12 on recruitment). If the Church of Norway is to provide an

adequate ministry in Sami, the need for deliberate efforts to increase the knowledge of Sami languages and culture must be taken seriously.

- *Established educational opportunities for clergy and other church employees in Sami languages and culture.* North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros dioceses are expected to provide opportunities for learning the North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami languages respectively, in cooperation with relevant educational institutions. Such courses should also include knowledge of Sami culture and church traditions. Newly appointed clergy in the administrative district for Sami language must take a course in a Sami language within a short time of taking office. The joint parish councils should make the same provisions for deacons, catechists and church musicians. Church employees outside the administrative district should be given the same opportunity wherever possible. Since the dioceses' extra expenses for Sami courses are a result of the national church's special commitments to the South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami languages, it will be natural to consult with the Ministry on financing.
- *An introductory course in Sami church life should be developed, with a focus on relevant cultural and traditional elements.*
- *Courses for Sami interpreters should be established* in order to recruit and improve the qualifications and status of the interpretation service. This should be organised first in the North Sami area.
- A minimum knowledge of Sami language and culture should be included in professional training in the church.
- A policy should be formed for the appointment of Christian education workers, catechists and deacons in the administrative district, by which knowledge of Sami language and culture is emphasised when competence in language and culture is weighed against professional qualifications. Further education after taking office should also be made available.
- The possibility of alternative paths to service as catechists, deacons and ministers for Sami-speakers should be considered (see section 5.12).

5.3. Objectives for preserving and use of Sami languages

Although not all Sami speak a Sami language, measures to preserve and use the Sami languages are necessary, and these are given high priority in the Church of Norway. That this involves three official Sami languages – South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami – poses special challenges with regard to competence, resources and organisation.

The language regulations in the Sami Act are the juridical setting for the Church of Norway's approach to the Sami languages. However, the act's regulations are a minimum, and the Church of Norway has a wider responsibility for Sami languages. As a result, the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* does not use the Sami Act as its main point of departure for the Church's efforts to preserve and use the Sami languages. This is in order

to prevent a too narrow focus and an abandonment of responsibility for the majority of the Sami population.

The strategic plan proposes that the Church of Norway should have a policy on Sami languages which operates at two levels: (1) A basic level / minimum standard for preserving Sami languages which can apply everywhere in the Church of Norway independent of the Sami Act. (2) A level related to the demands on the church under the language regulations in the Sami Act, which apply mainly to the administrative district for Sami language.

5.3.1. Level 1: Basic national standard for use of Sami language

The national minimum standard for use of Sami languages can be summed up thus:

- Use Sami hymns / liturgical elements in worship (as is often the case with other languages) at least once a year.
- Observe the Sami National Day (6th February) in some way in worship.
- Offer to give four-year-olds a Sami “four year book”.
- Offer to provide Bibles / New Testaments / Bible excerpts in Sami.
- Offer to use Sami hymns or liturgical elements when Sami families are involved in baptism, confirmation, weddings or funerals.
- Offer to conduct some elements of confirmation preparation in Sami.

All of this should be possible with relatively simple measures:

- Hymns and liturgical elements in Sami will be available in hymn books and liturgical material in the whole of the Church of Norway as a result of the worship reform.
- Establish an internet resource, where Sami hymns and liturgical elements are made available as text and sound files.
- Establish local routines for enquiring whether those involved want Sami elements in the ceremonies concerned (for example that this is included on application forms).
- Information on worship, ceremonies and other activities with Sami elements should be included in the annual statistical reports.

Resources on the internet will probably be the most costly of these measures for establishing a national minimum standard for preserving and use of Sami languages. Many of the other measures are already available, or will be made available independently of the establishment of a national minimum standard.

5.3.2. Level 2: Use of Sami languages within the administrative district for Sami language

The language regulations in the Sami Act contain minimum requirements for the use of Sami in the administration and in individual pastoral ministry. These requirements are limited to the local and regional level in the administrative district for Sami language. Services which the Church of Norway is required to provide locally and regionally involve measures which are a national responsibility, for example the availability of hymn books and liturgies. With the latest expansion of the administrative district, the Act now applies to North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami.

The following measures are required in order to meet the demands of the Sami Act's language regulations:

- Information about the Act and its requirements at all levels of the.
- Practical measures to fulfill the requirements of the Act.
- The availability of competent, Sami-speaking staff.
- The availability of necessary material in Sami languages.

Appendix 1, *Sami languages in the Church of Norway: interpreting relevant language regulations*, contains a detailed account of the implications of the language regulations for the church's various levels and areas of ministry (the appendix is not attached in the English version). The following is a schematic version of the Sami Act applied to the Church of Norway.

- In the administrative district for Sami language, it is expected that parish councils, joint parish councils and church employees, rural deans, bishops and diocesan councils should make themselves familiar with the language regulations and their application, as is described in Appendix 1.

Excerpt of the Sami Act	Local level	Regional level	National level
§ 3-2. <i>Translation of regulations.</i> Announcements and forms <i>Laws and regulations of special interest for the whole or parts of the Sami population shall be translated into Sami.</i>	PC ⁵ /JPC ⁶ are responsible for making relevant laws and regulations available in Sami	DC ⁷ , bishop and rural dean are responsible for making relevant laws and regulations available in Sami	SCC ⁸ makes a survey of which laws and regulations are affected by the regulations and request a translation. MCA ⁹ covers the cost.
<i>Announcements</i> by public bodies especially directed to the whole or parts of the population within the administrative district shall be made in Sami and Norwegian	PC's/JPC's and the clergy's announcements to the whole or parts of the population within the administrative district	DC's, bishop's and rural dean's announcements to the whole or parts of the population within the administrative district	Both NC ¹⁰ and SCC ensure that announcements concerning Sami church life are available in Sami.
Forms to be submitted to a local or regional public body within the administrative district shall be available in Sami and Norwegian	PC/JPC and clergy make forms available for general use	DC/bishop/rural dean make forms available for general use	SCC makes a survey of forms that need to be translated. NC covers the cost.

⁵ PC = Parish council

⁶ JPC = Joint parish council

⁷ DC = Diocesan council

⁸ SCC = Sami Church Council

⁹ MCA = Ministry of Church Affairs

¹⁰ NC = National Council for the Church of Norway

<p>§ 3-3. The right to be answered in Sami.</p> <p>Those who contact a local public body in the administrative district, have the right to be answered in Sami. This does not apply to spoken contact with officials carrying out their duties outside the body's office.</p> <p>Those who make written contact in Sami to a regional public body in the administrative district, have the right to receive a written answer in Sami.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letters in Sami are answered in Sami - Spoken enquiries in Sami at an office are answered in Sami. - Provisions are made for the use of Sami at the annual parish meeting. - JPC shall document the need for funds to cover dual language provisions in budget negotiations with the municipality 	<p>Letters / written requests in Sami shall be answered in Sami.</p>	<p>Letters / written requests in Sami shall be answered in Sami.</p>
<p>§ 3-6. Individual pastoral ministry</p> <p>Everyone has the right to individual pastoral ministry in Sami in the Church of Norway's parishes within the administrative district</p>	<p>Clergy with permanent appointments shall offer individual pastoral ministry in Sami in the case of counseling, baptism and Holy Communion. This applies to deacons with permanent appointments in the case of counseling.</p> <p>Sami interpreters will ensure that there is adequate language competence in the ordained ministry to fulfill the law.</p>	<p>DC shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - include the knowledge of Sami / instruction in Sami when advertising vacancies. - seek to ensure adequate instruction in Sami for clergy and further education for interpreters. - secure professional supervision of Sami ministry and interpretation services. - include measures to fulfill the Sami Act language regulations in budgeting and planning . - The bishop must supervise the Sami ministry and interpretation services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MCA is responsible for providing means for instruction in Sami for clergy and further education for interpreters. This is to be followed up by NC in contact with MCA. - Pastoral ministry in Sami presupposes the availability of liturgies, hymns and biblical texts in Sami. SCC is responsible for Sami hymns and liturgies. - MCA make grants for Sami Bible translations, and the Bible Society follows this up.
<p>§ 3-7. The right to leave of absence for educational purposes</p> <p>Employees in a local or regional public body within the administrative district have the right to leave of absence with pay in order to gain knowledge of Sami, when the body needs such knowledge. This right can be made dependent on the employee's obligation to work for the body in a certain period of time after the leave of absence.</p>	<p>JPC as employer shall give employees leave of absence with pay in order to gain knowledge of Sami, when the church needs such knowledge.</p> <p>JPC can make the leave of absence dependent on continued employment.</p>	<p>DC as employer shall give employees leave of absence with pay in order to gain knowledge of Sami, when the diocese needs such knowledge.</p> <p>DC can make the leave of absence dependent on continued employment.</p>	<p>NC as employer shall give employees leave of absence with pay in order to gain knowledge of Sami, when the church needs such knowledge.</p> <p>NC can make the leave of absence dependent on continued employment.</p>

5.3.3. Internal church regulations for the use of Sami languages

The Church of Norway has learned from long experience that rules for the use of Sami languages in the church are important for legitimising and upholding the use of Sami in church life (see the Royal Decree of 1848). The use of Sami in worship can still raise debate in some places, even within the administrative district for Sami language. The Church of Norway needs therefore to establish its own policy for Sami languages by means of regulations within the church.

The worship reform has made allowances for this. The *Basic local order*, which establishes a binding framework for worship in the parishes, states that “congregations within the administrative district for Sami language are bound to include Sami language in their worship. This shall be incorporated in the local basic order” (KM 07/11 The Worship Reform, general regulations, section C.3).

This should be seen in connection with the *annual plan* for worship, which shall also be included in the Local basic order and which also stipulates what kind of services shall be held (KM 07/11 The Worship Reform, general regulations, section C.4). Services in Sami should be included in this.

These regulations will make local parish councils aware of their responsibility, and will provide the bishops with a means of ensuring that Sami languages are in fact incorporated in parish plans in accordance with the law. The bishops of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros should in addition consider providing clergy with guidelines for the use of Sami languages in *church ceremonies*.

Plans now in force for *Christian education*, *diakonia* and *church music* contain guidelines for preserving Sami languages. The new plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway, *God gives – we share*, states that Sami children and young people have the right to teaching and materials in their own language, irrespective of where in the country they live. Church music in a parish involves language to a large degree, in liturgy, hymns, anthems etc. Diaconal ministry is covered by § 3-6 in the Sami Act language regulations in connection with pastoral care in the administrative district (see Appendix 1).

- Concern for the Sami languages in the cases named above is expected to be incorporated in *local planning* in the administrative district for Sami language, and should also be incorporated in Sami areas outside the administrative district. The bishops of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros should determine which parishes this should apply to.

5.4. Responsibility and the need for resources at different levels in the structure of the Church of Norway

As with other aspects of the Church of Norway, Sami church life requires cooperation between the local, regional and national levels, by which local church life is supported by the regional and national structures. After beginning with local issues, focus will be placed on the role of the regional and national levels. What responsibility should be placed on the various bodies, and how should they cooperate?

5.4.1. The local church

Section 3.5. above describes key participants in Sami church life at the local level, and the responsibility that local churches have for Sami church life (5.1.-5.3). In the light of this, the following needs for resources at the local level are proposed, within the limits of the plan of action for 2012-2016.

The Sami language workers / interpreters proposed below are regarded as absolutely necessary to enable local churches to fulfill their duties under the Sami Act language regulations. Appointments for language workers in Lule Sami and South Sami are especially important, since no such language workers are employed at any level in the Church of Norway.

For many years, Oslo diocesan council has expressed the need for a Sami minister for Oslo / Southern Norway. In the light of the large number of Sami living in the Oslo region and Southern Norway generally, this should be given priority.

During the next few years priority will be given to new diaconal appointments in the Church of Norway. It is natural that Sami church life should be favoured with new appointments in this connection.

Saemien Áålmege (SÅ) – the Sami congregation in the South Sami area is an experiment being carried out in 2009-2012. This project is expected to provide experience that can be useful for Sami church life in the whole country. It is important to observe how SÅ develops in and after the trial period. Reports say that grants from the Ministry barely cover running costs.

Resources that are needed

- *One new appointment (100 %) of a Lule Sami interpreter / language worker.* The appointment should cover both traditional interpreters' tasks and other language development work in connection with Lule Sami church life. The appointment should be based in *Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord*, but should also provide some services to South Hålogaland diocese and the church at a national level.
- *One new appointment (100 %) of a South Sami interpreter / language worker.* The appointment should cover both traditional interpreters' tasks and other language development work in connection with South Sami church life. The appointment should be based in the Sami congregation in the South Sami area, but should also provide some services to *Snåase/Snåsa* parish (and other parishes that may be included in the administrative district for Sami language), Nidaros diocese and the church at a national level.
- *One new appointment (25 %) as North Sami interpreter in Porsáŋgu/ Porsanger.* The Sami language church administration in Porsanger suffers because of the lack of an interpreter. North Hålogaland diocesan council has already informed the Ministry of the need for this appointment, but without result.

- *One new appointment (25 %) as North Sami interpreter in Loabát/Lavangen.* Loabát/Lavangen local authority was included in the administrative district for Sami language in October 2009.
- *A 100 % ministerial appointment to serve Sami church life in Southern Norway* with a special responsibility for Oslo. The appointment could be coordinated with the already established Sami church work in Bergen and perhaps meet the needs of other larger towns such as Fredrikstad and Stavanger. The appointment would include Christian education and diaconal tasks. If it is difficult to recruit a minister, a deacon could be appointed instead.
- *A new 100 % diaconal appointment for the Lule Sami area, based in Divtasvuodna/ Tysfjord and Hábmir/Hamarøy.* The deacon could also provide some services to the Bodø area.
- *A new 100 % diaconal appointment in Inner Finnmark rural deanery (Porsanger / Kautokeino)*
- Strengthen the *Saemien Áålmege (SÅ)* – the Sami congregation in the South Sami area by increasing the office of church administrator from 50 % to 100 %.

5.4.2. The rural deans' responsibility

There is no specific need for resources at the rural deans' level, but here are some ways in which they are expected to support Sami church life.

