



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF YORK

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell this weekend (1-2 June 2024) preached at the celebrations marking one thousand years of Christian Laws of Norway at Moster Old Church, which stands on an island off the west coast of Norway.

According to the saga recorded by the medieval historian Snorre, Olav Trygvason landed at Moster in 995 following his voyage across the North Sea from England, in order to become King of Norway. A church, probably wooden, was built there soon after. In 1024, King Olav Haraldsson (St Olav) held an assembly at Moster and passed laws establishing Christianity in Norway. Moster Old Church, a stone building dating from around 1100, is thought to be the oldest village church in Norway.

The millennium celebration at Moster included various events, with a dinner attended by HRH Crown Prince Haakon and Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre organised by the Christian Council of Norway and the Church of Norway. At this, Archbishop Stephen spoke of the importance of the continued links of mission and ministry with the Anglican Churches in Britain and elsewhere in Europe through the Porvoo Communion. The Communion, established in 1992, comprises 15 Anglican and Lutheran Churches in Europe, sharing a full interchange of ministries.

This evening event was followed by a special midnight service held at Moster Old Church in which Archbishop Stephen preached. Bishop Erik Varden, Roman Catholic Bishop of Trondheim, Erhard Hermansen, Secretary General of the Christian Council of Norway and Bishop Ragnhild Jepsen, Bishop of Bjørgvin led the service, with music of the kind that would have been heard at the time the church was founded.

The Revd Canon Joanna Udal, Senior Chaplain of the Diocese in Europe's Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway and Chaplain of St Edmund's Church in Oslo said: "The Moster 2024 celebrations give us a great chance to celebrate the strong ties between the British Isles and Norway both with the introduction of Christian law in Norway a thousand years ago and our deep-rooted partnership in mission today. This relationship plays an important part in our ministry as an English-speaking Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway and the Porvoo Agreement offers our communities mutual enrichment and valued support as our Anglican and Lutheran churches work together for the coming of God's reign of justice, peace and love."

On Sunday 2 June, Halvor Nordhaug, Bishop Ragnhild's predecessor, and Archbishop Stephen led a discussion on 'the role of the church in building a more loving, just and sustainable society', followed by the Ecumenical Celebration Service held at Moster's open-air theatre. Bishop Olav Fyske Tveit, Presiding Bishop of the Church of Norway, led the service with local, national and international representatives, and Bishop Ragnhild preached.

Reflecting on the visit on his return, Archbishop Stephen said: "It has been joyful to be joining the 1000 year jubilee services at Moster as we cherish the bonds of our friendship and Christian fellowship where we are walking, working and praying together. Our most recent partnership of unity in our mission is the Porvoo Communion which unites churches in their ministry in England, Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula as well as our brothers and sisters in Lutheran Churches in Nordic countries. We continue to learn from each other and grow in Christ's love."









For the full list of events of the Moster programme: <https://moster2024.no/en/jubileumsveka>

About the Porvoo Communion

The Porvoo Communion is a communion of 15 Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran churches in Europe. The communion was established in 1992 by a theological agreement entitled the Porvoo Common Statement which establishes full communion between and among these churches.

The Porvoo Communion unites the Anglican Churches in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Iberian Peninsula and Lutheran Churches in Nordic countries, the Baltic, and Great Britain.

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