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Saksdokumenter:

Porvoo Consultation on Diaconal Ministry, 15.-18.04.2013, Dublin, Irland

## Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

### Porvoo

#### Sammendrag

15.-18. april 2013 fant en tredje Porvookonsultasjon om diakoni sted i Dublin, Irland. Den første konsultasjonen var i London i 2006 og begynte som en utforskning av hva de anglikanske og lutherske kirkene legger i den diakonale tjeneste. På denne konsultasjonen ble det reist en rekke spørsmål rundt hvordan den diakonale tjeneste forstås i forhold til misjon, liturgi og vigsling til tjeneste.

Den neste konsultasjonen fant sted i Oslo i 2009. Her ble problemstillingene fra 2006 tatt opp igjen, og spesielle utfordringer for de anglikanske kirkene ble identifisert, likedan for de lutherske kirkene. Særlige utfordringer for Porvoofellesskapet knytter seg til forskjellene i forståelsen av diakonen og hva diakonatet innebærer. De anglikanske kirkene forstår i hovedsak diakonatet som et ledd i et treleddet embete som fører til presteordinasjon. Spørsmålet til anglikanerne blir derfor hvor den diakonale dimensjonen i de kirkelige tjenestene blir av. De fleste lutherske kirker forstår den diakonale tjeneste som karitativ. Utfordringen for dem er hvordan diakoni forstås i sammenheng med gudstjenesten og kirkens liturgier, og hva vigsling av diakoner innebærer i forhold til dette.

Konsultasjonen i 2013 ønsket å sette et spesielt fokus på hele kirkens diakonale tjeneste i stedet for bare å konsentrere seg om den vigslende diakonens tjeneste. I prosessen frem til april 2013 har noen av kirkene jobbet spesielt med utfordringene som ble gitt i Oslo i 2009. Ikke minst er det interessant at Scottish Episcopal Church har jobbet mye for å legge til rette for at ordinerte diakoner kan velge det som kalles et «distinctive» eller «permanent diakonal ministry», det vil si at diakoner kan velge å bli værende diakoner med et spesielt karitativt ansvar i menigheten i stedet for å la seg ordinere til prestetjeneste. Konsultasjonen kunne konstatere at det i noen kirker er bevegelse i tenkningen rundt den diakonale tjeneste som gjør tjenesten mer kompatibel mellom kirkene. Men dette gjelder ikke alle kirkene i Porvoofellesskapet. Såpass mye arbeid gjenstår dersom den diakonale tjenesten skulle bli kompatibel at det er et åpent spørsmål om det lenger er et mål i seg selv.

Kjell Nordstokke fra Den norske kirke bidro til å sette den diakonale tjeneste som hele kirkens tjeneste på dagsorden. Selv om konsultasjonen ikke klarte å holde fokus på dette

som hovedtema, var det enighet om at dette perspektivet bør tas videre. En svakhet ved konsultasjonen var at det var så få diakoner blant deltakerne. Konsultasjonen nedsatte derfor en arbeidsgruppe av diakoner som fikk i oppdrag å utforme relevante spørsmål basert på diskusjonene som fant sted under konsultasjonen. Disse skal deles med Porvoo Contact Group, bearbejdes og deles med kirkene. Resultatet av denne prosessen skal danne grunnlag for en ny konsultasjon som skal være særlig beregnet på diakoner og personer som jobber i diakonal tjeneste i kirkene.

I tillegg til rapporten fra diakonikonsultasjonen går rapporter fra den teologiske konferansen i København høsten 2012, migrasjons- og diasporakonsultasjon i Uppsala våren 2012 og konsultasjon om ekteskapet i Helsinki høsten 2011 til behandling på Porvoo Primates' Meeting på Island, 21.-23. oktober 2013.

### **Forslag til vedtak**

Mellomkirkelig råd tar Rapport fra Porvoo Consultation on Diaconal Ministry, 15.-18.04.2013, Dublin, Irland, til orientering

**THE PORVOO COMMUNION OF CHURCHES**

**CONSULTATION ON DIACONAL MINISTRY  
UNDER THE PORVOO AGREEMENT**

**DUBLIN, IRELAND**

**15 – 18 APRIL 2013**



**COMMUNIQUÉ**

**THEME:     *DIACONAL MINISTRY AS A PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL***

**Introduction**

The **Porvoo Communion of Churches**, mostly in Northern Europe, are Churches that have signed an agreement to “share a common life in mission and service”. The name Porvoo comes from the Finnish diocese and city in whose Cathedral the Eucharist was celebrated on the final Sunday of the conversations in 1992 leading to the Common Statement and thus finally to the Porvoo Communion.