Formally, the rural dean can be regarded as part of the regional body. The rural dean assists the bishop in his/her supervision and has leadership and employer functions for the clergy (and in some cases for interpreters). In this way, the rural deans in the five rural deaneries affected by the Sami Act language regulations have duties under the Act. With this in mind, the following suggestions are made:

Rural deans with one or more parishes within the administrative district for Sami language:

- should in the course of one year after taking office have been taught to read a minimum of liturgical texts in Sami (for example "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", the Lord's Prayer, the words of distribution at Holy Communion, the Benediction). They should also be given an introduction to local Sami church traditions.
- should be held up to date on the contents of the Sami Act language regulations and the duties that they impose on local and regional church bodies
- should be attentive to the Sami language ministry within the administrative district.
- should make use of rural deanery meetings to discuss Sami issues within the rural deaneries.

- are responsible, in cooperation with the bishop, for creating settings / meeting places for clergy and parish councils which can serve to support Sami language and culture in the life of the parishes.

5.4.3. The bishops' responsibility

There is no specific need for resources linked to the bishops, but here are some ways in which they are expected to support Sami church life.

The bishops of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros have a special responsibility for supervising Sami church life in their dioceses (see 5.4.3) and should:

- in the course of one year after taking office have been taught to read a minimum of liturgical texts in Sami (for example "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", the Lord's Prayer, the words of distribution at Holy Communion, the Benediction). They should also be given an introduction to local Sami church traditions.

The General Synod has urged the three most northerly dioceses to take responsibility on behalf of the whole church in connection with ministry in each of their official Sami languages. Sharing responsibility in this way is practical, but is also complicated by the fact that the boundaries between the Sami languages do not coincide with diocesan boundaries. Coordination of supervision and responsibility between the three bishops should be increased. This should be carried out in cooperation with the three diocesan councils.

- *The bishops of North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros should meet annually to discuss and coordinate ministry in the Sami languages.*
- Since ministry to the Sami also involves the bishops of Hamar, Oslo and Bjørgvin, the *bishops' conference* should also take responsibility for this discussion and coordination.
- *An annual meeting for Sami clergy* should be considered by North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros bishops.
- The bishop of North Hålogaland should hold an *annual meeting for interpreters* in for supervision and professional development.
- The possibility of holding the meeting for clergy involved in Sami ministry in connection with an *annual conference on Sami church life* should be considered. The conference could include other local employees and volunteers. The Sami Church Council and the diocesan councils should cooperate in arranging such a conference.

5.4.4. Diocesan councils – responsibility and need for resources

The diocesan councils for North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros share a special responsibility for Sami church life, as a result of both decisions at the General Synod and the Sami Act language regulations. These also give directions for the services that the diocesan councils should provide through the staff of the diocesan offices as a professional and

administrative resource, especially for the ordained ministry but also for the parishes. This requires that the diocesan council has the necessary *competence* and *capacity*. The services include guidance on Sami liturgy and hymn books, information on Sami church life in the diocese, teaching Sami languages, informing about relevant laws, directions from the Ministry and church regulations in the area, organising Sami committees and professional conferences, Sami Christian education activities, measures to increase competence etc.

In addition to the three most northerly diocesan councils, the Hamar diocesan council, in cooperation with Nidaros, has a natural responsibility for the South Sami population in its diocese. In addition, many Sami live in large towns such as Oslo and Bergen. It is natural that Oslo diocesan council should have a special responsibility for Sami church life.

In order to coordinate work among the Sami, regular meetings should be held between the three most northerly diocesan councils and between the diocesan councils and the Sami Church Council's secretariat.

There is a danger that tasks and responsibilities which in other spheres of the life of the Church of Norway are placed on the diocesan councils, will in the case of Sami church life be transferred to the national bodies. The Sami Church Council does not have the necessary capacity for this, and such a shift of responsibility would not benefit Sami church life. At a time when the diocesan councils are increasingly burdened with ambitious plans for Christian education, worship reform, church and culture etc, it is important to insist on this.

Sami Church Life in the Church of Norway – Draft of a Plan of Action, which provided the groundwork for the General Synod's debate in 1990, proposed the appointment of a Sami diocesan curate in each of the three most northerly dioceses in order to "ensure that each diocese has the capability and capacity to support Sami church life." This was not followed up.

In North Hålogaland diocese, the Sami diocesan curate – when there has been one – has taken responsibility for this function. But this has hindered the outreach among the Sami which the appointment was meant to ensure. In South Hålogaland and Nidaros, this has been part of the work load of one of the consultants at the diocesan office, but resources are limited. South Hålogaland diocesan council has informed the diocese of the need for a consultant on Sami church life in the diocese.

The need for resources

- The three most northerly diocesan offices need consultants with competence in Sami church life.

Appointments at the local and national level are given priority in this plan rather than consultant appointments in the dioceses. It is expected that the language worker proposed for the South Sami and Lule Sami areas will be able to assist Nidaros and South Hålogaland diocesan councils.

5.4.5. The Sami Church Council – responsibility and need for resources

According to Norwegian law (the Church Act), the General Synod shall "protect and promote Sami church life". The Synod has established a special body for this purpose. The Sami

Church Council functions on behalf of the General Synod with regard to Sami church life. Even though this is the special responsibility of the Sami Church Council, the National Council and the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations share responsibility for Sami church life within their own spheres.

According to the Sami Church Council's statutes, its main object is to promote, protect and coordinate Sami church life in the Church of Norway, and to encourage the acknowledgement of Sami church life as an integral and coequal part of the Church of Norway. The statutes go on to say that the Sami Church Council shall keep in touch with relevant issues in Sami culture, history and community life, attend to relations with churches in Sweden, Finland and Russia that have Sami congregations and be responsible for the Church of Norway's work for indigenous peoples in cooperation with the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations.

In other words, the Sami Church Council has a very far-reaching mandate. In addition to general professional competence in church affairs and knowledge of the Church of Norway's structure, activities and ongoing developments, the Council needs to have access to knowledge of Sami church and community life, Sami culture, traditions and history, be familiar with three Sami languages, including knowledge of liturgical, hymnological and pedagogical developments in these languages, be familiar with Sami church life in Sweden, Finland and Russia, with indigenous peoples' rights and the churches' concern for indigenous peoples, which also requires a knowledge of English. It is demanding for a small secretariat to be responsible for so many different fields of work.

Today, the Sami Church Council has four employees: general secretary (100 %), secretary (100 %), Christian education adviser (100 %) and North Sami language consultant (80 %). This is too little considering the Council's mandate and the expectations placed on it.

With the exception of Sami Christian education, which has an ample budget as part of the Christian education reform, the Sami Church Council has a tight budget. In 2010, running expenses for the Sami Church Council were around 10 % of the total budget (around kr.205,000,-) of which more than 75 % (kr. 165,000,-) went to travel expenses.

In order to carry out the assignments it has been given, the Council needs a knowledge of the Lule Sami and South Sami languages. In order to justify permanent appointments for contact with Lule Sami and South Sami speaking circles, the Council's appointments should be linked to those that are proposed at a local level (see section 5.4.1).

Need for resources

- one 100 % adviser for young people (see section 5.8).
- one 100% adviser for diakonia / culture / indigenous peoples (see sections 5.9, 5.11 and 5.15).
- increased operational budget.

Relocation of the Sami Church Council

In 2008, on the recommendation of the Sami Church Council, the National Council decided that the Sami Church Council should move to Tromsø in 2010. The Sami Church Council's reason was mainly a wish to be geographically nearer to communities with competence in Sami church life and to Sami settlement areas in general. The National Council has applied to

the Ministry for funds for this, but it has not been included in the state budget for 2010 or 2011. In the budget for 2011, the Ministry has written that relocation of the Sami Church Council should be considered in the light of the General Synod's discussion of the strategic plan for Sami church life in 2011.

The Sami Church Council realises that it is important to be close to national developments in the church, but this can also be the case with Tromsø as its base. Recruiting and increasing competence in Sami church life are the Council's main objects, and Tromsø provides the best opportunities for Sami studies and has the largest Sami student community in Norway. In addition to the Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology (KUN), Tromsø University has the following academic milieus: Institute of history and religious studies (including a complete course in theology), Centre for Sami Studies, studies in Sami languages and Master in Indigenous Studies.

The National Council and the Sami Church Council have made some administrative and personal preparations for the relocation. The possibility of sharing premises with KUN in Tromsø has been considered. KUN provides practical courses for clergy, catechists, deacons and church musicians, and was founded specifically to serve Northern Norwegian and Sami interests. Both KUN and the Sami Church Council think that the two institutions would both gain by sharing premises.

- Relocation requires funds for moving, establishing and running the Sami Church Council secretariat in Tromsø.

5.5. Sami bible translations

A basic requirement for ensuring the use of North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami in worship and ministry is that bible texts are available in these languages. In Norway, the Norwegian Bible Society is responsible for translating the Bible into Sami, with funds mainly from the Ministry. Translating the Bible into Sami languages requires cooperation across the borders. Today, the Norwegian Bible Society is responsible for organising translations into North Sami and South Sami, while the Swedish Bible Society has been responsible for translations into Lule Sami.

In 2006, the General Synod urged that bible translation should be intensified, with the aim of providing translations of the whole bible into the three Sami languages (KM 7/06). When the decision was made to compile a new lectionary for the Church of Norway, the General Synod passed on a request from the Sami Church Council, that priority should be given to translation of all the texts in the lectionary into the three Sami languages (KM 7/10, § 9)

North Sami

The Bible was translated into North Sami in 1895, with the contemporary Hætta/Friis orthography. A new North Sami orthography came in 1978, and since 1987 a committee has been translating the Bible into North Sami. The New Testament was published in 1998 with the current orthography, and work is in progress on revising / translating the Old Testament. The New Testament and revised/newly translated books of the Old Testament are available on the Bible Society's web site, www.bibel.no. The Norwegian Bible Society is leading and coordinating this work in cooperation with the Bible Societies in Finland and Sweden.

The aim has been to complete the Old Testament by 2015. Reports from the Bible Society suggest that this will need to be adjusted. The North Sami Bible project is complicated by the fact that the North Sami language in Finland and Norway/Sweden is influenced by the very different majority languages in these countries (with their respective Bible translations), and that there is no agreed standard for good North Sami syntax. The Bible translation project is in fact the only major attempt to find a form of written North Sami that is acceptable and understandable for North Sami speakers in all three countries.

Lule Sami

The New Testament was published in Lule Sami in 2000. The project was led by the Swedish Bible Society in cooperation with the Norwegian Bible Society and with experts from the Lule Sami area on both sides of the border. A number of portions of the Old Testament are translated and published in the Lule Sami *Julevsáme sálmagirjje* from 2005. At the end of 2009, there were no concrete plans for translating the Old Testament into Lule Sami, but the Swedish Bible Society wishes to know how much interest there is in the Lule Sami area for a translation of (parts of) the Old Testament into Lule Sami. In the consultative round on the *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway*, many respondents in the Lule Sami area emphasised the importance of starting work on translating the Old Testament into Lule Sami. In a letter of 11th November 2010, the Norwegian Bible Society asked the Swedish Bible Society to take the initiative and begin translating those portions of the Old Testament that are included in the newest Norwegian and Swedish lectionaries.

South Sami

The Gospel of Mark was published in South Sami in 1993. In 2003, a new project was started with the aim of translating texts to be used in schools and in church. This is a joint project by the Norwegian Bible Society, the Swedish Bible Society, the bishop of Nidaros and The Church of Sweden. The project does not have any permanent employees. These bible passages will be important for promoting the South Sami language, which only in recent years has been normalised and used as a written language. In other words, the work of translating the Bible into South Sami is a linguistic pioneer project for preserving South Sami. The bible passages that have been translated are available on www.bibel.no.

According to the Bible Society, the Church of Norway's new lectionary and the needs of schools will determine the final scope of the body of texts. It is natural that the lectionary should be the basis (KM 6/11).

The South Sami Bible translation project is in need of increased funding. The Bible Society applied to the Ministry, but received the reply that grants will not be increased, and that funds for the South Sami translation must be taken from the block grant to Sami Bible translations. In practice, this means that funds must be taken from the North Sami translation project, if the South Sami project is to be strengthened. According to the Bible Society, this would be very detrimental. It should be the rule that new Sami translation projects release fresh funding and do not take funds from existing projects.

The following measures are proposed concerning Sami Bible translations (North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami):

- The Norwegian Bible Society is urged to maintain the tempo in translating the Old Testament / completing the Bible in North Sami.

- The Norwegian Bible Society is urged to try to secure more funding for the South Sami Bible translation, with the aim of translating all the texts in the Church of Norway's new lectionary.
- The Swedish Bible Society is urged to begin work on translating the Old Testament into Lule Sami in cooperation with the Norwegian Bible Society. To begin with, all the texts in the newest Norwegian and Swedish lectionaries should be translated. The Swedish Bible Society is also urged to make the translations available on the internet.
- The Ministry of Church Affairs is urged to support translations of the Bible into Sami languages with the necessary funding.
- Employees in the Church of Norway are urged to contribute to the use of Sami Bible translations in the church and in schools.

5.6. Hymns and liturgies (the worship reform)

5.6.1. Hymns

In the North Sami and Lule Sami areas there is a long tradition of singing Sami hymns in the home or at meetings – in the North Sami area this applies also to worship in church. In recent years hymns have been written in and translated into South Sami and are often used in South Sami meetings and worship. The Sami Church Council is responsible at a national level for work on Sami hymns.

North Sami

In parishes where North Sami is spoken, there is a long tradition for singing hymns in Sami in church and at religious meetings. There are a number of books of spiritual songs for use at meetings. These all use the old orthography. Those that have been used most in recent generations are *Sálbmagirji* (1928) and *Gir'kosál'bmagir'ji* (1957). A new edition of *Sálbmagirji* (360 hymns) was published in 1996 with the current orthography, and a supplement *Sálbmagirji II* (441 hymns) was published in 2005 by the Sami Church Council. No tune book has been published for *Sálbmagirji I-II*, and in a letter of 3rd June 2010, North Hålogaland diocesan council has requested that one be published. The supplementary hymn book *Salmer 1997* contains eight North Sami hymns.

- A tune book for *Sálbmagirji I-II* should be compiled.

Lule Sami

The Lule Sami hymn book *Julevsáme sálmmagirje* (232 hymns) was published in 2005. It replaced the Lule Sami hymn book from 1895 (published in Sweden). Work on the new hymn book was led from Sweden, with the participation of advisors from the Lule Sami area in both Norway and Sweden. It continues a tradition of hymn-singing in Lule Sami on both sides of the border. The supplementary hymn book *Salmer 1997* contains seven Lule Sami hymns.

