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Saksdokumenter:

Lutheran diaconal workers in Europe examine migration 'bridges or walls'

Rapport nr. 23/2018 **Kjetil Drangsholt**

Rapport fra konferansen «European Churches in times of Change – secularization, revival and mission of the Church», Uppsala, 13. desember 2018

Nytt fra den verdensvide kirke – Det lutherske verdensforbund (LVF)

Sammendrag

Steinar Eraker fortsetter i den *LVF/europeiske diakoni-prosessen om Conviviality* og har fått følge av Kjell Nordstokke fra vårt råd. De var begge representert under møtet i Sibiu, Romania, i desember, som fokuserte på migrasjon; «People on the Move – Bridges or Walls?». Se vedlegg.

I desember ble det også arrangert et dagsseminar i Uppsala «*European Churches in times of Change – secularization, revival and mission of the Church*», som er en oppfølging av et nordisk initiativ og generalforsamlingsvedtak. Den norske kirke var representert ved Nora Baartvedt, Kjetil Drangsholt, Harald Hegstad og preses Helga Haugland Byfuglien. Se vedlagt rapport.

Prosessen bærer ennå noe preg av å famle litt i forhold til hva man skal vektlegge, og hvilke begreper som bør brukes. Men kanskje er det egentlig bra at ikke prosessen «låses» for tidlig. Vi var med å «lobbe fram» fornyelse/misjon/strategier i sekulariserte vestlige kirker under generalforsamlingen. Det kan på mange måter være sunt med et slikt *kontekstuellet samarbeid*, som gradvis utvides fra den nordiske til den globale LVF-arenaen. Denne prosessen kan også sees i sammenheng med det videre arbeid med misjon (blant annet Arusha Call) i vår kirke.

I år er det 20 år siden den viktige katolsk-lutherske *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ99)*. Denne har blitt bekreftet (med litt ulike ord) også hos metodister, reformerte og anglikanere. Den viser en viktig multilateral økumenisk utvikling som ikke minst reformasjonsmarkeringen var en katalysator for, men også personlige vennskap og «kjemier». Et hefte om seks økumeniske forpliktelser ble lansert under Bønneuka for enhet i januar: *The Lutheran World Federation's Commitments on the Ecumenical Way to Ecclesial Communion*:

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-lwf-ecumenical-commitments>

Den katolsk-lutherske internasjonale kommisjonen er i ferd med å slutføre sitt dokument om dåp, og flere spør om ikke tiden er inne for en ny «joint declaration» på nattverd.

På personalsiden har LVF flere utfordringer, da ressurspersoner i viktige nøkkelstillinger ved *Communio Office* har sluttet, og blant annet på grunn av prosesser (f.eks. sammenslåing av avdelinger) som ikke formelt er avsluttet, har man måttet ty til en del foreløpige løsninger. Professor Stephanie Dietrich (tidligere TN-leder) har et deltidsengasjement denne våren som direktør for Teologisk/økumenisk avdeling.

Også Pauliina Parhiala, nylig tilsatt som LVFs Jerusalem-direktør, har sluttet.

Mange medlemskirker jobber aktivt med *bærekraftsmålene (Agenda 2030)*, jf. MKRs lansering av Bærekraftsboka under dette møtet! www.bærekraftsboka LVF jobber med dette på flere måter og har forankret dette i organisasjonen.

https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/council_2016_-_resolution_on_implementing_sustainable_development_goals.pdf

Se også <https://wakingthegiant.lutheranworld.org/>

Den italienske lutherske søsterkirken vår har i mange år engasjert seg i diakonalt migrasjons-/flyktningarbeid, særlig knyttet til den farefulle ferden mange gjør over Middelhavet. Gjennom LVF utfordrer de sin større kirkefamilie og deltar selv i flere konkrete diakonale programmer.

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/lutherans-italy-call-compassion-end-migrant-deaths-mediterranean-sea>

Forslag til vedtak

Saken og Rapport fra konferansen «European Churches in times of Change – secularization, revival and mission of the Church», Uppsala, 13. desember 2018 tas til orientering.

Lutheran diaconal workers in Europe examine migration ‘bridges or walls’

(LWI) - What are the “actual” and “personal” borders that stop people from living together in peace with unfamiliar cultures, faiths and gender identities?

Delegates from 14 member churches of The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) examined this question during a workshop held in Sibiu, Central Romania, in mid-December, under the theme “[People on the Move – Bridges or Walls?](#)” It was part of the European Diaconal Process, which brings together diaconal practitioners from LWF member churches in Central Eastern Europe, Central Western Europe and Nordic regions.