The vision of the Porvoo Common Statement is to be together in mission and ministry. This consultation held at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, contributed to on-going reflection on this shared vision and has followed two earlier consultations on the subject, in London (2006) and in Oslo (2009). It was co-chaired by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Michael Jackson, and the Bishop of Uppsala, the Rt Revd Ragnar Persenius.

The Archbishop of Armagh attended one of the evening sessions, welcoming participants to the Church of Ireland, emphasizing that ecumenism remain a key factor in the life of the church.

The purpose of this consultation was to bring all churches up to date with developments in the Communion. It furthermore aimed to reflect on fresh opportunities to strengthen the ministry of deacons in today’s fast changing European scene. It will also call on the Churches of the Communion to co-operate in this endeavour and thereby add momentum to our Christian witness to contemporary society. The theme was chosen keeping this purpose in mind.

The Conference was rooted in prayer, worship and Bible studies. The Chaplain, the Revd Canon Patrick Comerford had prepared proper worship booklets. Choral Evensong on 17<sup>th</sup> April was in St Patrick’s Cathedral.

All presentations were followed by plenary discussions. There was one general discussion in small groups and one thematic workshop session. Through public conversations in an interview format Keynote Listeners provided the participants with the insights they had gained from the presentations and group work.

The members of the consultation expressed their appreciation to the Director of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI), the Revd Dr Maurice Elliott, and to the Church of Ireland, for the hospitality given. Dr Elliot introduced the participants to the philosophy and the ministry of CITI. Its aims are best captured under the phraseology of its mission statement:

- Integration - We are called to be a community of faith that integrates living worship with academic excellence.
- Contextualisation - We exist for the benefit of all traditions within Irish Anglicanism
- Diversity - We are for the resourcing of ministry and not simply ordained ministry
- Renewal - We are for the development of existing and new patterns of church

## **Bible Studies**

**Dr Katie Heffelfinger** of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute led Bible studies on Matthew 25.31-46. She asked the participants to consider what demands the call to service place on them as individuals, on the church as a whole and on the consultation itself. The Gospel text, also referred to as an apocalyptic drama, opens up a whole range of challenges, which became evident during the group work. Discussions focused on the elements of serving, not necessarily a sign of charity, but as an interchange which sees the potential of the one being served as someone who also has something to give. There is no middle ground between serving and not serving. The text is a challenge for churches to fulfil their calling to be 'the agent of the coming Kingdom'.

**The Revd Kieran O'Mahony** OSA of the Orlagh Retreat Centre, Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, worked with participants on John 13:1-17. From a historical-critical point of view, the foot washing is an enacted parable created by the Fourth Evangelist. He uses material from the Synoptic tradition, in this particular case Luke. The reason for this is to face head on a double crisis threatening the community:

- Belief in the cross and resurrection of Jesus, or rather lack of it
- The practice of mutual service, or rather its lack

In this Gospel there is more service than moral behaviour. Salvation itself was a lowly act of loving service by God, through the lifting up of his Son in death and resurrection. Christian service is a continuation of that service, so that the Father continues to act through the Son through us today. Participants concluded that Christian diakonia participates in and is a continuation of God's service of humanity in Christ and is an agent of transformation and change.

**The Rt Revd John Armes**, Bishop of Edinburgh, reflecting on the overall theme of the consultation, addressed the question of what the Gospel that we proclaim really is. The text chosen was Ephesians 2:21-22. Although this Epistle is more commonly perceived as a presbyteral, it is yet an Epistle of grace and the nature of our being in Christ. This certainly includes Diakonia. He noted that in this text the notion of conflict does not appear as a distraction from the Gospel. In group discussion it

was expressed that although reconciliation remains an important element for Christians to focus on, the area of unity today should not be seen in terms of uniformity. The Porvoo understanding of dialectical unity (living creatively with difference) is a concept which also pays attention to context and which is ever increasingly bringing us together.

## Plenary Sessions

Professor Kjell Nordstokke of the Diaconal University College in Oslo, Church of Norway, presented a key paper on the theme *Diaconal Ministry As A Proclamation Of The Gospel*. He referred to Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, in his reference to the diaconal work of the church, stating: 'We are asked to step out of our comfort zones and heed the call of Christ to be clear in our declaration of Christ, committed to prayer in Christ and we will see a world transformed'.