- Hymns and spiritual songs that have been put into writing should be collected, and new ones written or translated, especially for children and young people.

South Sami

A number of hymns have been translated into South Sami. The supplementary hymn book *Salmer 1997* contains seven South Sami hymns. There is no South Sami hymn book. In 2008 the Sami Church Council began collecting South Sami hymns, in cooperation with the Committee for South Sami Church Life (ÅGM). This has led to a number of South Sami hymns being written, and in 2010 *Ung Kirkesang* published a booklet, *Jupmele mov ryöjnesjæjja lea*, with four new hymns in South Sami.

- The production of hymns in South Sami should continue.

Multilingual Sami hymn books / booklets

In connection with the Sami Church Days, where many different Sami languages can be heard, booklets have been compiled including hymns that are available in several Sami languages. For the Church Days in 2004, the booklet included hymns in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami; in 2009 there were also hymns in Enare Sami and Skolt Sami.

- A new booklet with hymns in Sami languages should be compiled for the Sami Church Days in 2013.

The worship reform

As part of the worship reform, a considerable amount of work was done on a new two-volume hymn book for the Church of Norway. This was to include sixty Sami hymns, twenty in each of the three written languages. The purpose was to meet the need for the occasional use of Sami hymns at baptisms, weddings, funerals and other services anywhere in the country. The National Council now wants a single volume with fewer hymns than originally planned. The principle of including hymns in all three Sami languages has been upheld.

- The intention mentioned above should be upheld in producing future hymnbooks for the Church of Norway.

5.6.2. Liturgies

When the Sami Church Council took over responsibility for Sami liturgies, the Church of Norway had relatively little experience in the field. A number of problems soon emerged. In the first place, being forced to use some of the 1977 liturgies when they were introduced created an unfavourable climate for liturgical reform in many North Sami congregations. In the second place, professional resources in Sami languages have been scarce because the languages have been revitalised in many sectors of society at the same time. Very few liturgical experts have Sami as their mother tongue. Important ground-breaking work has been done on developing Sami musical scores, but the lack of professional expertise is also noticeable here. As the work on Sami liturgies has been expanded to embrace three Sami languages, the scarcity of administrative resources at the Sami Church Council has also become a critical factor for the projects. However, the ability to organise the work on Sami liturgies has increased considerably, and there is more awareness today of the key factors involved. A more realistic view of what resources are necessary has also emerged.

- Strengthening the Sami Church Council's secretariat (section 5.4.5) must be seen in the light of the need to continue work on liturgies in South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami.

North Sami

The Church of Norway's liturgies from 1920 are translated into North Sami, and are used wholly or partly in a number of North Sami congregations. In 1994, the Sami Church Council appointed a North Sami liturgical committee to translate a selection of the 1977 liturgies. The liturgy for the Eucharist from 1977, *Allameassu* 1999, has been given new musical settings and is in use in some churches. The translation was authorised by the Sami Church Council in 2007 and by the National Council in 2008. During spring 2011 a new North Sami book of worship was published with eighteen new liturgies in North Sami. Fourteen of these are translations of 1977 liturgies, three of liturgies for weddings and funerals (2003 and 2002) and two are newly composed (baptism in the home and the blessing of house and home). The book of worship represents a considerable musical renewal, with 25 new settings in which sensitivity for Sami musicality has been emphasised. These liturgies are also available on the internet: <http://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=127404>.

- Organ settings for the new North Sami book of worship should be produced.

Lule Sami

Work is in progress on authorising liturgies in Lule Sami for use in the Church of Norway. In 2008, the Sami Church Council and South Hålogaland bishop began authorising nine Lule Sami translations of liturgies from the church's 1977 liturgies. They were sent on a consultative round in 2009 and are expected to be authorised in the spring of 2011. See <http://www.kirken.no/?event=doLink&famID=94232>

- The Lule Sami liturgies should be authorised and published in 2011.

South Sami

Four of the Church of Norway's liturgies have been translated into South Sami: the Eucharist (1977) (authorised for use in Nidaros diocese), baptism, marriage (2003) and funerals (2002). The first-named is available on the internet, <http://www.kirken.no/nidaros/tekstsider.cfm?kid=20200&id=24025>. These liturgies must be edited linguistically and theologically before they can be authorised. It would be an advantage if South Sami liturgies could be used on both the Norwegian and the Swedish sides of the border. This requires that they are adapted for use in both the Church of Norway and the Church of Sweden, and that the authorisation process is carried out by the bodies in both churches that are responsible for South Sami liturgies. The aim is to appoint a working party with the approval of these bodies, so that the liturgies can be submitted for authorisation in 2012.

- The South Sami liturgy project should continue with the aim of authorisation in 2012 and publication in 2013.

The worship reform and Sami liturgies

Sami church life has only in a limited degree been affected by the liturgical renewal which the worship reform represents. The reason is that when the reform was decided upon, the Sami Church Council was in the process of translating (or completing) the 1977 liturgies in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami. Since these liturgies will be alternatives when the reform is introduced, the Sami Church Council decided to complete the process.

The key values in the worship reform, *indigenisation, involvement and flexibility* can also apply in Sami worship, both with regard to the older liturgical tradition and to newly created

liturgies. An example of the latter is *Ripheldihkie jih ektiedimmie gyrhkesjimmie saemien jih daaroen gielesne – open and inclusive worship in Sami and Norwegian*, guidelines for creative Sami worship published by the Sami Church Council in 2006.

In 2005, the Sami Church Council appointed an advisory committee to assist in developing Sami worship. In its final report (2007), the committee says this about the worship reform:

The worship reform in the Church of Norway has *indigenisation, involvement and flexibility* as its key values. *Involvement* should mean equal participation. *Indigenisation* should focus on the incarnation, that Christ came to human beings where they are. The church must make use of people's values and forms of self-expression. Dialogue with people is vital. *Flexibility* is important for Sami worship, since there are different traditions in different parts of the country. There should be room for the use of the 1920 liturgy where that is preferred, as well as new experimental liturgies. Sápmi is manifold in its languages, culture and spiritual traditions. Thinking must therefore be contextual when Sami church life is considered at all levels in the church.

Work on Sami worship is not first and foremost intended to enrich the Church of Norway, but to give the Sami population equal opportunities in worship. Equal opportunities means worship that is adapted to people's needs, not necessarily that everyone is offered the same kind of worship.

The pattern of the worship reform, with a fixed form, *ordo*, for worship, but with the principles of indigenisation and flexibility in determining the various elements of worship, opens up the possibility of *continuous development* of Sami liturgies. The Sami should be given the opportunity to develop their liturgies within the framework provided by the worship reform. The role of the Liturgical Center in developing Sami liturgies should be considered. South Sami circles have said that they would appreciate cooperation with the Liturgical Center.

- Within the framework of the worship reform, further development of Sami liturgies should be encouraged, with Sami languages, culture and ways of thinking as the starting point. The possibility of using the liturgies across the national borders can be borne in mind.
- Liturgical material in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami should be made available in the worship reform resource bank.
- The development of Sami church art and church music should be given priority. See section 5.11.
- The Liturgical Center should be involved in developing Sami liturgies.

5.7. Christian education (the Christian education reform)

Appointments:

Five permanent appointments and two project appointments are directly related to Christian education for Sami in the Church of Norway. Indirectly can two other appointments (one permanent, one project) also be related to Sami Christian education.

North Sami:

- Permanent: catechist in Kárášjohka/Karasjok, catechist/church teacher in *Guovdageaidnu/Kautokeino*, catechist in *Deatnu ja Unjárga/ Tana* and Nesseby,
- Project: Leader for Christian education project in Inner Finnmark (Christian education reform)

Lule Sami:

- Permanent: catechist in *Divtasvuodna/Tysfjord* and catechist in Hamarøy (indirect)

South Sami:

- Project: Christian education worker in the South Sami area / North Rana (Christian education reform) and Christian education worker (reform project) *Snåase/Snåsa* (indirect)

National:

- Adviser for Christian education (Sami Church Council).

Seven of the appointments have been made because of the need to organise Sami Christian education, and it is important that local appointments have the same motivation.

Christian education materials in Sami:

The following material (excluding bible portions) is available in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami.

North Sami: eight small picture books (one bible story in each), a children's bible, *Boahhteáiggeriika (Land of the Future)*, published as part of the celebrations of the 2000 years anniversary of the birth of Christ), *My Bible Book*, a book for Sami confirmation candidates (out of print, new edition in 2011).

Lule Sami: five small picture books (one bible story in each).

South Sami: A children's bible, five small picture books (one bible story in each) and a South Sami Christmas legend.

The Christian education reform:

The Christian education reform which was passed by Parliament in 2003 is probably the reform in the Church of Norway that has paid most attention to Sami interests. This applies to all three phases: experimental, evaluational and operational. An important reason for this is probably that the reform was politically initiated, and the proposal to Parliament from the Committee for Church, Education and Research, White Paper nr. 200 (2202-2003), contained clear instructions to pay attention to Sami Christian education in implementing the reform.

A North Sami project in *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan/Inner Finnmark rural deanery* and a South Sami project in North Rana parish / the South Sami language area were specific Sami projects in the experimental phase. In addition, Sami theses have been included in some projects, for example a project in Hamarøy in the Lule Sami area.

In the evaluation report *Sami Christian education – segment report 6, 2008* (http://www.utor.no/doc/Delrapport6_27_mai_SDM_OH.pdf), the projects related to the Sami are described and evaluated in a broad historical, cultural and ecclesiastical context. The report makes it clear that Sami Christian education faces special challenges in the need to pay attention to three Sami languages in a bilingual/multilingual setting, and in the considerable contextual theological questions raised by Sami culture and history.

The annual *conference for Sami Christian education* that the Sami Church Council has arranged together with Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology (KUN) since 2005 has provided an opportunity to discuss these questions. Even though the main focus has been on Sami Christian education, the conference has also discussed other themes related to Sami church life. It has established itself as an important forum for professional development and networking in Sami Christian education and Sami church life. During the past year, a conference on Sami church life which can focus more on other issues than Christian education has been suggested. Today, the Sami Church Council can only finance a conference within its budget for Christian education.

- The annual conference for Sami Christian education / Sami church life should continue to be held.

The course *Faith and philosophy in Sápmi* (30 study points) was started in *Sámi allaskuvla* / Sami University College in Kautokeino in 2008, partly financed by Christian education grants. The course contributes to reflection on Sami church life in the encounter with historical and contemporary conditions (the study plan has been developed with project grants from the Sami Church Council). The course was held in autumn 2008 / spring 2009 with positive evaluations. The Sami Church Council hopes to continue it (see section 5.13).

- The course *Tro og livstolkning i Sápmi* (Faith and philosophy in Sápmi) should be continued. In order to ensure recruitment, the course should be included in the further education programmes run by the Norwegian Association of Clergy, the Association for Employers in the Church of Norway, REU funds in the dioceses etc.

An important purpose of the Christian education reform is to help children and young people to find a language and images for their own faith and life. The Sami Church Council has used considerable resources within the framework of the Christian education reform to establish a *web site for Sami Christian education* (www.osko.no) which was launched on the Sami national day, 6th February 2009. This is an interactive site in four languages – North Sami, Lule Sami, South Sami and Norwegian – combining Sami Christian education and education in Sami culture. At the moment, the target group is 6-12 year-olds, but work is in progress to extend this to 12-15 year-olds in 2010. Since there is so little Christian education material available in Sami, the web site is a positive step forward and it is to be hoped that it will be a resource for children and young people in the important dialogue between their own life, their identity and Christian faith.

- Running and developing the web site for Sami Christian education should be continued

Parallel with electronic Christian education resources, basic Christian education material in Sami should be available on paper. This applies especially to the “four-year-book” which is

given to four-year-olds in all Norwegian parishes. So far, a book has only been available in North Sami (*Mu girkogirji*), but at the end of 2009 it was out of print. To meet the immediate need, “My Bible Book” was translated and published in North Sami in 2010, and a Lule Sami version is expected to be published in 2011. Themes such as Christian festivals, the church, baptism etc are not covered by the book, and the local elements of Sami church life are not emphasised. In the coming years, a four-year-book for Sami church life should be produced and published in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami, with room for indigenous Sami elements. The South Sami would rather wait for this than translate “My Bible Book”.

- A four-year-book for Sami church life should be produced and published in North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami.

One result of the Christian education reform is that Sami themes are much more in evidence in the national plan for Christian education. In a number of places in *God gives – we share*. Plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway, adopted by the General Synod in 2009, (English version 2010), the special responsibility for Sami Christian education is made clear. At the same time, the plan points out that knowledge of the Sami people’s spirituality, church life and traditions is an important part of the heritage that *everyone* should share.

Under the heading “Sami Christian education” in chapter 8, the plan says this on responsibility:

Parishes where Sami people live have a special responsibility for renewal also of Sami Christian education. The *Plan for Sami Christian Education* has been made on the basis of Sami culture, tradition and language.

The Norwegian state is built on the territory of two peoples, Sami and Norwegians. The Norwegian constitution § 110a affirms that the state authorities are committed to making it possible for the Sami people to preserve and develop their culture, their languages and their community life. Sami children and young people have the right to education and materials in their own language, irrespective of where in the country they live.

Under the heading “Music and culture” in the chapter on important elements in Christian education, *God gives – we share* points out that the choice of hymns and songs and other forms of expression to be used in Christian education must reflect diversity and ensure both renewal and respect for tradition. In this connection it should be mentioned that children generally find it easy to learn songs and texts in foreign languages. The use of simple children’s songs in Sami languages in Christian education could therefore be widespread.

The *Plan for Sami Christian education* was adopted by the Sami Church Council in 2010 and published in 2011. The plan was made as a supplement to *God gives – we share*. The purpose is to make sure that Sami children are offered Christian education which takes their Sami origins into account, both with regard to general conditions and content. The plan will help to ensure that the guidelines for Sami Christian education in *God gives – we share* are followed.

- Parishes and dioceses should be encouraged to ensure that the provisions for Sami Christian education in *God gives – we share* and the *Plan for Sami Christian education* are followed up.

- Internet resources should be provided to help in implementing the *Plan for Sami Christian education* and the provisions in *God gives – we share*.

