

Process outline for the Church of the Faroe Islands to become a member church of The Porvoo Communion of Churches

FO: Fólkakirkjan, Fólkakirkjan í Føroyum

DA: Færøernes folkekirke

1. Compatibility with the Porvoo Communion

The Faroese Church is surely compatible with the Porvoo Communion of Churches, wherefore there is no need for a long, investigative process. The Church of the Faroe Islands historically was part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark for centuries, hence an expression of the same faith based in the Holy Scriptures and expressed in the Apostolic and Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creeds, the Augsburg Confession and Martin Luther's Small Catechism, it has the two sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and it is structured according to an episcopal order.

2. No legislative or complex process needed

The primates of Porvoo Churches shall only be asked to recognize the Faroese Church as compatible to the Porvoo Common Agreement, including its Declaration. No new negotiations between the Churches should be opened, and no decision should be required from church decision making bodies. In this case, we recognize that yet another Church (in the Lutheran family) adopts the agreement which the Porvoo member churches already are signatories to.

3. Visit to the Church of the Faroe Islands by the Co-chairs & Co-secretaries in early 2024

It would be helpful if the Faroese Church would introduce the relevant points in her constitution, i.e. Lutheran Confessions, Creed, Sacraments, Ministry; and also highlight the history and the present state in relation to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark. On top of that, it would be interesting to hear or read about what the acknowledgements and commitments in Porvoo Declaration mean to the Faroese Church. Furthermore, it would be of interest to learn of ongoing cooperation with other churches, including prospects for twinning and links. The visit should preferably be conducted before the online Porvoo Contact Group (PCG) Spring Meeting on 14. March 2024.

4. Process outline and presentation to be send to the Porvoo member churches via the PCG

This Process outline and short presentation of the Faroese Church to be presented to the Porvoo Contact Group (PCG) and their primates in the first quarter of 2024, before the online PCG Spring Meeting on 14. March 2024. It shall be sent out with an introductory letter from the Co-chairs with the recommendation that primates and presiding bishops recognize the Faroese Church as compatible to the Porvoo Common Agreement, including its Declaration. It will be facilitated in cooperation with the Co-secretaries.

5. Opportunity for discussion and clarification on 14 March 2024

It is important and appropriate to allow time for discussion and clarification for the Porvoo Contact Group (PCG) at the online Spring Meeting 14. March 2024. This is furthermore a possibility for the Porvoo Contact Group to ask questions on behalf of their primates, should need be. It would be important that Cathedral Dean Uni Næs could be present for the meeting representing the Church of the Faroe Islands. PCG to clarify the matter with their primates before 14 March 2024.

6. Signing of the Porvoo Declaration on 10 October 2024

The Porvoo Communion of Churches will have its Church Leaders Consultation 8-10 October 2024 in Sigtuna, Sweden. It is a very suitable occasion for the Church of the Faroe Islands to sign the Porvoo Declaration and thereby enter the Porvoo Communion of Churches. The signing ceremony should preferably take place during the closing Eucharist on Thursday 10 October 2024. Bishop Jógvan Friðriksson of the Faroe Islands should be present to sign on behalf of his church together with another Faroese church leader, clergy or lay. The Co-chairs shall sign as witnesses on behalf of the Porvoo Communion.

Short presentation of the Church of the Faroe Islands¹

Statistics

- 41.729 members, which is 77% of the Faroese population (2023)
- 1 bishop, 1 cathedral dean, 27 pastors, 61 churches and chapels, 16 parishes

Historical facts

- The people of the Faroe Islands accepted Christianity around the year 1000.
- Approx. 1153-1620 part of Church of Norway (Nidaros archdiocese and Bergen diocese)
- Since 1620 a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and between 1990-2007 as a diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark.
- In 2007 it became an independent Church, separated from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
- The separation from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark was a part of a treaty with the State of Denmark allowing for Faroese self-governing of various institutions. Hence the separation was peaceful and not due to theological controversies.
- First female pastor in the Church of the Faroe Islands was ordained in 1977.

Leadership

- The bishop (Biskupur) of the Faroe Islands is the Right Reverend Jógvan Fríðriksson. Born on 19 February 1957, he was ordained in 1985 and worked as a parish priest. He was consecrated as bishop in 2007 and is the first bishop of the independent Church of the Faroe Islands, following its independence from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark. The bishop's seat is at Tórshavn Cathedral.
- The Cathedral Dean (Dómpróstur) of Tórshavn Cathedral is the Very Reverend Uni Næs. The Dean is the second most senior cleric, deputizing for the bishop in his absence, and sits ex officio on the Church of the Faroe Islands ministerial council.

Relations to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

- The Church of the Faroe Islands is represented at the board of the Council of International Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
- Bishop Jógvan Fríðriksson of the Faroe Islands is always invited to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark bishops' meetings.
- Cathedral Dean Uni Næs of the Faroe Islands is invited to the Danish cathedral deans' gatherings every year.

Relations to the Nordic Churches

- Bishop Jógvan Fríðriksson represents the Faroese Church in all Nordic Lutheran Bishops' gatherings.
- The Faroese Church will host the Nordic Lutheran Bishops' gathering in summer 2025.

Co-chairs & Co-secretaries
19 December 2023

¹ Sources:

- [English website of the Church of the Faroe Islands](#)
- [Hagstova Føroya Statbank Statistical Database](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)