Professor Nordstokke referred to the work of the Lutheran World Federation, resulting in the resource booklet *Diakonia in context*. He also referred to the work of the Anglican-Lutheran International Committee (ALIC) and its latest report titled: *To love and serve the Lord. Diakonia in the life of the Church*. One of the key Anglican-Lutheran insights is to no longer confront issues that need to be church dividing, but rather focus on 'diakonia and the fullness of its expression in the spirit of the prophets and the gospel of Jesus the Son of God'. Professor Nordstokke notes that these expressions of Anglican and Lutheran Communion at 'a global level largely correspond to the findings we as Porvoo churches have been discussing on the understanding of diaconal ministry'.

### Some key thoughts

- The discussion on the diaconate has changed from focusing on ministry as an order to ministry as an ecclesiastical expression. This was reflected in the 2009 Oslo report, which emphasized diakonia as an essential aspect of the ministry of the whole church, participating in God's mission in the world. Deacons represent diakonia but diakonia must not be understood narrowly in relation to an order of ministry.
- The recent ALIC report noted, diakonia is the ministry of all the baptised, supported by the ordered ministries of the church. Diakonia is an expression of koinonia, the communion in and with Christ through baptism. This implies that diakonia is not a human action but a divine intervention with the purpose of transforming, reconciling, empowering and healing the world.
- Diakonia is related to proclamation. Both are expressions of the gospel and are core elements of the mission of the church. Both are vehicles of the unconditional love of God, who accepts persons while they are sinners and without regard to their background. Proclamation without action falsifies the Word, as it makes the gospel abstract and denies God's transforming power in creation. The deed without the Word, however, would fail to convey the fullness of God's gift of salvation. Diaconal action is an integral part of the mission of the Church; Word and deed cannot be separated.
- Inter-relating diakonia and proclamation will depend upon the context and it is not possible to devise a pattern that will apply in all cases. General guiding principles might be formulated but cannot be prescriptive.
- The fundamental principle is that diakonia is the Gospel in action, in continuity with the

diakonia of Jesus and in line with the commission of John 20.21. It means holistic mission, encompassing proclamation, care for those in need and advocacy for promoting human dignity and justice. Through its action diakonia offers a visible sign which witnesses to the proclamation of the Gospel promise of God's liberating grace in Christ, which brings reconciliation and newness of life.

**The Rt Revd Michael Burrows**, Bishop of Cashel and Ossory, Church of Ireland, emphasised the failure to 'reinvent' the diaconate in recent times and the consequent loss. He suggested that the ordination service contains hints of the nature of a distinctive diaconate that could be developed in the ministries of at least some churches. Three features can be highlighted:

- The tied stole must be tied in the spirit of the foot-washing. It symbolises a ministry that is untidy, ready to drop everything and flee from the sanctuary to meet real need. Diaconal ministry is a ministry of responsive untidiness, liberated from the chains as well as the beauties of the altar.
- In the breaking of the bread the deacon ensures that when bread is broken there is enough for all. Deacons are a sign of solidarity with the poor. The ministry of bringing a specifically Christian perspective into the development area is a ministry that calls for ordination, and is emphatically diaconal.
- Deacons dismiss the people at the end of the Eucharist, sending them away from the sanctuary to serve God in the sacramentality of the world. They remind the church of the dangers and limitations of not leaving its sanctuaries and comfort zones to pursue authentic holiness. Art, music, poetry are examples of the sacramentality of the world, to be used for the re-enchantment of the world, as we have allowed so much to become desacralized. This could become a distinctive diaconal witness.

**The Revd Dr Tiit Pädam**, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estonia, addressed the question: 'What we have lost through not necessarily connecting the deacon to worship?' Based on his research of the diaconate in the Nordic Lutheran Churches, he pointed to problems and questions that still need to be addressed about different models of the diaconate. There are churches who ordain deacons to a distinct diaconate. Bishops can give permission to deacons to serve parishes where there is no priest available. This opens a possibility for permanent practice. There are also churches who do not allow ordination of deacons, who commission deacons, but not as part of the ordained ministry.

Although the diaconate takes different forms in the Nordic Lutheran churches, it is a skilled ministry with a distinct caritative function. The core of the diaconal ministry is based on Jesus' words in Mark 10:45: *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* This passage is used when ordaining or commissioning deacons.