The inclusion of children with disabilities is important in Sami Christian education and is provided for in the *Plan for Sami Christian education*.

National Sami confirmation camp

Since the 1980s, the Church of Sweden has held a three week long camp for Sami candidates for confirmation from the whole country, with good results. Individual young people from Norway have often taken part (mostly Sami with relatives from Sweden). In 2009 the Norwegian participation was questioned by the Church of Sweden because of the large number wanting to participate (see SKR 12/10). Attempts have been made in recent years to hold a confirmation camp for the South Sami.

The Sami Church Council is considering holding a national Sami confirmation camp on the same lines as the Swedish camp (but shorter). Since the tradition of confirmation as an element of Sami church life is already strong in Inner Finnmark, the main recruitment for the camp will probably be in other areas, where the Sami are a minority. The camp would be important as a minimum provision for Sami confirmees in the whole country. The Sami council in the Church of Sweden has had positive experiences in holding a single camp for North Sami, Lule Sami and South Sami and recommends that the Norwegians do not arrange separate camps for the three language groups.

A national Sami confirmation camp should be seen in the light of the need to strengthen youth work among the Sami and should be coordinated with other activities for young people (see the next section). A confirmation camp can both be a place to recruit young people and to give Sami youth leaders the opportunity to participate as leaders.

- To ensure a minimum provision for Sami confirmation candidates throughout the country, an annual Sami confirmation camp should be arranged. It is natural that the Sami Church Council is responsible for this, in cooperation with the three most northerly dioceses.

Similar activities can be considered for other age groups receiving Christian education.

5.8. Youth work

There is a great need for meeting places for Sami young people in the Church of Norway. There are hardly any such meeting places today. The Sami Church Council youth committee, SKRU, and the Sami Church Council have pointed this out, and the Church of Norway Youth Synod, UKM, has emphasised several times that Sami youth work should be strengthened. Efforts for Sami youth work should also be seen in the light of the General Synod decision to develop and renew the Church of Norway's work for 18-30 year-olds (KM 5/09).

With the exception of confirmation training, local youth work for Sami is almost non-existent. Nor does the Church of Norway organise Sami youth work at a regional level, but efforts have been made to recruit Sami young people to the Diocesan Youth Conference, UKT, in the three most northerly dioceses. A few Sami young people have been representatives at the

UKT in North Hålogaland in the past few years, and a Sami young person has had a seat on the youth council in this diocese in 2008-2010.

Sami young people have been represented at the Church of Norway Youth Synod (UKM) every year since the beginning of the 2000s. They have mostly been recruited from the Sami Church Council's youth work. UKM has raised questions concerning Sami youth work on several occasions, in 2008 as a separate item on the agenda (UKM 6/08).

In 2000-2004 the Sami Church Council had success with a youth project, (*Ung i Sápmi*, Young in Sápmi) which focused on Sami identity and Christian faith. The aim was to recruit Sami young people to training and service in the church. Around twenty South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami young people aged 15-30 took part. Several of these have represented Sami church life in various settings afterwards, and a couple of them have started training for church work.

When the *Ung i Sápmi* project was over, the Sami Church Council's youth committee (SKRu) attempted to continue the work in 2005-2007. SKRu was an advisory committee for the Sami Church Council, but was disbanded in 2007, partly because appointments under the Sami Church Council could no longer be financed with project funds. It also lacked integration in the national and regional structures for youth work. Establishing a Sami youth committee in a new form has therefore been a priority for the Sami Church Council in connection with the *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life*.

The main reason for establishing a Sami youth committee in the Church of Norway must be the needs of Sami young people themselves. Efforts to strengthen Sami youth work will also be important for recruitment. The overall aims of Sami youth work in the Church of Norway must be to strengthen identity, language and Christian fellowship among Sami young people, increase their participation in and responsibility for Sami church life, and create more room for young people's culture in Sami church life. From a Sami point of view, it is important that youth work is organised across the generation boundaries.

Sami youth work should be based on local church life, and involving Sami young people and encouraging them to take part in local church life on their own premises should be a priority for local churches. Local work requires support at a regional and national level in order to succeed. In many places, youth work coordinated at a regional or national level will be the only youth activity in the church that is available to Sami young people. Sami youth work should therefore be given priority at a regional and national level

Camps / gahterings

The best way to strengthen Sami youth work is thought to be to create meeting-places for Sami young people. Because of great distances and congregations with few Sami young people, the strategy is to concentrate on regional and national meetings/camps (as in the *Ung i Sápmi* project). The focus should be on fellowship, identity and spiritual growth rather than paperwork and committees (UKM 07/10). Leadership training should be a part of this strategy in order to increase engagement, aid recruiting and ensure continuity. Given time, this kind of youth work can pave the way for a Sami youth body in the Church of Norway.

Sami youth committee – Sung

In order to give Sami young people influence in the church, a Sami committee for youth issues (Sung) should be organised at the national level to support local and regional Sami youth work.

Sung should be organised as a national committee like the National Council Youth Committee (Ufung). Sung will naturally deal with questions concerning Sami youth work that are of an ecumenical character and also involve cooperation across the borders. Sung will be a place where Sami young people are equipped for service in the church. The majority of Sung's members should be Sami (cf. the criteria for being on the electoral role for the Sami parliament).

UKM (07/10) has stated that Sung must not just be an administratively composed body appointed by various councils and committees, and thinks that the efforts for Sami youth work should begin with a large gathering of young people where some members of Sung can be elected. UKM suggests that Sung can be modeled on the National Council's committee for youth questions: the youth gathering can elect half the members and the others can be appointed by the Sami Church Council. In this way, all considerations can be taken, for example ensuring members from all three language areas, a balance of gender, age, etc.

- The appointment of a permanent Sami youth consultant with responsibility for national Sami youth work should be made (see section 5.4.5). The consultant's main tasks should be to coordinate Sami youth work in the Church of Norway, based on camps / mass meetings and to establish a Sami youth committee in the Church of Norway (Sung). Running costs should be provided for this.

Sami youth work should also be encouraged at a regional and local level.

- The three most northerly dioceses should be urged to focus on Sami youth work.
- Project funds should be allocated to local Sami youth work.
- Parishes within the administrative district for Sami language, the Sami congregation in the South Sami area and Inner Finnmark rural deanery are urged to pay special attention to Sami youth work.

A youth team

The Ministry has a scheme with so-called "Sami pathfinders", on the principle "youth meets youth". The scheme consists of three Sami young people who, under guidance from *Sámi Allaskuvla*, the Sami University College in Kautokeino, inform about the Sami and Sami youth in schools in different parts of Norway. A similar one-year scheme related to Sami church life could be organised, in which three young people, after instruction and mentoring, could travel around to different youth gatherings in the Church of Norway. They could give general information on the Sami and Sami church life in different parts of the country, as well as taking part in youth camps, confirmation instruction etc.

This idea should not be implemented as part of the plan of action for the *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life*. It presupposes established Sami youth work as a recruitment pool for the youth team and will be costly. In the long term, however, it can be considered. A Sami youth team could strengthen Sami youth work and act as a starting point for recruitment to service in the church.

5.9. Diakonia

Appointments:

Three appointments in the church of Norway are directly related to Sami diaconal ministry.

North Sami: Deacon in *Kárášjohka*/Karasjok, deacon in *Deatnu*/Tana and *Unjárga*/Nesseby.

Lule Sami: None

South Sami: South Sami deacon.

In addition, the Norwegian Sami Mission (*Samemisjonen*) employs a South Sami diaconal worker. This person has recently retired, but is continuing to work for one year. After this, the future is uncertain.

At the end of the 1990s, the question of Sami diakonia was considered, and a committee under the Sami Church Council prepared the document, *Grunnlagstenkning om samisk diakoni* (Reflections on Sami diakonia, 1999). The importance of building up a positive Sami identity and creating meeting places for Sami were basic themes in the document. This echoes the concerns in the Plan for diakonia (KM 6/97).

Cultural diversity and the rights of indigenous peoples are basic themes in the *Plan for diakonia*, which takes a broad view of diakonia with many points touching on Sami life. It defines diakonia as “the caring ministry of the Church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving one’s neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice.”

All four key concepts – love for one’s neighbour, inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice – are relevant for Sami diakonia. The need for a Sami dimension in traditional diaconal care is obvious. It is a question of meeting people in their own language and/or in the setting of their own culture and traditions in situations where they are especially vulnerable. Examples are pastoral counselling, the staffing of nursing homes, the inclusion of the disabled and caring for the bereaved, those affected by suicide, the victims of addiction, the sexually abused etc. *Grunnlagstenkning for samisk diakoni* also mentions children whose language at home is Sami as a group with special needs. In working with issues involving gender, equality and close relationships, a knowledge of Sami family structures and other aspects of Sami life is vital. Insight in Sami spirituality and ways of understanding life can also be important in order to avoid misunderstanding the experiences of those needing pastoral care or psychiatric treatment. In other words, Sami diakonia requires an extensive knowledge of Sami culture.

When it comes to inclusive communities, making contacts and networking is important when ministering to the Sami, who often live spread over large areas and are a minority in local communities. Strengthening and activating local networks (godparents, relatives, neighbours, good friends) in relation to church activities has a diaconal dimension. Including and making provisions for people with special needs is important also in Sami diakonia. The need for more hospital and prison chaplaincies can also be mentioned.

The focus on caring for creation makes room for revitalising and emphasising traditional Sami values related to nature. In the light of global climate problems, these values have a renewed relevance. The Sami contribution to work on the new plan for diakonia was decisive

for the inclusion of care of the creation in the new understanding of diakonia. It is important for Sami church life that this perspective is included in the local diaconal ministry.

In the plan's section 3.2, "Diakonia in society", diakonia is considered in a historical and social setting in which reconciliation is important for understanding the nature of diakonia. Preservation of the Sami languages, culture and community is seen as having a diaconal dimension:

Norway is established on the territory of two peoples – the Sami and the Norwegians, cf. Section 110A of the Norwegian Constitution. The norwegianisation of the Sami people has left deep wounds that are not yet fully healed. The historical role of the Church in this issue calls for efforts of reconciliation that can visualise and preserve the cultural diversity of the Sami people. The rights of the Sami people to their own language, history, culture, forms of commerce and codetermination, must be at the forefront of the diaconal ministry of the Church.

Diakonia can play an important part in opening up and enhancing Sami identity by taking seriously the Sami people's worldview and way of life.

This perspective is also relevant for the final theme in the plan for diakonia, the struggle for justice. Diakonia indicates themes that are taken up in the section on reconciliation and dialogue (below, section 5.10), and not least in the section on indigenous peoples (5.15). Engagement in indigenous peoples issues in an international context opens up for a diaconal ministry that takes global injustice seriously.

The *Plan for diakonia* is translated into North Sami (and English) and was made available at www.kirken.no in 2010. After the plan was implemented, there have not been many measures taken or opportunities to discuss its contents and implications for Sami diakonia.

- There should be an increased focus on Sami diakonia in years to come, and also increased funding. An appointment should be made under the Sami Church Council (see proposed appointments, section 5.4.5).
- A professional conference should be held on the theme of Sami diakonia, and further work should be done on a plan for diakonia in the context of Sami church life.

Diaconal ministry in the Church of Norway should be strengthened in the next few years by making new appointments. In this connection, it is natural that Sami church life is also granted new resources.

- Two new diaconal appointments should be made to strengthen local Sami church life (see section 5.4.1).

5.10. Reconciliation and Dialogue

The General Synod made the following statement (KM13/97): "The General Synod acknowledges that the authorities' norwegianisation policy has led to injustice toward the Sami population. The General Synod will contribute to the cessation of this injustice." The General Synod recommended that preparations should continue for holding services of

reconciliation and that questions concerning reconciliation should be discussed in local churches.

Few of the “services of reconciliation” that were announced have been held. After the General Synod resolution, some members of the Sami community were afraid that such services would proclaim a superficial “reconciliation” and that the Sami would be expected to accept that a painful and difficult history could be settled by a single church service. A better procedure would be to hold services that can *promote* reconciliation, rather than to hold services that are announced as “services of reconciliation”. There are a number of positive examples of this.

The most positive result of the General Synod resolution on reconciliation has been the reconciliation and dialogue project carried out in the Lule Sami area in North Salten (Hamarøy and Tysfjord) , 2005-2007. This project has provided the Church of Norway with valuable experiences that can be passed on to local and regional efforts at Sami-Norwegian reconciliation in other parts of the country.

As part of the project, meeting places for discussion and dialogue were created both for adults and young people. Sami and Norwegians could listen to one another’s stories and discuss the negative history and its consequences. The project also involved exchanges with the Koi people of South Africa, a coloured indigenous population that was marginalised by both the white and the black majority communities. The project was supported financially by the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations and the Sami Church Council. In the project report from February 2007, the project leader summed up what should be done to continue the reconciliation process:

1. Through the dialogue and reconciliation project in North Salten the church has been a spiritual meeting place in a way that has not been seen before. It has allowed itself to be influenced in the encounter with individuals’ life stories in a way that has changed the church and people’s impression of it. *The experience that has been gained must be passed on* to the church in other places and in its encounter with other groups with which it has been in conflict.
2. *The writing of history.* Through increasing local knowledge of the fate of the Sami and not least of the church’s role in the norwegianisation process, we as a church and a local community will be able to gain insight that we lack today, into what norwegianisation has done to Sami and Norwegians living in North Salten right up to the present day. As far as I can see, this will be a much too far-reaching and demanding task for small congregations with few resources to attempt on their own. (...)
3. *Make sure that Sami languages, art and culture are given more space in parishes which have both a Sami and a Norwegian population.* I think that a detailed plan should be made to ensure that Sami can discover familiar features in the church’s art, culture and language. Today, Sami art, culture and language are almost totally absent from most churches in the Lule Sami area. As of today, there is only one minister who can read the liturgy in Lule Sami. This situation is totally unacceptable and fundamentally wrong.

4. *Give economic and, if necessary, other support to an independent dialogue and reconciliation process in the Lule Sami area.*

To sum up, the reconciliation and dialogue project in North Salten can be said to have established reconciliation as part of the church's contribution to strengthening Sami church life (see section 4.6). It has also provided valuable experience of effective methods for local and regional reconciliation and dialogue. This will be relevant for much of Sami church life, and can probably be useful in other aspects of the church's ministry. The project report urges the establishment of independent dialogue and reconciliation activities in the Lule Sami area.

