DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

ST EDMUND’S OSLO AND THE ANGLICAN CHAPLAINCY IN NORWAY

St Edmund’s Oslo

Det norske misjonselskap Stavanger

Mariakirken Bergen

Vår Frue Trondheim
Velkommen! The Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway is a community of many nations, ethnic backgrounds and Christian traditions, offering English language Anglican worship throughout Norway. The role of Senior Chaplain offers a fascinating and rewarding opportunity to lead a team of priests in developing and expanding the mission of the Anglican Church in Norway, and in building up and bringing together our congregations. It is an opportunity to exercise your gifts of leadership, pastoral ministry, preaching and communication in a country of beautiful scenery, ranked by the United Nations at the top of the Human Development Index and as the happiest country in the world!

Where we are

Location and surrounding area: description and maps

A country of mountains and fjords, the small urban centres of Norway tend to be situated in close proximity to both and offer abundant and easily accessible opportunities for recreation throughout the year. This, in combination with a remarkable density of cultural and educational institutions in a compact urban setting, is one of the characteristics that people appreciate most about living in Norway.

As explained in this profile, the Chaplaincy has congregations in four major cities across Norway: Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim. The role of Senior Chaplain is based in Oslo, but requires regular travel to the other congregations to address needs and issues, and for ecumenical meetings and representation. Frequent and efficient domestic flights mean that each location can be reached in around one hour’s flying time. Each of the four congregations has its own defined geographical area, in terms of outreach and mission activities and the allocation of financial contributions from the Norwegian state and from local kommune (municipalities).
Oslo

The governmental and economic centre of Norway, Oslo is also home to a large university and several academic and theological institutions. Situated around the basin of the fjord and surrounded by forested hills, the city with a population of 693,000 enjoys a large number of theatres, galleries, museums and concert venues as well an excellent public transport system, all of which contribute to a consistently highly rated quality-of-living score. Intra-national migration accounts for a quarter of the city’s population, making Oslo one of Europe’s fastest growing cities, and creating enormous potential for growth in the coming years.

Historically, the Oslo congregation began in 1851 and built its own church in 1884. It was primarily to serve British and north American business and governmental work in Norway. Strong links developed between the church and the Royal Family of Norway because Maud (a daughter of King Edward VII) married the future King Haakon VII of Norway and worshipped at St Edmund’s. The church is a listed building with architectural and historico-cultural significance. The Council consults the City of Oslo Department of Cultural Heritage for any issues concerning the exterior of the building.

The church building is maintained by the Church Fabric Committee. The current planned projects are the refurbishment of the crypt with meeting room, new kitchen and accessible washroom facilities, and the replacement of the organ. The organ, sufficient to the needs of leading public worship, may have a limited life and should be replaced in the foreseeable future. The funding of both these projects is currently under discussion.
Bergen

Bergen is a city and municipality in Hordaland on the west coast of Norway, with a population of around 280,000. Bergen is the second-largest city in Norway and, according to tradition, was founded in 1070 by King Olav Kyrre. It served as Norway's capital in the 13th century, and from the end of the 13th century became a bureau city of the Hanseatic League. Through an agreement with the Church of Norway, the congregation worships in Mariakirken, or St. Mary’s church, the oldest church in Bergen dating ca 1200. Mariakirken holds a Hanseatic tradition and so a location historically used for mission amongst those who are not native Norwegian speakers. The congregation also has use of Mariastuen, a gathering space with a capacity for 50 seated at tables, kitchen facilities and a room designated as Rev’d Weisz’ office.

Stavanger

Stavanger is a city on the Southwest coast of Norway and is the fourth largest city in Norway and the administrative centre of the county of Rogaland. Stavanger Cathedral, completed in 1125, is the oldest in Northern Europe, and remains at the geographical heart of the historic town. The earliest houses were constructed in wood and were built in the 18th and 19th centuries for the herring fishermen; they are considered part of the city's cultural heritage. The present city centre was built a little later; it is small and compact, and the immediate suburbs are residential, with business and industry further out.

The city’s rapid population growth in the 1960s (currently 142,000) was primarily a result of Norway's booming offshore oil industry. As this has dwindled, so has the number of foreign
workers; there are domestic and international military installations located in Stavanger, including NATO. It has one of the lowest unemployment figures in Europe and Norway, and most people enjoy an excellent quality of life. Transport links are very good; the local airport has direct short-haul flights to London and many other cities in Europe, as well as long-haul flights. The airport bus runs every 15 – 20 minutes, and there is a railway and bus station linking with many places in Norway, and ferries to both the outlying islands and other Norwegian coastal towns as well as other Scandinavian countries. Though a rental agreement the congregation currently meets and worships at the college of Det Norske Misjonselkap (the Norwegian Missionary Association).