In this understanding of the diaconate, the service at the Lord's table is understood in connection with the service at the table of those in need. But the service of those in need is also brought back to the service at the Lord's table, as expressed in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland: *Diakonia begins at the altar and return to the altar.* If we limit the ministry at the table, preparing the coming of Christ, we indicate that deacons are not an expression of the Church. Deacons are called to this go-between ministry, an expression of God's work through the Church to the world and back, in the

name of Jesus Christ. We have lost an essential part if we don't understand diakonia as a response to the calling of God.

**Bishop John Armes and Revd Anne Tomlinson**, both of the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC), explained recent developments in SEC in relation to diaconal ministry, focusing on training for and exercise of distinctive diaconal ministry. Bishop John Armes told the consultation about this important work of the SEC, seeing diakonia as an essential aspect of the ministry of the whole church. A working party has been addressing some of the questions raised in the Oslo consultation. The SEC then drafted a paper setting out an alternative training route for candidates for a distinct diaconate. Further, the SEC has been addressing the question of how Deacons might be deployed at diocesan and congregational levels. The Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness has a number of women and men currently exploring diaconal vocation. This may lead to a 'College of Deacons' being established in company with the Bishop. In the plenary discussion, possibilities of exchange of deacons and diaconal students were raised, as well as exchange of curriculum for diaconal formation.

**The Archbishop of Dublin, Michael Jackson**, reflected on how Anglicans had changed in relation to earlier consultations. He observed that the Lutheran members of Porvoo had helped Anglicans to set the context for a new dimension of diaconal ministry. Porvoo had shown that there is 'one ministry, that of Jesus Christ' and that all ministry depends on this. Dr Jackson felt that hierarchies were 'essential for responsibility, accountability, leadership and the granting and enacting of permissions'. However, he also observed that hierarchies were often 'self-serving'.

Archbishop Michael Jackson referred to the work of the Diaconal Institute in Oslo where formation for deacons take place particularly in the fields of theology and education, while church diaconal training is carried out in the context of a hospital and social institutions on the same site. This provides a model which he hoped could be mirrored in the Church of Ireland before long. In the broader context, he commented: 'the time surely is coming when the numerical balance is overturned and there are more lay ministers than clerical'. Recognising these important signals from the Church of Ireland, it was pointed out that clear distinction must be made between the ministry of the diaconate and lay ministries in the church.

**The Bishop of Uppsala, Ragnar Persenius** presented an overview of how diaconal ministry is organised in all the Nordic countries. All have a distinct focus on being a caritative ministry, and as such they are geared to be adaptable to changes in society. Most of the Nordic churches ordain deacons to the ministry, but not all churches regard it as part of a three-fold ministry. In some of the churches it is also necessary to clarify the role of the deacon with regards to administration of the Eucharistic sacrament. There are also different practices as to the role of the deacon in liturgical life.

The Nordic Lutheran churches all emphasise the calling of the whole church to diaconal ministry and the priesthood of all the baptised. However, today there is a need for distinct leadership in diaconal ministry. In many congregations this leadership is conducted by the ordained deacon, while the ordained deacon is under the oversight of the bishop. But the calling to diaconal ministry is a calling of the whole church, which means that there is stronger emphasis on the link between diakonia and the mission of the church. Although the tradition of diaconal orders is changing, diaconal institutions remain an important part of the diaconal ministry of the church. There is also a growing awareness of diaconal work in other church-related organisations.

**A Panel discussion** summarising some significant areas was moderated by the Archbishop of Dublin. Panel members - Canon Helene Steed, Canon Ian Ellis, Deacon Frances Hiller, Deacon Ninni Smedberg and the Revd Pekka Huokuna also responded to questions.

- Are we actually getting a closer understanding of each other or are the structures too embedded to change?
- If we're not getting closer, how can we give recognition to each other's ministries?
- If we are not changing in relation to each other, are we then changing in relation to society?

Panel members felt that the Porvoo Churches are coming to understand each other's approach to diaconal ministry more clearly and observed that the consultation had learned of the variety of expressions of diaconal ministry across the Porvoo Communion.

It was felt that changes were indeed taking place in the Porvoo Churches with regard to diaconal ministry, but in some parts change was deeper than in others. The Scottish experience was a striking example of a Church re-evaluating diakonia in quite fundamental ways.