Addressing participants, Bishop Reinhart Guib of the [Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania](#) (ECACR) emphasized the focus on individual persons, and used the phrase “people, not numbers” to describe the congregations of Transylvanian Saxons, left in Romania after the 1990s post-communist era exodus. He said migration to and within Europe currently and in the past, has been important for the mission of the church, which joined the LWF in 1964.

The [International Academy for Diaconia and Social Action, Central & Eastern Europe \(interdiac\)](#), which supports LWF member churches in promoting best practices of diaconal service in the region, was represented by its head of education, Rev. Tony Addy and manager Janka Adameová.

Addy explained conviviality as a concept that “focuses attention on relationships.” It relates to ‘La convivencia’ – a period of several hundred years in the history of the Iberian Peninsula when Christians, Jews and Muslims coexisted in relative peace, he said.

Changing role of faith and religion

Among key topics at the workshop were the growing cultural and religious diversities in Europe and the changing roles of faith and religion. Delegates noted that people fleeing persecution -- whether Christian, Muslim or of another faith identity -- value their religion as a secure resource when nothing else is stable. In some contexts, however, religion is being used to underpin an exclusionary national identity that supports a xenophobic response, which in some cases can engender conflict in society. Discussion on these concerns led to further exploration of issues related to xenophobia, racism, mobility, migration and refugee movements.

During one of the sessions, Rev. Dorin Cioabă, pastor of a Roma Pentecostal congregation, Dr Holger Lux (Romanian Blue Cross) and Erika Klemm (ECACR advisor for migration) introduced participants to the specifically Romanian aspects of diaconal work.

Delegates heard how the ‘Refugee Round Table’ set up by ECACR with participants from other churches, discusses pastoral work among refugees including a program called “I am a Stranger” that explores the biblical contexts of being a stranger. The LWF member church also observes a ‘Refugee Sunday’ which it is encouraging other churches to join. Its work

extends to students and teachers, who participate in workshops on migration and migrants, including a traveling exhibition that has reached more than 3,000 students.

Diverse backgrounds

Participants reflected on what it means to seek conviviality in the distinctly different contexts in Europe. For example, in secular countries like the Czech Republic, religion and faith communities do not seem to play an important role in the wider society. On the other hand, there are countries in which Christians are a majority but Lutherans tend to be in a minority position, and there are others where Islam is the dominant religion. These diverse backgrounds, also in Central Western and Nordic Europe, helped participants to examine questions of identity and theological motives that underpin church social action. They also discussed ways of countering growing hate speech and populism.

There is an urgent need to look for ways to live together in peace and harmony in times of fragmentation and growing tensions among different groups in Europe. — LWF Area Secretary for Europe, Rev. Dr Ireneusz Lukas

LWF Area Secretary for Europe, Rev. Dr Ireneusz Lukas, said "there is an urgent need to look for ways to live together in peace and harmony in times of fragmentation and growing tensions among different groups in Europe." The diaconal process, he added, "contributes to mutual understanding and cooperation on the continent."

March 2019 in the Netherlands

The Sibiu gathering was the first in a new phase that will develop guidelines for diaconal practice, teaching materials and proposals to change church and public policy related to the core theme "Seeking Conviviality – the art and practice of living together." The next workshop will be held in March this year in the Netherlands, and will focus on "People on the Move – Responding to Growing Diversity."

The LWF and interdiac began the conviviality process in 2011, bringing together diaconal practitioners from the three LWF regions in Europe. The process has resulted in a number of publications introducing the core concept of 'Seeking Conviviality' and advocacy. It was presented at the 2017 LWF Twelfth Assembly in Windhoek, Namibia, and shared with the member churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

By LWF program assistant Monika Rawcliffe, edited by LWF Communications.