Trondheim
The Chaplaincy’s northern congregation is the country’s third largest city, with a population of around 205,000. Trondheim is the home of the Nidarosdomen, which is the northernmost medieval cathedral in the world, and is built over the grave of the nation’s patron saint, St. Olav. The Nidarosdomen is Norway’s National Cathedral, at which many royal coronations, weddings and funerals are held. The city is also home to Norway’s main technical university (NTNU) and various other research organisations, which attract researchers from all over Europe as well as a notable presence of both Norwegian and international students. The congregation worships in Nidaros Cathedral two Sunday evenings a month and on the other two Sundays of the month holds morning services in the centrally located Our Lady’s Church (Vår Frue kirke).
**Balestrand**

Due to historical circumstances, a small English church dedicated to St Olaf was built in Balestrand (near the west coast of Norway) in 1897, linked to the family at the famous Kvikne Hotel nearby. It has a four months’ summer chaplaincy between the middle of May and the end of August. The church building is owned by the British-based mission society USPG, to whom the Kvikne family gave the deeds. In recent years, the Friends of St Olaf’s were founded to raise funds for the upkeep of the church building, and a good number of people pay an annual subscription. The spiritual provision is arranged by the Senior Chaplain and the post involves opening and closing the summer chaplaincy each year and promoting the services. The church is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the western area of Norway, with around 20,000 visitors a year, judging from the visitor’s book. It is a listed building.

*St Olavs Balestrand*
**Tromsø**

There is an annual carol service in Tromsø (in the far north of Norway) which attracts 40 to 50 people, led alternately in recent years by clergy from Oslo and from Trondheim. We have looked at developing more regular English language services and the Bishop of the area would welcome this. However, the core group is just a few and they are very busy in work and so the capacity for local leadership is too limited.

**Kristiansand**

About 40 people from the membership register live near Kristiansand (in southern Norway) and the Assistant Chaplain in Stavanger has run a carol service there each Christmas at Oddernes Kirke, which usually has about 100 people attending.

**Who we are**

**The role and the team**

*Oslo and the Chaplaincy as a whole*

The model followed in the last eight years has sought to give coherence to an arrangement whereby there is one full time Senior Chaplain for all of Norway, who also has local oversight of the Oslo congregation, with three fifty per cent Assistant Chaplains in each of the other three main congregations. Though in principle the Senior Chaplain is Team Rector with three Team Vicars, the history of the Chaplaincy and geographic distance between the congregations has in practice led to a high degree of autonomy within each congregation, while maintaining conformity and collaboration.

In legal terms, the Statutes have a single legal body for the Chaplaincy, namely the Anglican Chaplaincy Council in Norway and describe this body as "based" in Oslo. This reflects an earlier model of operation which was that the Chaplain was based in Oslo and went out to the other congregations: and then had a full-time Assistant Chaplain (first based in Oslo and then in Stavanger) to assist with other congregations. Each of the local congregations has a church committee with local warden and treasurer for their local Assistant Chaplain to consult and to give support, but these are "informal" bodies with regard to the legal framework. The Senior Chaplain is supported by a "forstønder" ("administrative leader"), a volunteer post under Norwegian law which provides a channel of communication with the authorities in the Norwegian language, in addition to the Chaplaincy Council and its committees. The Oslo congregation has currently two Readers in training, in addition to a fair number of Norwegian priests with Permission to Officiate (PTO).

**Bergen**

The Bergen congregation is blessed to have had the pastoral leadership of the Rev’d Kirk Weisz since August 2016, when he was appointed Resident Pastor-in-Charge. A native of Tennessee in the United States, Kirk was ordained in the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) in 2007 and served the PCUSA for many years prior to relocating to Bergen. Kirk has been granted permission for five years (renewable) by the Bishop of the Diocese of Europe, under the provisions of the
ecumenical canons, to lead Services of Communion by Extension. Kirk has full local responsibility for the Bergen congregation and leads the community in every dimension of church life. Kirk is in the ordination process in the Church of England and was ordained to the diaconate in December 2019 and will be ordained to the priesthood in July 2020. Kirk has been completing a year-long study program in Anglicanism on Eastern Region Ministry Course (ERMC) for the 2019-2020 academic year. The Bergen congregation is also served by a gifted lay reader Iris Evans-Bjørnø. Iris became a licensed lay reader 15 years ago and has been a part of the congregation for the past 30 years. Iris typically leads a Service of the Word once a month. The congregation is also served by two PTO clergy who are retired priests of the Church of Norway, and lead services occasionally in the absence of Kirk and Iris.