- Efforts should be made to continue and spread experience from the Lule Sami reconciliation and dialogue project.

The perspective of reconciliation played a central role in the Church of Norway's response to the bill proposing the new Finnmark Act of 2003 (KM 11/03). The Norwegian public took note of the Church of Norway's stance in this issue, and this was emphasised in the final debate on the Act. This reinforced the conviction of many Sami that the Church of Norway also exists for the Sami. There are still many questions concerning Sami rights in Norway which have not been settled and which will be discussed in parliament in 2009-2013. These are first and foremost about rights to land and water in the Sami area south of Finnmark, i.e. from Troms and south to Femunden (Den nye sameretten) and the coastal Sami's right to fish in the fjords and off the coast (proposal from the Committee for Coastal Fishing). The church's engagement in these issues is related to its concern for indigenous peoples (see section 5.15).

- It is natural for the Church of Norway to keep itself informed of current issues concerning Sami rights. This requires background knowledge and awareness of the church's responsibility and role in such issues.

5.11. Church and culture: church music and church art

The Church of Norway's cultural report, *The Art of Being Church*, 2005, laid the foundation for the increase in cultural activities in the church today. Sami church and cultural life is paid attention to as a distinctive perspective in the report, and the following "consequences and advice" is presented:

The Church of Norway should enable the Sami people to preserve and promote their language, their symbols and their cultural forms and create conditions for a vital Sami church and cultural life.

The Sami people shall have the right to use their own cultural forms and symbols in the church. This is vital, if they are to experience pride and security as a people. Sami artists can meet to share experiences and methods and to inspire one another to develop Sami cultural forms of expression further. Through worship and meetings, the Sami population can come together to discuss which Sami symbols and cultural forms can be used in church.

The church is urged to find symbols and rites from Sami tradition. This requires active liturgical efforts in which knowledge of Sami history, religious practices and culture is essential. Sami theologians are urged to continue this important work, while theological educational institutions should spread the necessary knowledge.

The church should create meeting places for all generations in order to strengthen Sami identity. This can be done through worship or through gathering confirmation candidates from the whole of Sápmi in order to strengthen their fellowship and their grasp of Sami spirituality and traditions, and to enable them to share their knowledge with one another. Going to church is also a social event. After worship, opportunities can be provided for the generations to meet and to hear news of friends and relatives who live far away. Children and young people will be able to learn about their origins. New information technology can also be used. The internet can be an effective instrument for contact between generations. Stories can be exchanged and knowledge and traditions be shared.

Sami hymns should be used more often in worship so that they are passed on in a natural way. Spiritual songs are important at funerals and devotions in the home and should also be given a place in public worship. Resources should be made available to pass on the knowledge of Sami hymns to the younger generations, so that the treasure trove they represent can be preserved. It is also important to make room for developing the use of *yoik* and traditional musical forms in areas where this is natural. Writing new hymns in the Sami languages will make Sami hymns more appropriate and familiar.

The Church of Norway has a responsibility for preserving and promoting the Sami languages – also as sacred languages. There should therefore be more sermons and services only in Sami.

Rather than suggesting isolated cultural activities, *The Art of Being Church* claimed that spreading Sami culture in the church is a matter of ensuring that Sami culture is integrated in the basic functions of Sami church life. The great breadth of suggestions in the *Strategic Plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* can be understood in this light. Promoting the use of Sami languages, making new appointments, working on Sami liturgies and theology etc are all examples of making Sami culture a priority in the Church of Norway.

The *Plan for Church Music* contains several references to Sami music and in addition contains a whole section on church music from a Sami point of view. The plan emphasises that the Church of Norway wants the diversity in Sami culture and music to blossom and develop within the church. One section is devoted to Sami hymns with their characteristic Sami tonality and to traditional music. It points out that the multicultural society both inspires and exerts pressure on the traditional values found in Sami communities and Sami church life. In the light of this, the Sami church seeks to strengthen its identity so that its church music can be preserved and revitalised on the basis of local traditions and needs. The plan points out that also congregations outside the main Sami areas should make room for Sami traditions and identity in their musical life. One of the aims of the *Plan for Church Music* is to make non-Sami aware of the value of the Sami musical tradition through using the Sami hymns and liturgies that are included in the hymn book and giving Sami music a role in worship.

The *Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway* indicates two areas to concentrate on in spreading Sami culture in the church: (1) Sami church art / church textiles and (2) Sami church music. To concentrate on these areas will serve to make Sami church life more visible and indigenised. It is relevant here to refer to what has been said about the importance of this in the section on reconciliation and dialogue (section 5.10). Sami church art will be an important factor in creating and affirming identity.

Very little has been done so far in Norway in the field of Sami church art and church textiles. But when it comes to church music, valuable experience has been gathered on the importance of developing Sami-inspired musical settings for liturgies in South Sami and North Sami.

- Resources should be made available for Sami culture with a special emphasis on Sami church art / church textiles and Sami church music. The Sami Church Council will ensure an appointment to deal with this (see proposed appointments, section 5.2).

When the dioceses have applied for grants for church culture, only North Hålogaland diocese has included Sami culture as part of its cultural activity. The National Council is responsible for seeing that the recommendations in *The Art of Being Church* are followed up also when it comes to Sami culture and church life.

- The cultural consultants for North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros diocesan councils and the National Council's cultural consultant should work with cultural activities that enhance Sami church life.

5.12. Recruitment

Sami Policy. White Paper nr 28 (2007-2008) makes it clear that good quality in services rendered requires employees with a command of Sami language and culture (page 71). At the same time, the government acknowledges that this poses a considerable recruitment problem. There is a gap between the competence required by laws and political recommendations and the competence in Sami language and culture that is actually available in the government departments. The White Paper says this about the situation in the Church of Norway (page 181):

As in other areas (cf. chapter 5.2), the availability of qualified Sami-speaking manpower is a problem for the church. The Sami Church Council has taken measures to improve the recruitment of Sami to appointments and professional training within the church. Even so, most ministers, catechists and deacons appointed to posts in the Sami areas today do not have a Sami language or cultural background. To ameliorate this, North Hålogaland has begun language training for clergy. The problem must also be seen in a wider perspective. It is, for example, also necessary to improve recruitment of Sami young people to professional training within the church.

The consequence of the recruitment situation is that even within the administrative district for Sami language, Sami are on the whole ministered to in Norwegian. According to The Sami Act § 3-6, everyone has the right to individual church ministry in Sami in Church of Norway parishes within the administrative district for Sami language, that is to say eight local authorities – Snåsa, Tysfjord, Kåfjord, Kautokeino,

Karasjok, Porsanger, Nesseby and Tana. Lavangen local authority in Troms has applied to be included in the administrative district.

It is not only within the administrative district that the church is taking measures to increase the use of Sami language.

In addition to professional qualifications within the church, a command of Sami language and culture is required for most church appointments in the Sami area. This applies to all levels in the church, for example interpretation, IT-solutions, courses for employees and providing bilingual signs. (*Sami Policy. White Paper nr 28 (2007-2008), page 181.*)

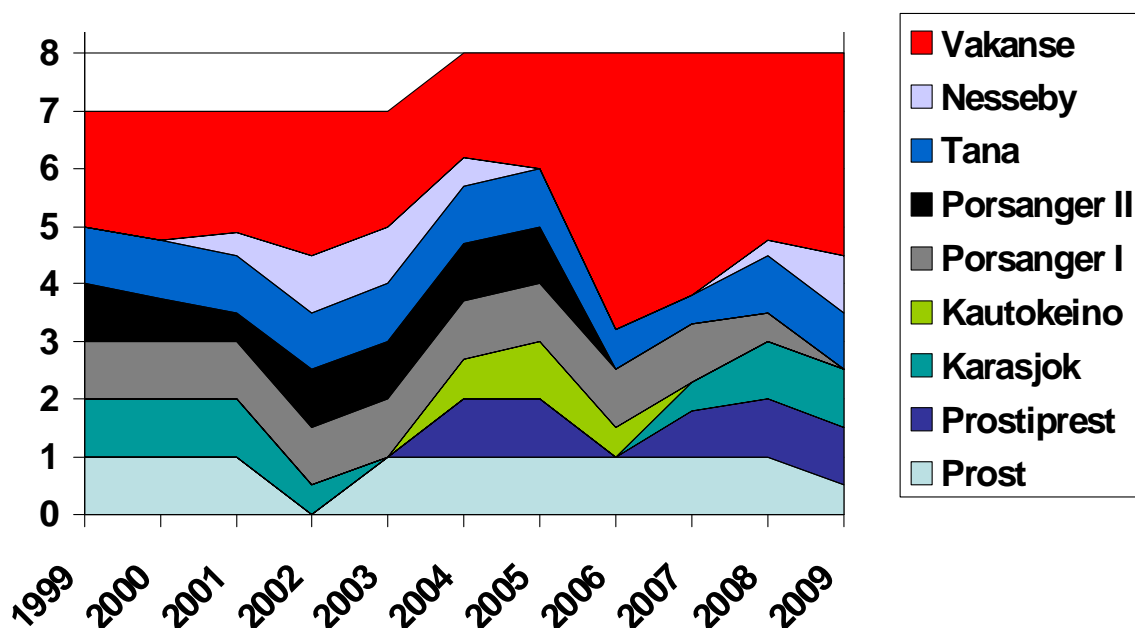
The Church of Norway needs to concentrate on developing competence and on recruiting in order to secure adequate knowledge of Sami languages and culture among church employees. It can be useful to ask what the common features are in cases where the Church of Norway has succeeded in preserving Sami language and culture locally. The following factors can be mentioned:

1. The use of Sami in the ordained ministry has mostly been ensured by ministers who have *learned Sami after being appointed*.
2. *Sami interpreters recruited locally* (for the time being only in the North Sami area) play an important part in the clergy's ministry in Sami, and in most cases the clergy are not able to fulfill the demands of the Sami Act without the help of interpreters.
3. The use of Sami among local church employees is ensured mostly by *Sami speakers recruited locally*. In the case of Christian education and diakonia, most employees begin without fulfilling professional requirements, but receive further training after being appointed.
4. Where Sami speakers are recruited to theological studies or the ordained ministry, the result is a significant spin-off for Sami church life.

Staffing in *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan* / Inner Finnmark rural deanery

When *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan* / Inner Finnmark rural deanery was established in 1991 it was expected to be a powerhouse for developing Sami church life. However, much energy has been spent dealing with a very demanding staffing situation for the clergy. This is the reason why the General Synod in KM 7/06 requested that the staffing of *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan* / Inner Finnmark rural deanery should be given special consideration in the plan for Sami church life.

Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan / Inner Finnmark rural deanery was established in 1991 in order to invigorate work on Sami church life. In the first seven years, the rural deanery was fully staffed with clergy, but after 1999 the situation has changed (reflections on the possible reason for this, see section 3.5.3). In the eleven years since 1999, the rural deanery has lived with a *permanent shortage of ministerial staff*. There have never been fewer than 20 % of situations vacant, and at the most there have been 60 %.



The figure above shows the staffing situation in the rural deanery in 1999-2009. The period opened with seven appointments and this was increased to eight in 2004. The red section at the top shows the vacancies. The period began with 30 % vacancies in 1999 and ended with 45 % in 2009. In the last four years the average was 50 %.

A long period with vacancies like this affects the work of the rural deanery. The clergy spend their energy in keeping the wheels turning, while the interpreters and local employees – who represent the local (Sami) competence – get worn out from having to help one new locum after the other. It drains the energy of staff, parish council and congregation when vacancies are continuously advertised without applicants

From August 2010, *Sis-Finnmárkku proavassuohkan* / Inner Finnmark rural deanery is fully staffed with clergy. Two of the ministers are seniors, and efforts must still be made to recruit new clergy. An equivalent survey has not been made of local church employees in the same period, since the situation here has been better.

General problems with recruitment for Sami church life

Even though the picture may not be identical, there are reasons to believe that the situation in Inner Finnmark exemplifies the problem for Sami church life as a whole. Clergy appointments in the Sami areas are generally the most vulnerable when it comes to recruitment. When recruitment to the ordained ministry generally has declined, Sami church life is probably even more vulnerable. This problem is exaggerated further because a considerable number of the ministers with a command of Sami are today among the most senior clergy in the church. This is the case with the two ministers who speak Lule Sami and South Sami respectively. To sum up: this reveals a problem for the whole issue of Sami

church life in the Church of Norway and makes special efforts for recruitment and language teaching necessary in the years to come.

Problems in recruiting local church employees with the necessary command of Sami language and culture are also part of the picture. This applies especially to Christian education, diakonia and church music.

- Funds should be made available to stimulate and ensure recruitment and stable employment for Sami church life in the future. Special measures should be considered for the administrative district for Sami language. Recruitment should be for the whole of Sami church life.

Research

Very little research has been done on the problems faced in recruitment to Sami church life. In 2009, the Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology (KUN) applied for a grant for a research project Recruitment to employment in the church in Sápmi, REKISAM. The study was to seek an answer to the question: why is it difficult to recruit persons with a Sami background to employment or study in the church? According to the description of the project, the aim would be to discover what factors are decisive when persons with a Sami background choose employment in the Church of Norway. In-depth interviews would be held with persons from the whole of Sápmi, with the aim of testing various hypotheses which could account for the recruitment problem: lack of role models, problems raised when working in one's home area, lack of suitable study possibilities, an anti-academic attitude, the need for reconciliation. KUN's application was turned down, but the description of the project was given positive comments.

- Research projects which can provide insight into recruitment problems related to Sami church life should be made possible. This would provide a basis for more purposeful efforts at recruitment.

Recruitment strategy

Strategies for recruitment should take into account the whole breadth of appointments within the Church of Norway: administrative positions nationally, regionally and locally, clergy, interpreters, deacons, catechists / Christian education workers, church musicians, preachers / lay worship leaders, cultural workers, consultants etc. The aim of recruitment should be to contribute to Sami church life and thus propagate Christian faith, strengthen Sami's cultural and linguistic identity in the church and provide a professionally sound evaluation of Sami culture in a church context. Recruitment strategies for three groups are listed below:

Category 1: *Persons with theological / professional church qualifications who are motivated to work with Sami church life (primarily non-Sami)*

Reason: There are not enough applicants for ministerial appointments in the Sami area, especially in the administrative district for Sami language. There is also a need for recruitment to other categories of church appointments.

