

Thematic Consultation of the Porvoo Communion of Churches

Madrid and Toledo, Spain, 10th-13th October 2023

Life in the Eucharist/The Eucharistic Life in our Churches

Communiqué



The Porvoo Communion, which unites the Anglican Churches in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Iberian Peninsula and Lutheran Churches in Nordic countries, the Baltic, and Great Britain, met in Madrid, Spain, in October 2023 for its thematic consultation on 'Life in the Eucharist'. The meeting was hosted by Rt Revd Carlos López Lozano, Bishop of Madrid in the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church, and member of the Porvoo Contact Group. Representatives from the Church of the Faroe Islands were warmly welcomed as they attended in order to initiate a process towards becoming members of the Porvoo Communion in the Church's own right, having previously been connected through the Church of Denmark.

The consultation started with a Eucharist celebrated in the Cathedral of the Redeemer, led by Bishop López Lozano, and with preaching by Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin and Anglican co-chair of the Porvoo Contact Group. The participants experienced generous hospitality at several gatherings, hosted by Bishop López Lozano and members of the Cathedral congregation.

The participants were introduced to several aspects of the Spanish context in the opening session. Firstly, a paper was given explaining the history and theology behind the Mozarabic eucharistic liturgy used in the Spanish Episcopal Reformed Church, and that the participants had experienced the previous evening. Thereafter, the situation of minority churches in a majority Roman Catholic country and the resulting ecumenical landscape were described in several contributions.

Continuing themes in the first session, the effects of secularisation on the eucharistic life in the churches in Spain was discussed in the second session. Anglican and Lutheran perspectives on eucharistic life were also presented, touching on the challenge of relating this to everyday concerns of people inside and outwith the church.

On the second day, the question of what it means to live a sacramental life in communion in 21st century secularised Europe was explored in different geographical contexts, with contributors from Portugal, Estonia, Scotland, and Finland, and followed by general discussion. Most member churches of Porvoo reflected that they work in secular contexts, and sharing sacramental life requires meeting our communities where they are, and therefore being open to changing our own sacramental practice. The sacramental communion within Porvoo must inspire common sacramental life and a consequent commitment to the suffering realities of the world, such as the climate crisis, social deprivation, and people living at the margins.

In the afternoon, participants witnessed the celebration of the Spanish National Day as they travelled to Toledo to experience the 'city of three religions'. The Metropolitan Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain (Roman Catholic Church), Most Reverend Monsignor Francisco Cerro Chaves, welcomed the group to Toledo Cathedral, where blessings and messages of friendship were exchanged.

The consultation gave opportunity for interesting discussion and reflection about what the Eucharist means for the life of the churches in the Porvoo, both within their own contexts and together as a communion. Future major gatherings in the Porvoo Communion will include a church leaders' consultation on environment and eschatology in Sweden in 2024, and a theological conference in Wales in 2025 marking the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, and the Primates' Meeting in 2026.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

An asterisk * indicates that the participant is also a member of the Porvoo Contact Group.

ANGLICAN PARTICIPANTS

The Church of England

James Hadley

Erik Heemskerk

Joanna Udal*

(deputising as a Porvoo Contact Group member in place of Tuomas Mäkipää)

The Church of Ireland

Stephen Fielding*
Michael Jackson (Anglican Co-Chair)

The Lusitanian Church (Portugal)

Jorge Pina Cabral*
Jaime Dias

The Scottish Episcopal Church

Nicholas Taylor
Miriam Weibye*

The Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church

Daniel Caravaca
Carlos López Lozano*
Anna Noon

The Church in Wales

Ainsley Griffiths (Anglican Co-Secretary)*
Jordan Hillebert
Andrea Jones

LUTHERAN PARTICIPANTS

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

Rikke Juul
Thorsten Rørbæk (Lutheran Co-Secretary)*

The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tauno Teder*
Marko Tiitus

The Church of the Faroe Islands (guests at the meeting)

Meinhard Bjartalíð
Uni Næs

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland

Kati Eloranta
Tomi Karttunen*
Emiliana Skoog

The Lutheran Church in Great Britain

Meelis Süld*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland

Bjarni Þor Bjarnason*

The Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Worldwide
Zilgme Eglite*

The Church of Norway
Beate Fagerli*
Simon Gaarde Hansen
Gunnhild Nordgaard Hermstad
Jan Otto Myrseth

The Church of Sweden
Sara Eriksson
Johannes Grimheden
Christopher Meakin*