Rapport fra konferansen «European Churches in times of Change – secularization, revival and mission of the Church», Uppsala, 13. desember 2018
v/Kjetil Drangsholt

Konferansen tok utgangspunkt i de utfordringer europeiske kirker står overfor med synkende medlemstall, færre medlemmer som døper sine barn – og for noen kirker – også manglende rekruttering av prester. Under generalforsamlingen for Det lutherske verdensforbund i 2017 arrangerte de nordiske kirker en workshop hvor utfordringene nevnt ovenfor ble tatt opp, og disse kan gjenkjennes i strategien til LVF for kommende periode fram til generalforsamlingen i 2023. Under møtet for de europeiske regionene i LVF i Slovenia 5.-7. november 2018 ble prosjektet «European Churches in Times of Change» presentert. Dette ble fulgt opp med en dagskonferanse i Uppsala 13. desember samme år, der de nordiske kirkene var representert i tillegg til visepresidentene fra region Europa Vest og region Europa Øst. Communion Office var representert ved Ireneuz Lukas som er fungerende områdesjef for Europa. Fra Dnk deltok Helga Byfuglien, Harald Hegstad, Nora Baartvedt og Kjetil Drangsholt.

Konferansen var strukturert i fire sesjoner:

Sesjon 1 tok opp bakgrunnen for prosjektet med de utfordringer europeiske kirker står overfor med vekt på samarbeid mellom de europeiske regionene, økende sekularisering, kirkens rolle i samfunnet, teologisk utdanning og rollen for lekfolket i kirken. Diskusjonen viste til utfordringer og tilsvarende muligheter for en kirke som forkynner evangeliet i ord og handling, er endrings- og lærevillig, synlig i det offentlige rom og inkluderende i all sin virksomhet.

Sesjon 2 ble organisert som en gruppesamtale der temaene sekularisering, kirkene i det offentlige rom og behovet for teologisk utdanning og lekfolks rolle i utviklingen av kirkene ble utdypet. De samme tema ble deretter tatt opp i plenum i sesjon 3 der ungdomsperspektivet ble grundig presentert.

Sesjon 4 tok opp perspektiver fra de to øvrige europeiske regionene; sentral Vest og sentral Øst der mulighetene for et samarbeid mellom de tre europeiske regionene ble luftet. Områdedirektør Ireneusz Lukas pekte på den nordiske region som en plattform for videre utvikling av kirkene i en tid med store samfunnsendringer. Samlet sett er det fire elementer som må løftes frem: En teologisk refleksjon som utvikler en kirke som er relevant, tilgjengelig og livsnær der kirkene kan lære av hverandre og dele erfaringer.

Avslutningsvis ble fremdrift og organisering av prosjektet drøftet. Initiativet til prosjektet utgår fra den evangelisk lutherske kirke i Danmark som bidrar med en prosjektkoordinator tilsvarende 30-40.000 Euro. De øvrige nordiske kirkene blir invitert til å bidra. Mellomkirkelig råd har preliminært antydnet at det er muligheter for et bidrag og avventer en formell henvendelse. Det skal etableres en arbeidsgruppe som oppnevnes formelt av LVF, men for referenten er det litt uklart hvordan dette skal skje.

Kristiansand, 10.1. 2019

Kjetil Drangsholt

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Kristiansand, 10.1. 2019

Kjetil Drangsholt

EUROPEAN CHURCHES IN TIMES OF CHANGE – SECULARIZATION, REVIVAL AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH

REPORT FROM NORDIC REGIONAL MEETING, UPPSALA, 13 DECEMBER 2018

Representatives from LWF Member Churches in the Nordic Region met in Uppsala, 13 December 2018, in order to discuss a common project under the heading “European Churches in Times of Change – Secularization, Revival and Mission of the Church”.

The meeting was hosted by the Vice President of the LWF Nordic Region, Archbishop, Dr. Antje Jackelén, and moderated by the Chairman of the LWF World Services Committee, Bishop Henrik Stubkjær.

The Vice Presidents of the LWF Central Eastern Europe Region, Archbishop Urmas Viilma, and the Central Western Europe Region, Pröpstin Astrid Kleist, as well as the LWF interim director, Department for Mission and Development, Ireneusz Lukas attended the meeting along with representatives of the LWF German National Committee.

A full list of participants is attached as an annex to the report.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The objectives of the meeting were presented to the participants prior to the meeting in a supporting document, which has been included in a slightly updated version as annex to this report.

DECISIONS AND COMMITMENTS

The participants decided to establish a reference group by the end of January 2019. This group will develop the Terms of Reference for the project. The Terms of Reference should also address the format of future meetings concerning the project. These meetings should take advantage of existing structures and avoid duplication through establishment of new structures.

Søren Abildgaard, Denmark, will invite the group for a meeting after 1 February 2019. Each of the Nordic countries will assign a person to the group, if possible. The group should consider inclusion of Young Reformers in the work. The reference group is to be considered an interim group, until the Terms of Reference have been approved by the Member Churches or by another appropriate church body.