Deacon Ordination of Rev’d Weisz at Mariakirken, Bergen, December 2019
(left to right; Bergen lay-reader Iris Evans-Bjørnø, Stavanger locum priest Jules Cave-Bergquist, Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (registrar), Rev’d Kirk Weisz, Bishop David Hamid, Deacon Frances Hiller, Archdeacon Leslie Nathaniel, Senior Chaplain Darren McCallig)

Stavanger
Stavanger is, at time of writing, ministered to by the Reverend Jules Cave-Bergquist, as long-term locum following a turbulent period in its history. The position of Assistant Chaplain in Stavanger has also included serving as Chaplain for the local Nato contingent, and regular contact with the British international school, currently taken on by others. The congregation of Stavanger is in the process of rebuilding, and the path chosen will be an important decision to be taken by the new Senior Chaplain.
The newly installed Assistant Chaplain, the Rev’d Sheila Rosenthal has brought a candid and open informality to both the long established and largely academic strands of the Trondheim congregation. The congregation has developed a federal sense of being the Anglican church in Trondheim, enjoying and welcoming fellow Anglicans in Norway, while equally valuing their own unique and continually evolving identity. There is currently one reader, one retired reader and retired minister. In addition, there is an ordinand in training (probably to be deployed outside Norway on ordination).

The congregations

Oslo
In recent years, we have transitioned into a truly international congregation, with members from about 33 different countries. While a core of longstanding members remains, the Oslo congregation has grown significantly in the last three years and we have focused on welcoming newcomers. New members in the last year reflect the changing trends in Norway with members from South East Asia and the Far East, and fewer new African members. There is interest from English speaking foreigners married to Norwegians as well as Norwegians, concerned about the liberal drift in the Church of Norway, seeking a secure base.
The Chaplaincy, in all its congregations, needs to find a balance between being an English-speaking Church and being Anglican. The Chaplaincy always follows Anglican patterns of church order and worship and is set within the Canonical framework of a Diocese in Europe which is directly part of the Church of England, and by virtue of this part of the Anglican Communion. It is, however, a natural choice of church for many English-speaking people in Norway who may not feel comfortable to worship in the Church of Norway. At the same time, many Anglicans come from outside the Church of England and have different experiences of Anglicanism as a result. This makes for legitimate diversity.

Bergen
The Bergen congregation has been meeting since at least the early 1960s. During these early days, non-Eucharistic services were led by lay ministers. Once every three months a Eucharistic service was led by the Chaplain, who was based in Oslo. The congregation got its first resident Assistant Chaplain (a 50% post) in January 2013. Before the move to Mariakirken the church was primarily an ageing congregation with a declining membership. However, since the move to Mariakirken and the stable pastoral leadership provided by Kirk over the past four years, the congregation is growing in terms of numbers and in diversity. The church is now composed of younger families with children, undergraduate and postgraduate university students, and working and pensioned adults.

Stavanger
The Stavanger congregation is small and close-knit. A lot of contact is made between members during the week, and there are those who have taken it upon themselves to pastorally support those in need over the past year or so. Numbers have been in sharp decline over the last 6 – 7 years, partly due to the decline in the oil trade requiring fewer foreign workers, and the numbers also dropped again in the last couple of years due to a turbulent period in its history.

Trondheim
The expression of the Anglican Church in Norway has a long and warm history. The Trondheim congregation began nearly fifty years ago, in the early 1970s, with the celebration of English Carol Services in Nidaros Cathedral. The genesis of the congregation was through young families from the UK that were by then living in the Trondheim area, some married to Norwegians. They were seeking more regular English worship. This was supported by the Chaplain in Oslo and development of lay leaders. In time to a non-stipendiary priest and volunteer Readers from the congregation were in place. The post of Assistant Chaplain became a 50% paid post in the last 13 years. The first Assistant Chaplain was home grown so to speak. Rev. Mary Strømmen was here with her husband, was accepted for training and then became the part time chaplain here for about 8 years. She was succeeded by April Almaas, an American Lutheran who was historically appointed under the Porvoo Agreement and who left last year to become a full time Lutheran minister in Trondheim. The present chaplain, Sheila Rosenthal, has been in post since November 2019.
The congregational makeup was originally a “female ex-pat” group based out of the city’s former Anglo-Norsk club which expanded to include Norwegians, students, academics, and younger working families from all corners of the globe. At present there are no children under 11 that regularly attend, though several young adults. This may change as we again develop relations with two English-speaking schools in the City. There is post-graduate, often post-doctoral, members from NTNU, who are English speakers from across the world, who have either a historical link with the CofE or a need to worship in English. The congregation is regularly joined by English-speaking tourist, and at the Cathedral by pilgrims to Nidarosdom, having walked the Pilgrim Way here, sometimes from considerable distances.