Target group: Students / graduates in theology, diakonia, catechist training and church music, and educational institutions in these categories.

Method:
- Inform about Sami church life at relevant institutions.
- Develop Sami-related courses for professional studies and further studies for clergy and other professions in the church.

Category 2: *Persons familiar with Sami language and culture with various professional qualifications (primarily Sami)*

Reason: There is a shortage of professionals who are familiar with Sami language and culture. This applies to church-related and administrative appointments nationally, regionally and locally.

Target group: Persons who are familiar with Sami language and culture, have professional qualifications in education, nursing, journalism, economy, leadership etc, and are motivated for retraining as minister, preacher, deacon, catechist, church musician etc.

Method:

- Contact/motivate individuals and inform them of alternative paths to service in the church.
- Develop courses which give qualifications for employment in the church.
- Draw up alternative paths to service in the church in the light of the special needs for competence and recruitment related to Sami church life

Category 3: *Students and schoolchildren motivated for church-related studies (primarily Sami)*

Reason: A strong desire to recruit Sami young people to service in the church.

Target group: Pupils in the third grade at high school and students.

Method:

- Choose potential candidates, arrange leadership courses, arrange for placement in churches where there are Sami services.
- Take part in vocational fairs and visit schools in Trøndelag, Nordland, Troms and Finnmark.
- Inform about possibilities for employment in Sami church life at for example the Church of Norway Youth Synod, the annual assembly of the Norwegian Saami Association and selected festivals that attract Sami young people.
- Visit student circles in Trøndelag, Bodø, Tromsø, Alta and Kautokeino

These recruitment measures should be accompanied by stimulus packages such as stipends for theology students who speak Sami, arrangements for home leave for clergy who work in parishes in the administrative district for Sami language, placement in selected parishes, mentor schemes for students in placement in Sami congregations, funds to support participation in courses in Sami language / Sami themes etc.

- A recruitment project for Sami church life should be started to carry out the recruitment and stimulus measures outlined above. The Ministry of Church Affairs is urged to make funds available for this.
- Increased efforts for Sami Christian education and Sami youth work should be seen in the light of long-term recruitment (see sections 5.7. and 5.8).

5.13. Increasing professional competence: church history, missionary history and Sami theology

According to international standards on indigenous peoples' rights, the Sami people have the right to have their culture, tradition and history reflected in the educational system:

Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information. (*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, article 15 section 1*)

It is only natural that this right should have implications for the church. This can be seen in the General Synod resolution on the plan for Sami church life (KM 7/06). The resolution urges that the plan should contribute to increased focus on the church's missionary work in the Sami areas and on Sami spirituality, culture and social life in the church's educational system.

The Sami people are an indigenous people of Norway with a thousand year history of contact with the church. However, the Sami's presence in church history, church life and the life of society is hardly, or inadequately reflected in church related training and research in Norway. Even though there have been some exceptions during the past few years, the picture has on the whole remained the same. This is a structural problem, reflecting values and attitudes to the Sami in times past. In practice it means that the majority of training programmes in the church make the Sami's role in national church history and in the church scene today invisible.

This not only means that the Sami experience that their history and presence is inadequately described, but that the church and the majority population experience that part of their own history is invisible. From a Christian point of view, in which reconciliation springs out of acknowledged historical facts, this is a moral problem. In addition it appears to be contrary to the international standards of indigenous peoples' rights.

The state, which exercises the nation's religious, educational and Sami policy, the Church of Norway as a majority and state church, and the church's educational institutions all share responsibility for ensuring that this does not continue. In recent years the state authorities have laid down *national standards for presenting Sami themes* in the education of all age groups in public schools at primary and secondary level. The state authorities, national professional organisations and the institutions concerned should now ensure that this applies to professional training in the church.

The presentation of Sami-related themes in professional training in the church should be seen as *a national issue concerning the whole church* and should not be reduced to being merely a regional issue. This means that Sami-related themes should be included in all professional studies within the church. This will increase the general awareness of Sami church life in the Church of Norway and presumably also improve recruitment to service in the church in Sami areas.

- *Competence project*: a three-year project financed by the state with one appointment (100 %). Aims:
 - To determine *national minimum standards* for Sami-related topics in all professional studies in the church

- To launch a *programme to improve competence* with the aim of improving and assuring the quality of teaching of these topics at the church's educational institutions.

Some institutions should be given a special national responsibility for developing Sami-related research into church topics. Tromsø University, Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology and *Sámi allaskuvla* / Sami University College are some of the institutions for which this would be natural.

In addition to improving competence in professional training, Sami-related *further education courses* should be developed. The course, *Tro og livstolkning i Sápmi* (Faith and philosophy in Sápmi, see section 5.7) can meet this need for several professional groups.

There is a special need for professional research on *Sami church history*. There is no comprehensive account of Sami church history, and important fields have not been the subject of research and presentation. This includes significant developments in the recent past. General improvement of standards in church educational institutions should include giving priority to Sami church history.

- A *Sami church history project* should be launched with the aim of publishing a Sami church history. The project can include a number of sub-projects. Sami church history should be investigated in the setting of a study of Sami religious history as a whole, and the role of the church in that history. The project can be based in the Institute of History and Religious Studies at the University of Tromsø, which already has this field included in its research plans.

Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity is another important field for Sami church life. Studies connected to the Sami Church Council in the 1990s raised important identity questions related to Sami church life and have contributed to further study. The whole field is only in its early stages and needs to be continued and expanded. While church history can be left to the academics, it is important that work on Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity should be rooted in Sami church life. It would also be an advantage if Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity could be a subject for dialogue between academic theologians and lay people.

- *Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity*: A three-year project. One appointment (100 %) coordinated by the Sami Church Council and the Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology (KUN). Aims of the project:
 - To establish a *Sami theological network* across the national borders, in order to further the study of Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity. The network holds an annual theological conference. KUN coordinates the project.
 - To run a three-year sub-project on *Sami theology from women's perspective*. A project working party gathers Sami women across the national borders to discuss issues that they find relevant for Sami theology and interpretation of Christianity. The working party should include both members with and members without academic qualifications in theology or the study of Christianity.
 - To hold local / regional projects / seminars.

The Church of Norway faces many challenges in improving competence and producing materials that can meet the needs of Sami church life in the future. The Sami Church Council,

with its broad mandate and limited secretariat, will find it difficult to deal with too many such tasks, and the number of Sami in academic institutions is still relatively low. In order to deal with the many needs, this number should be increased, for example with the help of KUN. In the long term, a *Sami church educational centre* should be established in order to supply the parishes with qualified persons. The appointments linked to the projects mentioned above should be transferred to this centre when the project period is over, that is to say from the first year after the handling plan period (2017).

5.14. Sami church life across the borders

Throughout Sápmi there is a long tradition for local and regional church gatherings across the national borders. In Norway this applies to all language groups. In the North Sami and Lule Sami areas, the Læstadian movement has been a stable setting for Sami Christian fellowship across the national borders. In the South Sami area, weekend meetings have had the same function for many years. The Skolt Sami in Neiden have a close relationship with the Orthodox Skolt Sami in Sevettijärvi on the Finnish side of the border.

Sami Church Days have in recent years been established as an ecumenical gathering for all Sami throughout Sápmi. They have been held twice, in 2004 in Jokkmokk in Sweden and in 2009 in Inari in Finland. Both events attracted almost a thousand participants.

The idea of arranging Sami Church Days came from the Sami Church Council in Norway and the event was arranged in cooperation with the Sami Council of the Church of Sweden. The arrangement is rooted in the highest Sami church bodies in Norway, Sweden and Finland; the Sami Church Council (Church of Norway), the Sami Council of the Church of Sweden and Oulu diocese (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) in cooperation with the Finnish Sami parliament. The Cooperation Council of the Christian Churches in the Barents Region (SKKB) takes part in preparing and running the event, and is especially responsible for coordinating Russian Sami participation (more on SKKB below).

The Sami church bodies in Norway, Sweden and Finland have decided that Sami Church Days should be arranged every four years in the future, the next occasion being in 2013 in the South Sami area in Norway. As host church, the Church of Norway through the Sami Church Council will be responsible for coordinating the planning and arranging of the event in cooperation with the Sami Council of the Church of Sweden, Oulu diocese and the Sami parliament in Finland and SKKB. This is an extensive task that requires human resources and considerable funding.

- Sami Church Days should be arranged as a two-year project, 2012-2013.

Cooperation on the Sami Church Days has contributed to closer relationships between Sami church bodies across the national borders. As a result The Enare convention was signed in the spring of 2009 by these bodies in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The agreement regulates cooperation on the Sami Church Days and provides for annual meetings to discuss matters of mutual interest for Sami church life. Coordinating work across the borders can be beneficial for a number of issues, for example teaching Sami languages to clergy, liturgies, hymns, preparations for confirmation, Christian education materials, Sami theological studies etc.

- Annual meetings should be held between central Sami church bodies in Norway, Sweden and Finland, in accordance with the Enare convention.

There are several examples of regional and local cooperation on Sami church life across the borders. For many years ÅGM, the committee for South Sami church life in Nidaros, has had close contact with the South Sami committee in Härnösand diocese in Sweden. In the spring of 2008 a consultation on Sami church life was held in Luleå between North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland, Luleå and Oulu dioceses. At the local level, church cooperation across the borders takes place throughout Sápmi. This contact can also help to strengthen the languages: all the Sami languages are small, and the borders between the language groups do not coincide with the national borders. There are many reasons to intensify this contact.

- Project funding should be made available at the national level to strengthen Sami church life over the national borders at a local and regional level.

The Cooperation Council of the Christian Churches in the Barents Region (SKKB) was established in 1996 to meet the need for dialogue and cooperation between Christian churches in the Barents region after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Both Lutheran and Orthodox churches are members, and nine dioceses in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia are represented. Indigenous peoples' issues are given priority in SKKB. Since the majority of Russian Sami belong to the Russian Orthodox Church, SKKB provides a useful platform for ecumenical relations with the Russian Orthodox Church.

- SKKB is urged to continue its work with indigenous peoples' issues in the Barents region, with a special emphasis on the Sami.

5.15. Indigenous peoples' issues

The Sami belong to the universal church. It is important for Sami church life to participate in processes which strengthen the work with Sami church life in an indigenous peoples' perspective. Contact with other indigenous peoples through the work of the Sami Church Council has given important impulses to the work on Sami theology and Sami interpretations of Christianity. This has in its turn contributed to Sami worship and liturgy. The Church of Norway's concern for indigenous peoples' issues has both an international and a national dimension and is related both to specific church issues and to the general question of indigenous peoples' rights.

- The Sami Church Council should be provided with human resources in this field (see proposed appointments section 5.4.5).

5.15.1. Support for the rights of indigenous peoples

Work on the rights of indigenous peoples must take into account the connection between the national and the global arena. For many years, Norway has been a pioneer nation in defending indigenous peoples' rights internationally. The way in which Norwegian authorities treat their own indigenous people will be an example to other countries of how the rights of indigenous peoples should be defended. The question of the rights of the Sami in Norway will thus have indirect consequences for the global issue of indigenous peoples' rights.

In 2003 the General Synod took a clear stand in its discussion of the Finnmark Act (KM 11/03). The church was prominent in an issue that was especially important for Sami rights in Finnmark. This case should establish a precedence for processes concerning Sami rights from Troms to Hedmark (the new Sami rights / Den nye sameretten), and for coastal Sami's rights to fish in fjords and off the coast (proposal from the Committee for Coastal Fishing). It is important that the Church should take a clear stand in these cases, also in the future. Contact with other indigenous peoples can give the church the courage to be a prophetic voice in difficult issues that are of great importance for the Sami people and for future generations (see section 5.10).

5.15.2. International/ecumenical engagement in indigenous peoples' issues

In recent years, Sami have been represented in various international church foras, for example in delegations to assemblies of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Much can be learned by this, and networks can be built. In many cases Sami have been represented in programmes specifically concerned with indigenous peoples' issues, and this has given useful impetus to Sami church life in Norway.

- The practice of ensuring Sami representation in the Church of Norway's delegations to leading international/ecumenical bodies should continue.

More generally, the World Council of Churches indigenous peoples programme is an important partner, and the Lutheran World Federation has passed resolutions on increasing its engagement in indigenous peoples' issues. This cooperation should continue, and the Church of Norway should consider earmarking some of its annual financial support to WCC and LWF for indigenous peoples' programmes in the organisations. There are several reasons for this. In the first place, contact with the ecumenical network on indigenous peoples' issues has inspired internal processes in Sami church life at home. In the second place, the Sami contribution has had a positive influence on international work on indigenous peoples' issues in WCC and LWF. And finally, the Church of Norway should assume a special responsibility for contributing globally to this issue. Indigenous peoples are generally among the world's poorest and most marginalised populations and often belong to churches with few resources. Few nations are in a position to contribute to the churches' international efforts for indigenous peoples to the same extent as Norway. Pressure and contributions from the Church of Norway were decisive for the resumption of the WCC indigenous peoples programme in 2008, and both the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations and the Sami Church Council have given financial support to the programme in recent years.

- Part of the Church of Norway's annual financial support to WCC and LWF should be earmarked for indigenous peoples' programmes in the organisations

5.15.3. International diakonia and mission (aid)

Cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid

The Sami Church Council is represented in the board of Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and as one of the patrons has cooperated with NCA in the field of indigenous peoples' issues. This has especially been the case in Southern Africa (the San people) and the Circumpolar North region / Russia.

NCA has in the course of time become deeply involved with the San people (formerly known as “bushmen”), an indigenous people in the Kalahari region of Southern Africa. NCA contributed for example to the San people’s victory in the court case over the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in 2006. In 1995 the Sami Church Council made contact with the Kuru Development Trust (today known as the Kuru Family of Organisations) in Botswana. Representatives of the San people visited Tromsø and Karasjok in the same year. In 1997 a Sami student deacon had a placement in Kuru. In 1998 two San representatives took part in NCA’s indigenous peoples’ conference in Karasjok, where land issues were on the agenda. During the Sami Church Days in 2004, NCA arranged for two San young people from the reformed church in D’kar to take part. They held a seminar on the situation for indigenous peoples in Botswana. In the same year, NCA also contributed to the dance ensemble Naro Giraffe Group’s visit to Karasjok parish and the Sami festival Riddu Riddu. In the autumn of 2004, NCA financed and organised the visit of a Sami delegation to the San people in Botswana. The delegation was given insight into the San people’s situation and contributed to efforts to make a survey of the San people’s use of land. Attention was especially directed to the court case over the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the San people’s right to live in this area. The San people won the case in 2006. NCA’s support for these exchanges has been invaluable. In recent years these contacts have not been followed up by Sami church circles in Norway.