Once the terms of reference have been approved, the Member Churches will consider specific commitments in terms of funding and staff for the initiative.

The Terms of Reference should be developed in time for their inclusion in reporting from the Nordic region to the LWF Council meeting in June 2019.

The participants decided to focus on a limited number of pilot projects in 2019/2020 in order to assess the viability and relevance of the proposed methodologies. Specific project proposals for each of these projects will be developed in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Terms of Reference and specific project proposals for pilot projects should be presented at the Nordic Bishops' Conference in 2019. Discussion of the project at other European regional church leadership meetings during 2019 is also envisaged. During the European Leadership Conference in 2020 it will be appropriate to discuss the initial results of the pilot projects and decide on the next steps forward.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

The participants identified a number of issues which call for further **theological reflection**.

1. (A new) **Ecclesiology** that underlines the double nature of sending and gathering, of Grace as a gift and the task we are committed to. The church is where we gather in an anti-stress space, and from where we are sent with a non-consumerist message, emphasizing the citizenship dimension of life in the world. A church in which common people participate fully, averting the risk of clericalization.

2. **Liturgy** that balances rest and (spiritual) growth of members.

3. **Education** related to the dimensions of belief, behavior and belonging. This impacts on

a. General Christian education for both age groups 0-18 and 18+;

b. Equipping lay people to work as “professionals” in the church, or to the use German terminology, in both capacities as “Haupt- und Ehrenamtliche”;

c. Training a lay “elite” to be the church in the “world”;

d. Training of pastors.

4. **Didactics and pedagogy** where the essential questions are: How do churches learn as a body; and how do people learn?

The work of theological reflection on these issues could be shared between churches. The project should in general take advantage of existing networks and cooperation between the Nordic churches.

The conclusions concerning where to focus regarding **church development** were less detailed. Some of the issues identified for further theological reflection could also have a potential impact on church development, especially concerning the role of church in society and the need for education of lay people and strengthening of their role. Participants expressed concern that the existing networks and cooperation might not be sufficient to transmit the results to the congregational level or to ensure the full participation of youth.

DISCUSSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

In the **first session**, **Archbishop, Dr. Antje Jackelén**, introduced the project, setting the scene for the discussions. She addressed the need for a vital and vibrant church in times of change, a concept to which we attach different meanings. Are we talking about secularization, multicultural developments, global migration, digitalization or climate change? Secularization need not be a hostile concept, but also is a measure of the world as a partner in the success of the gospel.

The project is about doing together as LWF and harvesting the fruits of communion, so that we take home common learning. It should be based on a proper analysis of our respective situations. The initiative comes from the LWF General Assembly and the resolutions adopted. These have now been incorporated into the strategy for 2019-2024 under the heading Supporting churches' presence and vibrant witness. This is part of holistic mission: proclamation, diakonia, and advocacy.

There are differences of context, and the project should connect to what we already do, ensuring that we draw on experiences in our own context. At the same time, the project should be attentive to DMD procedures, and be inspired by e.g. the diaconal process, or the church in public space.

Henrik Stubkjær emphasized that we need to show congregations that this is meaningful and ensure the involvement of local congregations.

Ireneusz Lukas presented an LWF perspective on the project, underlining that we are all LWF. He described the road from resolutions to strategy to work program. The role of CO is to connect the global level to the regional level. Bringing greetings from Sibiu, he mentioned the diaconal process as a good example of regional/interregional cooperation. Content is provided by local churches, whereas CO has a coordinating role. This is part of a program plan already approved by Council.

The roots are to be found in the changing context, the reflections on this and in LWF developments. This is a new situation in the history of LWF. Now the Nordic churches want to receive, making valid the saying that "there is no church so rich, that it will not depend on gifts; there is no church so small, that it will not be able to share." From this perspective, the Nordic initiative is much appreciated.

He presented the status reached by the ERM 2018, looking forward to leadership conferences in 2019/2020.

He then addressed the question how to include the project in the programmatic work, taking note that there is already a project coordinator; that the regional meeting is an occasion to take ownership; and the role of CO is to accompany the process. Other regions have been invited as guests, and the results can be shared, inspired e.g. by the diaconal process, or by translating documents coming from the project.

Henrik Stubkjær concluded that LWF will work as a facilitator or catalyst; and that the project remains open even for regions outside Europe, like North America.

Harald Hegstad gave a keynote speech putting the topics of secularization, church development, the role of the church in society, and education and the role of lay people in perspective. The speech has been distributed with this report.