Key statistics, electoral roll and age profile

Oslo
We are now regularly, with children, between 80 and 95 people on a Sunday and sometimes more. There is a healthy spread in the age profile of the congregation, from infant and up to about 95. New members in the last year reflect the changing trends in Norway with members from South East Asia and the Far East, and fewer new African members. The electoral roll, renewed in 2020, has 54 members.

Bergen
Bergen is a tourist town, and with the use of Mariakirken on Sunday mornings at 11 am, tourists boost worship attendance numbers to an average of between 60 and 70 from May to the end of October. From November to April the congregation consists mostly of church members, with average attendance numbers between 30 and 40. The Bergen congregation is a transient community of faith like the entire Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway with members relocating to Norway for a temporary period of time for work or education. The electoral roll in Bergen has 25 members, however the congregation has a number of churchgoers such as students, who chose not to be on the electoral roll and push the number of active churchgoers toward 35.
**Stavanger**
The regular congregation currently average 10 – 25 on a Sunday and are now beginning the process of rebuilding and attracting again some of its previous membership. The electoral roll has 26 members. The congregation comprises mainly expatriate workers from the oil industry and from NATO. There is a good mix of ages and nationalities; perhaps the largest grouping is Nigerian, with a sprinkling of British, Norwegian, American and South Africans. There are several families with small or pre-teen children; until last year there was a paid part – time youth worker, as well as the half – time chaplain.

**Trondheim**
Average weekly attendance is around 25 - 35 members, including some children, though more at special services. With services held in three different venues, and the makeup of the weekly congregation varies with both the venue and form of service. The makeup of the congregation is based on two main strands; longstanding expat members, often with Norwegian spouses, and a group of younger academics connected to the University. The electoral roll currently has 12 members.

![Image of a church service]

**What we do**

**Worship**

**Oslo**
Generally, the Oslo congregation is seen as a place of spiritual vitality and warmth. Children’s Church meets on Sundays apart from the first Sunday of the month when there is a Family Communion service. There is a small youth group which meets occasionally, recently in continuation of the confirmation class of 2019. There are regular bible studies after church on a Sunday on two Sundays a month, Lent groups and a full programme for Holy Week. There are
well established rotas for sides persons, lesson readers and intercessors, as well as those serving refreshments and providing flowers.

The Senior Chaplain also serves a "house congregation" in Drammen. There is now a small group of 7 or so women who came to Norway from the UK and the Commonwealth in the 1960s onwards and married Norwegians. They are a spiritually deep group with a strong prayer ministry which the Senior Chaplain supports with a eucharist and a lunch every six weeks in Drammen. This group mounts the annual carol service of Lessons and Carols in Drammen which was held for the fiftieth year in 2016, and which continues as a strong tradition that gathers both Norwegians and ex-pats from other English speaking countries.

Carol services are one of the ways that the Chaplaincy is visible to Norwegians across the country and an important part of our outreach. Well attended services are held in 8 different locations, and the bonds that are formed may lead to the development of new congregations outside of our four main centres.

Bergen
The Bergen congregation hold a Service of Communion by Extension led by Kirk nearly every Sunday, and Kirk will be allowed to fully celebrate the Eucharist once he is ordained in the Church of England in July 2020. The lay-reader Iris prepares and assists with communion and otherwise leads a Service of the Word on Sunday when licensed clergy are not present. The congregation is blessed with many gifted, highly educated and giving regular members. For example, there are four designated members who are trained to assist with communion, and a very gifted and much-loved Sunday School teacher who prepares a lesson each week for the children of the church. At present, the congregation can have up to 5 children on any given
Sunday in 2019. The congregation also have a small group of committed sides persons who help to set-up worship on Sunday mornings and secure the church afterwards. The church also holds a coffee hour fellowship every Sunday morning that is organized by a rota of numerous members and is well attended each Sunday. Throughout the year, the church holds traditional church gatherings related to the current liturgical season such as Harvest Festival, Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, an annual Lent study and a full Holy Week service schedule.