In 2006, the Sami Church Council asked whether NCA could include the Circumpolar North region / Russia in its work for indigenous peoples. The indigenous peoples in these areas face difficult social, cultural, environmental and human rights problems, and the Sami Church Council stressed the need for diaconal help. It explained also that efforts from NCA in this field would increase involvement in NCA’s work on the part of Christian Sami. With this background, the Sami Church Council asked NCA to make a survey of the situation for indigenous peoples in the circumpolar region, and pledged itself to prepare the groundwork for cooperation with NCA. In a preliminary study in the autumn of 2009, with help from the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), NCA has made a survey of areas in Siberia, with a view to possibly beginning aid to indigenous peoples in Russia. The report identifies relevant indigenous organisations and possible Russian partners, as well as possible challenges related to such projects. After internal consideration of the report, NCA will contact the Sami Church Council to inquire as to the way forward.

- The Sami Church Council should continue dialogue and cooperation with Norwegian Church Aid on aid to indigenous peoples. Administrative consultations should be held annually. When it comes to specific aid projects, the dialogue should concentrate on following up contact with indigenous peoples in Southern Africa and Northern Russia. Other topics for cooperation should be plans for presenting indigenous peoples in NCA’s information internally in the Church of Norway, for example in connection with the Lenten appeal, and a possible increase in Sami Christian involvement in NCA’s work.
- Norwegian Church Aid is urged to continue to have a clear focus on indigenous peoples in its future activities.

Missionary agreements (SMM):

The Church of Norway has set as a target that all the congregations in the country should have a missionary agreement (missionary project / partnership relation) through the Joint Council

for Congregations in Mission (SMM) (see *Making Friends! A Handbook on Partnership Relations between Congregations*, 2009, and SMM's web site www.menighetogmisjon.no). Together with NCA's Lenten appeal, missionary agreements will be the best way for local congregations to participate in efforts for indigenous peoples.

All the congregations in Inner Finnmark rural deanery have entered into missionary agreements in a joint project related to the Canjar Indians in Ecuador (Normisjon). The project supports the only primary / secondary school in Ecuador that teaches the Indians' own language, culture and history. The project was chosen because it reminds the Sami of the repression of their own language and culture in the educational system and in the majority society. The missionary agreement with its indigenous peoples profile appeals to local communities and has led to initiatives such as exchanges between congregations in Inner Finnmark rural deanery and Indians involved with the school in Ecuador.

Within the framework of the Church of Norway's partnership relations scheme in the parishes (missionary project / sister congregation) it is also possible for dioceses to establish partnership relations. The three most northerly dioceses could for example discuss whether coordinating local and regional indigenous peoples projects related to a specific region could make these more effective.

- SMM and missionary consultants in North Hålogaland, South Hålogaland and Nidaros dioceses should cooperate with the Sami Church Council to increase the number of missionary agreements related to indigenous peoples in the Church of Norway generally and in Sami areas in particular.

5.16. The state/church reform

On 10th April 2008, all the parties in the Norwegian parliament agreed to a settlement which will change the constitutional relationship between the state and the Church of Norway (*stat-kirke forliket*). The political agreement involves a process whereby relations between the state and the Church of Norway will be changed. As part of this process, the future duties of both the state and the Church of Norway to Sami church life must be clarified. This applies to the formulation of a new Church Act and a new church order for the Church of Norway.

In considering the principles involved in the *state's* future responsibility for Sami church life, it is important to distinguish between "state-church relationships" and "state-Sami people-relationships" (see the Constitution § 110a) Sami church life is affected by both relationships, but on different grounds. That the Church of Norway's status as a state church is changed, is not a valid argument for maintaining that the state no longer has responsibility for Sami church life. It is reasonable to regard Sami church life as *part of the Sami population's culture and community life*. And according to the Constitution's § 110a it is the state's responsibility to create conditions for this to be preserved and developed (see section 4.3.1). When the *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life* emphasises the responsibility of the state for Sami church life, it is not an argument against changing the relationship between state and church, but an argument for upholding the relevance of the Constitution's § 110a for Sami church life, also after the Church of Norway ceases to be a state church. It is also reasonable to assume that the Church of Norway will have a clearer independent responsibility for Sami church life when its relationship to the state is changed, and that this should be taken into consideration when the state/church reform is put into practice.

5.16.1. The General Synod's guidelines for the future church law and church order

KM resolution 8/07 *Grunnlovsforankring, kirkelov og kirkeordning for Den norske kirke* (Constitutional basis, church law and church order for the Church of Norway) provides premises and overriding principles for a future church act and church order. The resolution contains a clear commitment to support Sami church life also after the relationship between state and church has been changed.

The paragraph on church law and church order states that “the church has a special responsibility to support Sami church life as a necessary and equal part of the Church of Norway. This has its origin in the Sami's strong historical relation to the Church of Norway and in the Sami's status as an indigenous people of Norway.”

Concerning the relationship between state regulations and internal regulations, it maintains that “the Church of Norway's special responsibility for Sami church life is seen in the light of the Constitution § 110a” and that “the Church of Norway shall still be bound by the language regulations in the Sami Act and be party to the state financial arrangements entailed in these directives”.

The resolution also states that “the indigenous peoples' dimension shall be respected both in the law and in the church order”.

- The guidelines for supporting Sami church life (KM 8/07) should be followed in the drafting of a new church act and a new church order. The state's and the Church of Norway's future obligations to Sami church life need to be clarified in the light of the Constitution § 110a, the Sami Act and the international rights of indigenous peoples.

5.16.2. The responsibility of the state for pursuing an actively supportive policy for Sami religion and life stances

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples article 12 establishes the right of indigenous peoples to practise and propagate their religious traditions, customs and ceremonies: “Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies [...]” It is reasonable to assume that the Sami's *Christian* traditions are also covered by this legal protection.

Christianity has for a long time been the religion of the Sami, and the vast majority of Sami in Norway belong to the Church of Norway. For many generations, Sami participation in the church's festivals, rituals and religious life has been bound up with other Sami traditions and cultural practises. Against this background, distinct Sami Christian traditions, spiritualities and interpretations have emerged. If Sami church life is not preserved in the Church of Norway, there is a danger that important traditions and cultural elements – both specifically religious and otherwise – in the Sami people will disintegrate.

The responsibility for creating space and development opportunities for Sami Christian traditions cannot be placed on the church alone, but must be seen in the light of the state's overriding responsibility (the Constitution 110a), where an *actively supportive Sami policy* and an *actively supportive religious and life stance policy* must be seen together. This

indicates the need for an actively supportive Sami religious and life stance policy on the part of the authorities.

The *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life* assumes that the state/church settlement will not involve basic changes in the obligations of the state or the Church of Norway to Sami church life. Even though the state's confessional basis ceases and the Church of Norway is given increased independence, the Church of Norway will still be Norway's *folkekirke*, national church, and the responsibility of the state to pursue an actively supportive religious and life stance policy will be made explicit. The Church of Norway will still be a church with a special foundation in the Norwegian Constitution. The state's fundamental responsibility for supporting Sami church life will be maintained in the balance between an actively supportive Sami policy and an actively supportive religious policy, also after the change in relationship between state and church.

5.16.3. The Sami Act language regulations

It is necessary to clarify whether the changed relationship between state and church has consequences for the Church of Norway's obligations under the Sami Act. In addition to the aim of upholding the current obligations, the act's language regulations should be examined with regard to the use of Sami languages in the church's *public activities* (worship and church ceremonies).

It is apparent that the lawmakers did not have sufficient regard to the special character of the church's ministry when the Sami Act language regulations were formulated. The legislative history of the act specifies that the special provision for the right to individual church ministry in Sami languages (§ 3-6) restricts this right to isolated individual acts detached from the congregation's public activities. However, the church's acts of ministry are unlike services rendered to individuals in most public institutions in that they in their very nature are activities rooted in the common life of the congregation. When the right to be ministered to in baptism and holy communion in accordance with the Sami Act stipulates that this ministry must take place in an individual setting, it violates the essential character of these rites as expressions of the congregation's common life.

There is good reason to ask whether the wording of the Sami Act language regulations is inadequate here, in that the legislative history indicates that Sami speakers do not have the same right as others to take part in the church's public activities in their own language. The Sami Church Council has therefore requested that the Sami Act language regulations should be improved at this point, in the light of the Norwegian state's obligations to the Sami as an indigenous people in accordance with the Constitution § 110a and with human rights provisions (SKR 26/09).

- The implications of the Sami Act language regulations should be considered with regard to the use of Sami in the church's public activities (worship and church ceremonies) and to the continuation of the obligations under the regulations when the relationship between state and church is changed

5.17. Sami democracy in the church (the democracy reform)

In connection with the democracy reform, the Sami Church Council requested that a committee be formed to consider all aspects of democracy in the Church of Norway for the Sami people (SKR 39/08). On this background the General Synod instructed that a committee should propose new procedures for electing representatives for Sami church life to the diocesan councils and the General Synod before the election in 2011 (KM 11/08). The National Council appointed the committee in the autumn of 2009, and the committee's report was the basis of discussions in the Sami Church Council and the National Council in 2010 (SKR 16/10, KR¹¹ 26/10, SKR 30/10, KR 39/10). On the basis of a discussion of the principles involved (see below), the committee presented its proposal.

Principles for Sami church democracy

The church's approach to Sami church life is based on the Sami's situation as an ethnic minority and indigenous people in Norway. The Norwegian Constitution § 110a states that "It is the responsibility of the authorities of the State to create conditions enabling the Sami people to preserve and develop its language, culture and way of life." This provision reflects international law which ensures special protection for indigenous peoples and gives them a collective right to self-determination in matters that concern them. This is also relevant for the efforts to increase democracy in the church.

In the document *Increased Democracy in the Church of Norway*, section 3.1, three principles for democracy in the church are laid down: (1) a democratic culture, (2) the parish as the basic organisational unit and (3) the role and influence of the individual church member. These are also the basis for increasing democracy among the Sami, but they need to be supplemented with a fourth principle that takes minority policy into account: (4) the Sami people's right to co-determination and self-determination.

Sami *representation* in different church bodies such as the diocesan councils and the General Synod will be an example of Sami *co-determination*. Establishing Sami church bodies such as the Sami Church Council and *Saemien Áålmegeeraerie* (Sami congregation council in the South Sami area) will also pave the way for a form of Sami *self-determination* in the church, within carefully defined limits. While co-determination makes it possible for Sami to influence decision-making in the church, self-determination will provide them with a space in which to form their own church life.

In strengthening the Sami dimension of church democracy, there must be a balance between the first three principles and the fourth. For example: the Sami are in a minority locally almost throughout the Sami settlement area. Even though a parish can be regarded as Sami from a geographical/territorial point of view, the parish's representative body (the parish council) will only in a minority of instances reflect Sami co- or self-determination. A democratic structure, the parish as the basic organisational unit and the individual church member's role and influence will not be sufficient to guarantee Sami co- and self-determination in the church. Special consideration must be given on the basis of the policy for minorities.

Proposals in the *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life* make "inclusion" the basic principle in the church's policy for minorities as applied to the Sami (see section 4.5). This means that the Sami are given the right to participate in the life of the Church of Norway without having to

¹¹ KR = National Council minutes

give up their special characteristics. To ensure this, the minority must be given the opportunity to participate in the majority church's democratic structures, while Sami church life at the same time is secured their own decision making arenas in which they can form their own church life within the framework of the Church of Norway.

Further reflections by the committee

With these basic principles in mind, the committee examined election procedures that could give greater *democratic legitimacy* to the election of Sami representatives to the Sami Church Council and the three most northerly diocesan councils.

Under the present procedure for electing the Sami Church Council, the council is a body under the General Synod, but only to a small extent the Sami's representative body in the Church of Norway (the actual membership of the council reflects the latter, but not the electoral procedure).

In the election to the three most northerly diocesan councils, the Sami themselves vote, but via ten, ten, and five electors/delegates respectively. This procedure has not worked satisfactorily, and the committee regards the elector system as undemocratic.

The committee considered therefore the possibility of (1) linking Sami representation in the three most northerly diocesan councils with representation from these dioceses in the Sami Church Council (i.e. that Sami representatives in these diocesan councils would automatically be members of the Sami Church Council). And (2) ensuring genuine Sami democratic election of these representatives by replacing the elector system with a trial scheme which would include the establishment of a Sami electoral roll.

Doubts about ethnic-based electoral rolls – and the question of a Sami synod

Through verbal contact at the administrative level with the Sami parliament in September 2010, the Sami Church Council was made aware of several problems in establishing ethnic based electoral rolls. In the first place, there are very strict rules for use of the Sami parliament's electoral roll for other purposes than the one it was established for. In the second place, the Church of Norway would have to seek permission from the Data Inspectorate to establish an ethnic based electoral roll. And in the third place: had the committee considered the possibility of local or regional unrest, if such an ethnic based electoral roll for the Church of Norway was established?

Since the juridical and practical implications of establishing an ethnic based electoral roll were not clarified sufficiently, the Sami Church Council asked in SKR 30/10 that the current procedure for electing the council should be continued in the election in 2011. As a result, the General Synod decided not to change the procedure for electing the Sami Church Council and the diocesan councils in the three most northerly dioceses. (KM 11/10).

Because of the doubts about establishing an ethnic based electoral roll, the Sami Church Council requested in the same resolution that the possibility of establishing a Sami synod should be considered:

The Sami Church Council requests that the establishing of a Sami synod should be considered. A Sami synod would be given a role in electing / proposing candidates as the Sami representatives in the Sami Church Council, diocesan councils and the General Synod. This would ensure that the representatives who are elected to the

respective boards would have greater legitimacy in the Sami community (SKR 30/10, paragraph 3).

The possibility of a Sami synod given a role like that outlined in the Sami Church Council's resolution was discussed in the committee appointed by the National Council, but it was not included in the committee's final report, since the idea was not explicitly included in the mandate it had from the General Synod (KM 11/08). The Sami Church Council's resolution makes the issue relevant again.