Participants discussed the need to learn also from other people and to be in dialogue with outsiders and non-believers. The churches face the same challenges as other social sectors, like unions or culture. Others stressed the need to embrace migrant churches.

Some questioned the added value from this new initiative in light of the many existing networks.

As a communion we are responsible for upholding and developing the Lutheran tradition. Some questioned, what Lutheran tradition is today. Others worried where the tradition is in times of change. The church has great value, but must not be conservative, and backward-looking.

The church as means for *Missio Dei* was discussed. The church could also be seen in its social context as the people of God. The academic discussion has to be translated to the practical life of congregations.

Harald Hegstad responded that we should be willing to harvest the fruits of academic discourse and learn from experiences of others, although academics are hesitant to be normative. The teaching of pastors removed from everyday reality is an example, where we should strengthen the role of the congregation as a trainer. We can also learn from the experiences of others, also from non-adherents. By doing this, we will experience the community of saints.

After group discussions in the second session, the participants gathered for plenary discussions in the **third session**.

During this session **Thura Árnadóttir** presented a youth perspective, and **Christine Keim** gave a German perspective on the discussion. Both presentations have been distributed with this report.

On **theological reflections**, participants discussed the relation between church and academia.

Identity, education and relation to the state were issues raised. Secularization as a positive factor underlying human rights and freedom of religion were mentioned, but also as a possible constraint for Christian education. The Norwegian Trosoplæringsprogrammet was mentioned along with initiatives for education of lay people for service. German initiatives like Kurse zur Glauben were mentioned. But also the need for more advanced level education.

The leadership conference in May 2020 would be an obvious occasion. We should use existing networks for theological reflection, including the Young Reformers Network. With a lot of ideas floating around it might be better to focus on a more narrow pilot initiative. And we have to define who owns the project.

Education has to be seen in the age span from 0 to adult.

Ecclesiology and the role of role of congregation was mentioned. A cross-border theological think tank was proposed by Henrik Stubkjær. This could organize conferences that need to be rooted in congregations. It was emphasized that laity is not the same as uneducated.

There is a need also to address vocational training.

Another challenge is translating church language without losing content, making Lutheran ethics comprehensible.

On **church development** the need for the prophetic voice of the church in society or in the public space was emphasized and contrasted with the balance between legitimate political positions. A prophetic voice should also lead to prophetic action.

The difficult concept of revival of the church was discussed. There is a need to reclaim this concept as an expression of the ongoing reformation. Today, this concept points to spirituality, new ways of being church and the liturgical life.

It was proposed that this meeting could only be the starting point for further academic studies, and that more steps are needed if we are to leave our comfort zones.

In the **fourth session**, focus was on issues identified, decisions and commitments as reported above. In this session a non-exhaustive overview of existing decision making and thematic structures were provided by the participants. There was agreement between participants that the initiative should be connected to the existing cooperation, and that duplication through establishment of new structures should be avoided. This list has been annexed to the report.

Participants confirmed their commitment to providing the necessary funding for the initiative, given that work would primarily be undertaken through existing networks and staff. More specific pledges can only be made, once the terms of reference outlines what might be needed. Specifically, the Church of Sweden indicated willingness to make existing staff available. In conclusion, funding issues should not be seen as a hindrance to the progress of the project.

During this session **Urmas Viilma** and **Astrid Kleist** presented perspectives from the other European regions of LWF.

Ireneusz Lukas stressed that LWF is also the member churches and regions. The issues discussed at the meeting are very precious to all of us. We need to talk about faith, inspired by the wording of LWF strategy: With passion for the church and for the world. But respect for tradition is not the same as taking a traditionalist position. This initiative reflects the desire to be part of the communion. The contribution of young people made the meeting possible. There is a need for a regional process to go deeper into the discussion and understanding of the issues raised today. He encouraged member churches to use council members as a contact to LWF.

It would be possible to apply for an LWF project, as there is space to influence programming. For the 2020 European Leadership Conference there will be a preparatory team, that could include this initiative. The Nordic Bishops' Conference is an obvious event to further the process, and these issues should also be put on the agenda in other regions. A proposal could be discussed at the Council meeting in June 2019.

Finally, he underlined that LWF needs publicity and encouraged member churches to write about the meeting, preferably in coordination with communication staff at the Communion Office. There is a need for decisions and funding to be rooted in Communion Office. It might be more costly, but it ensures that it is linked to the global communion.