Furthermore, it was recommended that the Porvoo Churches could give greater recognition to each other's ministries by arranging diaconal exchange, so that the Churches could challenge each other through direct experience of diaconal ministries with varying emphases.

It is important that the voices of those who are serving in longer-term diaconal ministries should be heard more clearly, it was stated.

Panel members saw the Porvoo Churches as changing to varying extents in relation to society at large, but it was noted that the Church's credibility, among people in general, is largely influenced by the extent to which its life is marked by service, diakonia.

*Participants concluded that this Porvoo Consultation had highlighted the recognition and respect for the diaconal ministry together with the living diakonia in our churches.*

*It has helped to re-engage afresh with the dynamic diaconal component in discipleship and ordination enabling those exercising diaconal ministry to establish a network of communication leading up to a Porvoo Consultation of Deacons.*

## **Concrete Tasks**

### **1. Preparation of a Questionnaire and Follow-up**

- *The distinctive deacons at this consultation will prepare a questionnaire to be presented to the PCG by October 2013.*
- *They will form the core group with an option to co-opt as required.*
- *The questionnaire will use the insight and material of this consultation.*
- *The information received will then be shared with those in diaconal ministry, church policy makers and bishops in our churches.*



- *The material coming from the questionnaire will be the basis for discussion in a consultation among deacons and co-workers in diaconal ministry to be held within two years.*
- *The discussion does not end with the consultation, but deacons and co-workers in diaconal ministry will be asked to feed back into PCG, so that actual action can emerge.*

## **2. Interfaith Engagement**

- *Use the Porvoo Keys of Interfaith Engagement at the parish and other levels in diaconal ministry to strengthen the interfaith engagement in local communities as well.*

## **3. Interchange**

- *Promote and strengthen the interchange of deacons and those in diaconal ministry between member churches, also in the field of diaconal studies and curriculum.*

## **4. Diaspora, mission and Christian Confidence**

- *Work towards strengthening diaspora congregations in mission and building Christian confidence in society.*
- *Develop further reflection on participation in international diakonia.*

### **List of Attendees at Consultation**

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Church</b>
Revd Dr Anthony Rustell	Church in Wales
Revd Déacon Frances Hiller	Church of England
Revd Canon Dr Leslie Nathaniel	Church of England
Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer	Church of England
Revd Ása Björk Olafsdottir	Church of Ireland
Very Revd Dermot Dunne (Christ Church Cathedral)	Church of Ireland
Revd Canon Helene Steed	Church of Ireland
Revd Canon Dr Ian Ellis	Church of Ireland
Rt Revd John McDowell	Church of Ireland
Dr Katie Heffelfinger (CITI)	Church of Ireland

Revd Dr Maurice Elliott (CITI)	Church of Ireland
Rt Revd Michael Burrows	Church of Ireland
Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson	Church of Ireland
Revd Niall Sloane	Church of Ireland
Revd Canon Patrick Comerford (Chaplain)	Church of Ireland
Revd Rob Clements	Church of Ireland
Very Revd Victor Stacey (St Patrick's Cathedral)	Church of Ireland
Ms Beate Fagerli	Church of Norway
Rt Revd Ingeborg Midttømme	Church of Norway
Revd Dr Kjell Nordstokke	Church of Norway
Revd Dr Øyvind Rise	Church of Norway
Revd Dr Jenny Sjögren	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden
Deacon Ninni Smedberg	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden
Rt Revd Ragnar Persenius	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden
Revd Dr Tiit Pädam	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden
Revd Jacob Duevang Krogh Rasmussen	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Revd Dr Thorsten Rørbæk	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Revd Dr Mika K T Pajunen	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Revd Dr Pekka Huokuna	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Deacon Titi Gävert	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Revd Dr Tomi Karttunen	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Revd Dr Eliza Zikmane	Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad
Revd Thomas Bruch	Lutheran Church in Great Britain (Observer)
Revd Dr Heather Morris	Methodist Church in Ireland

<b>Revd Kieran O'Mahoney OSA</b>	<b>Roman Catholic Church (Ireland)</b>
<b>Most Revd Dr Diarmuid Martin</b>	<b>Roman Catholic Church (Ireland)</b>
<b>Revd Dr Anne Tomlinson</b>	<b>Scottish Episcopal Church</b>
<b>Rt Revd Dr John Armes</b>	<b>Scottish Episcopal Church</b>