To create an electoral procedure which more clearly reflects the intention that the Sami Church Council should be the *Sami's representative body* in the Church of Norway, a possible solution could be that the General Synod formally elects representatives to the Sami Church Council, but that this should take place after nomination in the form of voting in a body with legitimacy in the Sami church community. This could be in the form of a *Sami synod* which could meet as part of the electoral process and which has as one of its tasks to nominate members of the Sami Church Council.

A Sami synod could be composed by for example inviting the following bodies to send representatives:

- one Sami delegate from the Sami congregation in the South Sami area
- one Sami delegate from each of the parishes in the administrative district for Sami language (13 in all)
- one Sami delegate from each rural deanery in the Sami settlement area (approx.30 in all: North Hålogaland 9, South Hålogaland 7, Nidaros 13, Hamar 1)
- five Sami delegates from Southern Norway
- one Sami representative for each of the diocesan councils in North Hålogaland , South Hålogaland and Nidaros (3 in all)
- the Sami Church Council (7).

If all of these sent a delegate, there would be 59 in all. Delegates from the respective areas could nominate candidates to a South Sami, Lule Sami and North Sami representative on the council and a Sami representative from Southern Norway, while the synod as a whole could nominate the leader of the Sami Church Council.

A Sami synod could also develop into a forum for discussing important themes, questions and decisions for Sami church life and encourage cooperation and dialogue between the local, regional and national levels of Sami church life and between the different regions. One model is that a synod could act as a kind of board of representatives for Sami church life in the Church of Norway.

- Further efforts should be made to increase the legitimacy of Sami democracy in the church. The possibility of establishing a Sami synod with a role in connection with the election of the Sami Church Council should be investigated.

5.18. Expectations to employees' and employers' organisations

Several trade unions and employers' organisations are important for the church and should be included in a total strategy for Sami church life. The Association for Employers in the Church of Norway and Church related NGOs (KA) takes care of the Sami's need for competence

through its educational, further educational and consultant services to the joint parish councils and parish councils. The same applies to the trade unions for the various categories of workers in the Church of Norway. The most important of these in this connection are the Norwegian Association of Clergy, *TeoLOgene* (The theologians, a branch of the Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees), the Norwegian Association of Catechists, The Norwegian Association of Deacons, The Norwegian Musicians Union, The Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees and Delta.

- The Association for Employers in the Church of Norway and Church related NGOs is urged to meet the need for Sami competence through its activities.

5.19. Cooperation with Læstadian congregations and Christian organisations

There are important participants in Sami church life that are not mentioned in the survey in chapter 5 of the fields of activity for Sami church life in the Church of Norway. This applies to both Læstadian congregations and voluntary Christian organisations. The organisations mentioned below are not the only possible partners for strengthening Sami church life (see for example section 5.15). It is important that the Church of Norway generally includes these in its plans for developing Sami church life.

In many places, Læstadian congregations are an important element in local Sami church life. The *Strategic Plan for Sami Church Life* takes for granted that the Læstadian movement is important for Sami church life and enriches the Church of Norway as a whole. Efforts should be made to maintain the good relationships with Læstadian congregations, which are an important element of and contributor to the life of the church.

The Norwegian Sami Mission regards Church of Norway congregations as a natural setting for its evangelical and diaconal work in the Sami settlement area. The organisation's leaders have however expressed unease at the theological developments in the official Norwegian church, especially with regard to the debate on homosexuality. The Mission to the Sami people has indicated that it could cooperate with the Sami Church Council in producing Christian materials for children in Sami languages. It should also be possible to cooperate with the Mission's local radio, Radio DSF in Karasjok – a bilingual radio station covering the whole of Inner Finnmark rural deanery – in spreading bible portions, liturgical materials, hymns etc. The Mission has also mentioned the need to spread biblical materials to Sami in Russia in the Kildin Sami language.

Sunday schools have for many years been an important element in church life in parts of the Sami area, and the Norwegian Sunday School Union could be a useful partner in Sami church life. It would be natural to consider future cooperation in strengthening Sami Christian education.

6. ACTION PLAN

This chapter summarises new appointments and measures mentioned in chapter 5 that are to be given priority in a five-year plan of action (2012-2016). Only appointments and measures that require new resources are mentioned. However, all the measures mentioned in chapter 5 should be understood as guidelines for strengthening Sami church life in the Church of Norway during the plan period 2012-2016.

New appointments and measures 2012-2016					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
New permanent appointments					
100 % South Sami language worker	50 %	50 %			
100 % Lule Sami language worker	50 %	50 %			
25 % North Sami interpreter, Porsanger		25 %			
25 % North Sami interpreter, Lavangen		25 %			
100 % Adviser (youth), SKR	100 %				
100 % Sami minister, Southern Norway			100 %		
100 % adviser (diakonia/culture/indigenous peoples), SKR			100 %		
100 % deacon, Lule Sami area				100 %	
100 % deacon, a parish in Inner Finnmark rural deanery				100 %	
50 % increased appointment, church administrator, South Sami congregation		50 %			
New measures					
Annual professional conference for Sami church life	X				
Sami youth work		X			
Measures in diakonia, culture and indigenous peoples' affairs			X		
Worship reform	X				
Relocation of Sami Church Council	X				
Measures not cost estimated which must be effectuated in cooperation with educational institutions / the Ministry / institutions					
Teaching of Sami language and culture		X			
Project for increased competence			X		
Church history project			X		
Recruitment project		X			
Bible translation	X				

Timing and priorities

The reasons for priorities and for the timing of new appointments and measures are as follows:

The appointment of *Sami language workers and interpreters* is regarded as vital if the church is to follow up the Sami Act language regulations. This applies especially to the South Sami and Lule Sami languages, which do not have human resources in the Church of Norway today. All these appointments should be made in 2012/2013.

The *Sami youth adviser* at the national level meets a pressing need for strengthening Sami youth work in the Church of Norway. It is also important from the point of view of recruitment. The adviser will work with meeting places and networking for Sami young people from all the language areas. Youth work will be a priority for the Sami Church Days in 2013, which is regarded as a good opportunity for improving Sami youth work. In order to give the adviser time to establish networks, mobilise participants and take part in planning, the appointment should be made in 2012.

For many years, Oslo diocesan council has proposed the appointment of a *Sami minister in Oslo / Southern Norway*. Under the present circumstances it should be possible to recruit persons to this appointment in 2014.

Diakonia and culture are given priority in the Church of Norway, but there are very few resources within Sami church life to increase competence in these spheres. It will benefit Sami church life if diakonia, culture and indigenous peoples' issues are considered together. A newly-appointed *adviser for diakonia, culture and indigenous peoples' affairs* would have a spin-off effect on Sami church life as a whole. This adviser should take office in 2014, since the need for the other appointments mentioned above is more acute.

Diakonia in the Church of Norway is to be strengthened in coming years with the appointment of more deacons. In connection with this, it will be natural to provide more human resources for Sami church life. The appointment of two new deacons for local Sami church life is proposed in 2015.

Saemien Áålmege, the Sami congregation in the South Sami area (SÅ) should be strengthened. This can be done by increasing the church administrator's post from 50 % to 100 %. This means that SÅ should continue after the trial period ends in 2012.

Increased grants for the running costs of the Sami Church Council are necessary, partly in order to arrange a professional conference for Sami church life that can cover more spheres than just Christian education.

Grants for running costs for youth work and diakonia, culture and indigenous peoples' affairs should be seen in relation to the advisory appointments that are proposed. Means are needed to make it possible to create settings for Sami church life locally and regionally within the scope of the appointments.

The worship reform makes demands on Sami church life in the form of continued development of liturgies. The General Synod's resolution on a new lectionary for the Church of Norway also makes it necessary to support the translation of the Bible into South Sami,

Lule Sami and North Sami. The worship reform should be given priority in Sami church life in the plan of action's time span.

In 2008, the National Council decided to *relocate the Sami Church Council* to Tromsø in the course of 2010. The reason was proximity to Sami settlement areas and communities with competence in Sami affairs. The question of costs has been mooted for the Ministry, with the aim of securing financing in the national budget. However, in connection with the budget for 2011, the Ministry has stated that relocation of the Sami Church Council should be considered in the light of the General Synod's discussion of the strategic plan for Sami church life in 2011. The timing of the relocation and new appointments in the Sami Church Council should be considered together.

Activities and projects related to *education in Sami language and culture, increasing competence, church history, recruiting and bible translation* have not been cost estimated by the National Council, since they must be put into effect in cooperation with relevant institutions and the Ministry. It is to be expected that this will be followed up once the plan of action is passed, and that plans explaining the organisation, budgeting and financing of the projects will be made. Possible partners in financing or realising the projects are:

Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs (the Ministry)

Ministry of Education

The Sami Parliament

Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical Theology

Institute of history and religious studies, University of Tromsø

Sámi allaskuvla / Sami University College (SÁ/SH)

The Norwegian School of Theology (MF)

The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, (TF)

The Norwegian Bible Society

Sami Church Days, Mo i Rana 2013, is not included in the plan of action, but is an important project during the plan's time span. It requires its own organisation, budget and financing, and it will bind considerable amounts of the Sami Church Council's administrative and economic resources in the period 2012-2013.

APPENDIX - Glossary

The following is a list of institutions, organisations, laws, conventions etc that are named in the text, with their Norwegian names/titles:

Association for Employers in the Church of Norway and Church related NGOs – Kirkelig arbeidsgiver- og interesseorganisasjon, KA

Bishops' Conference – Bispemøtet

Church Act – Lov om Den norske kirke (kirkeloven)

Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations – Mellomkirkelig råd

Church of Norway Development Education Service - Kirkens U-lands Informasjon (KUI)

Church of Norway Youth Synod – Ungdommens kirkemøte

Committee for Coastal Fishing – Kystfiskeutvalget

Committee for South Sami Church Life – Sørsamisk kirkelivsutvalg (Åarjelhsaemien Gærhkoejielemen Moenehtse, ÅGM)

Constitution (of the Kingdom of Norway) – Grunnloven (Kongeriget Norges Grundlov, given i Rigsforsamlingen paa Eidsvold den 17de Mai 1814)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations) – Barnekonvensjonen

Cooperation Council of the Christian Churches in the Barents Region - Samarbeidet kristne kirker i Barentsregionen (SKKB)

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – FN-erklæringen on urfolks rettigheter

Delta – Delta (trade union for church employees)

Diocesan Council – bispedømmeråd

Diocesan Youth Conference – Ungdommens kirketing

Enare Convention – Enarekonvensjonen

Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo – TF, det Teologiske Fakultet

Finnmark Act – Finnmarksloven

Friendship North/South – Vennskap Nord/sør

General Synod (of the Church of Norway) – Kirkemøtet (elected body consisting of all members of the diocesan councils)

God gives –we share. Plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway – Gud gir – vi deler. Plan for trosopplæring i Den norske kirke

Human Rights Act – Menneskerettsloven (Lov om styrking av menneskerettighetenes stilling i norsk rett)

Increased Democracy in the Church of Norway – Styrket demokrati i Den norske kirke

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (ILO Convention) – ILO-konvensjon nr. 169 om urfolk og stammefolk i selvstendige stater

Institute of history and religious studies, University of Tromsø – Institutt for historie og religionsvitenskap, IHR

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – FN konvensjon om sivile og politiske rettigheter

Joint Council for Congregations in Mission – Samarbeidsråd Menighet og Misjon, SMM

Joint parish council – Fellesråd

KA Association for Employers in the Church of Norway and Church related NGOs – KA Kirkelig arbeidsgiver- og interesseorganisasjon

Liturgical Center – Liturgisk senter

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) – Lutherske verdensforbund

Læstadianism – Laestadianismen

Ministry - Departementet (the Ministry of Church Affairs – the name is changed according to the structure of different governments. In 2011: Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs – Fornyings-, administrasjons- og kirke departementet, FAD)

Ministry of Education – Kunnskapsdepartementet, KD

National Council / Council of the Church of Norway – Kirkerådet (The General Synod's executive body)

National Council Youth Committee – Kirkerådets Utvalg for ungdomsspørsmål (Ufung)

Northern Norway Educational Centre of Practical theology – Kirkelig Utdanningscenter i Nord

Normisjon – Normisjon (missionary society)

Norwegian Association of Catechists (unofficial title) – Kateketforeningen

Norwegian Association of Clergy – Presteforeningen

Norwegian Association of Deacons – Diakonforbundet (Det norske diakonforbund)

Norwegian Bible Society - Bibelselskapet

Norwegian Church Aid – Kirkens Nødhjelp

Norwegian Musicians Union - Musikernes fellesorganisasjon

Norwegian Saami Association – Norske samers riskforbund

Norwegian Sami Mission – Norges Samemisjon, formerly Norsk Finnemisjon

Norwegian School of Theology – (Det teologiske) Menighetsfakultetet

Norwegian Sunday School Union – Norsk søndagsskoleforbund

Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees – Fagforbundet

Plan for Church Music – Plan for kirkemusikk

Plan of Action to Strengthen Sami Languages – Handlingsplan for samisk språk

Plan for Sami Christian education – Plan for samisk trosopplæring

Recruitment to employment in the church in Sápmi – Rekruttering til kirkelige stillinger i Sápmi (REKISAM)

Royal decree of 24th February 1848 with later amendments – Kongelig resolusjon (kgl.res.)
24. februar 1848 med senere endringer

Rural deanery – prosti

Sami Act - Lov om Sametinget og andre samiske rettsforhold (sameloven)

Sami committee for youth issues – Samisk ungdomsutvalg (Sung)

Sami Council of the Church of Sweden – Samiska rådet

Sami Church Council – Samisk kirkeråd (Church of Norway)

Sami Church Council youth committee – Samisk kirkeråds ungdomsutvalg (SKRU)

Sami Parliament - Sametinget

Strategic plan for Sami church life in the Church of Norway – Strategiplan for samisk kirkeliv
i Den norske kirke

The Art of Being Church – Kunsten å være kirke (Report on church and culture 2005)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights – FNs Verdenserklæring om Menneskerettighetene

White Paper no. 28 (2007-2008) – Sami Policy – Stortingsmelding (St.meld.) nr 28 (2007-
2008) Samepolitikken.

World Council of Churches (WCC) – Kirkenes verdensråd (KV)

Dynamic and coequal
- Sami church life in the Church of Norway