Lent study, “The Hopeful Heart” by John R. Claypool, at Mariastuen, Bergen, March 2020

**Stavanger**

Although the music during worship is predominantly evangelical songs, the congregation is liturgically and doctrinally flexible, with a preference for informal worship, be it Eucharistic or a Service of the Word; it is a relatively young, bright, intelligent congregation and they appreciate good preaching. Café church is very popular; they enjoy being together, and most people stay behind for coffee and cake after worship every week.

For the last 17 or so years, the previous chaplain formed the congregation into something that resembles more a house-group than an Anglican congregation; the only officer at present is the Treasurer, and there is a committee that meets regularly. Communications between the Stavanger and Oslo congregations, and between the Stavanger congregation and the diocese of Europe are strained at present, largely due to the self-sufficient way in which they have been formed, the fact that there is no local assistant Warden or Secretary to receive information and communications, and its recent history. Most people are now starting to turn towards the future, although the wounds start to open at times. There is no lay leadership, but there are two people being prepared to administer the chalice at present. With the strain in communications, the future chaplain will need to earn the trust of the Stavanger congregation, knit them back into the Anglican Church and compliance on several levels, and enable them to contribute to the life of the wider church.
There is a well-established tradition of a major carol service organised at Stavanger Domkirke in December with about 700 people in attendance, in addition to occasional ecumenical services held elsewhere during Lent and Easter. There has also been good links established with the local Nato contingent and the British International School in Stavanger, both currently on hold.

**Trondheim**

The current pattern of worship is divided between two Church of Norway buildings, a church in the centre of the city, Vår Frue, where we have morning Eucharists, and at the Cathedral. Vår Frue Kirke is the open church of the City’s Mission (Bymisjon) so there are a wide variety of people present in the café in the back and throughout the church during these services. This presents Safeguarding issues for both the congregation and the users of the Bymission. The Church of Norway has a different approach to Safeguarding from the CofE and this leads to potential misunderstanding.

In the Cathedral we have the use of the Chapter House, an intimate space, which is used mainly for Evensong. The other cathedral service takes place in the main body and is the evening Eucharist for Trondheim. This is a great pleasure and privilege for us as it is a time and place afforded us by the Church of Norway in fulfilment and accord with the Porvoo Agreement. (That agreement also gives us the use of Vår Frue church.) We have also the use of office space and other facilities at minimal cost for which we are very grateful. We contribute to the ecumenical life in Trondheim through the involvement of our two Norwegian speaking Lay Readers on many ecumenical committees. We take part in midday prayers at the Cathedral through and other groups. There are plans for a regular midweek service led by the Chaplain in English during the tourist season. Bible studies are held in Advent and Lent.

The congregation also meets occasionally at a church in the mountains just outside Trondheim, providing a welcome break from the more formal settings. These services all attract quite different congregations. At the Cathedral we are joined by city dwellers who come to us because they worship every Sunday evening at that time, both Anglophones and Anglophiles. We offer refreshments after our services.

Remembrance Day is commemorated and is usually attended by the British Consul and some Norwegians, often with military personnel taking part of or joining us. We also have links with a group of local and active historians with a particular interest in Second War.

The first Anglican service in Trondheim was the Service of Nine Lessons with Carols and intitiated by the Dean of the Cathedral. For over 45 years this service has taken place every December and is well attended. The Cathedral provide us with a choir and organist. This service started life as a small in-house carol service but blossomed into what is now a regular and anticipated celebration in the city and beyond.

**Balestrand**

The services during the summer chaplaincy are in English and the average weekly attendance, across the four late evening services and Sunday morning eucharist, is about 70. Two English-
based tour companies bring groups to Balestrand. Some joint services are arranged with the Church of Norway parish and since 2015 an Anglican choir from the congregations in Oslo and Bergen has come to open the season. This provides an excellent opportunity for members of all the Chaplaincy’s congregations to meet and worship together in the beautiful setting of Balestrand.

**Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages & Funerals (statistics)**

**Oslo**  
Confirmations have taken place in 2017 (four young people and one adult), 2018 (three young people), 2019 (six young people and one adult) and are planned for 2020 (anticipated to be two young people and two adults). We have usually about six baptisms a year, taking place at the main Sunday service, and a similar number of funerals. The Anglican chaplaincy is not accredited to take marriages but can offer a blessing in church following a civic ceremony, and one or two a year take place.

*Confirmation 2019, St Edmund’s Oslo, with Bishop Robert Innes, Senior Chaplain Darren McCallig*
Bergen
Since relocating to Mariakirken in 2015, there have been two infant baptisms that took place in 2016. There is an infant baptism scheduled for May 2020. There has been no funerals or weddings in recent years. The youth of the church consists primarily of younger children 0-9 age range so there has been no need for confirmation classes.

Stavanger
One baptism in 2016 and one in 2017.

Trondheim
One funeral in 2018 and one baptism in 2016.

Church music

Oslo
Music is a significant part of our worship at St Edmund’s and is an integral part of regular services. Based upon the Anglican traditions, music contributes to worship through hymns, liturgy and reflection. Led by our robed choir, organist and under the direction of the choir master, St Edmund’s has a strong singing congregation and one which is enriched in its worship through the inclusion of its music. The St Edmund’s Choir is central to what we do. Hymns are sung in SATB and are accompanied by organ and on occasion piano. Descants are added to hymns, and a choral anthem is normally sung during communion. The choir, which has members representing a cross section of our community, rehearse one evening a week and can call on approximately 25 voices.
In addition to Sunday worship, choral evensong is performed one or two times a year, the choir sings at special non Sunday services within the church calendar, and services of Nine Lessons and Carols are sung both in Oslo and Drammen, as well as for some other engagements.

The St Edmund’s Ensemble, made up of professional and amateur players from the congregation, both adult and young people, perform in Sunday services, particularly for occasions such as Remembrance Sunday and Easter as well as more routinely in family services. The Children’s Choir rehearse weekly and perform at our family services.

St Edmund’s has in the past six years grown as a venue for concerts and hosts a number of events given by Oslo-based organisations and individuals. These include the Oslo Jazz Festival, the by:Larm Festival, monthly popular music concerts, the Norwegian Academy of Music Master concert series, chamber music ensemble recitals and private events.

*Bergen*

The congregation has numerous capable church musicians who serve on a voluntary basis. There is a rota of four organists, who greatly enrich Sunday morning services. There is a Christmas choir, consisting of 30 singers from the congregation and friends in the community, that provides the musical leadership for the annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols in both Mariakirken and Korskirken. Together these services have a significant local impact as an important element in mission and “visibility.” For example, the carol service in Mariakirken had 200+ in attendance in 2019. The congregation also has a small chamber choir that sings occasionally throughout the year and comprises some very capable singers from our congregation and friends from the community.
Trondheim
The congregation is blessed with several professional musicians who greatly contribute to the weekly services. The Nidarosdomen Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral organist have participated in the annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols for many years. When church choirs from outside Norway visit Trondheim, there is sometimes a Choral Evensong attended by Anglican and Norwegian congregations.

Ecumenical Relations

The historic Porvoo Agreement, signed in 1992, links together 14 mainly northern European Anglican and Lutheran churches. It is at the heart of the Chaplaincy’s work with other churches in Norway and beyond.

Oslo and the Chaplaincy as a whole

The focus in Oslo has been to extend Porvoo into a closer contact with other churches represented in Norway, particularly the Swedish congregation close by. There is also an annual evening ecumenical service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity whereby five denominations share in pilgrimage walk between five church buildings, with prayers held and hymns sung in each, including the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. The American Lutheran congregation in Oslo, with whom we share a Good Friday service, has also been involved.

There are particularly good opportunities for the Senior Chaplain in Oslo to build further in our Ecumenical relationships. Previously this has included representation on behalf of the Diocese of Europe on the Porvoo Contacts Group, and for the Church of England at annual residential meetings of the Nordic and Baltic Councils of Churches. Closer to home, there is the possibility for very active membership in the Norwegian Christian Council, though this is dependent on a grasp of the Norwegian language.

Bergen

The Bergen congregation has a strong focus on development under Porvoo relations. As mentioned above, Mariakirken is the oldest church in Bergen and was Hanseatic in that it served the significant German trading community in Bergen. It was extensively restored between 2008 and 2015, and when it was due to re-open, the Dean and the Cathedral Parish lobbied for it to be a place of worship and a center for mission to international people living and working in Bergen or visiting as tourists. To this end, the Anglican congregation was invited to lead English language services on Sunday mornings at 11am. Partnership with the Church of Norway, who leads regular Norwegian language services at 6pm in Mariakirken, is expressed by joint services (with both languages and both leaders) throughout the year, for example, on Ash Wednesday and at Easter. In 2020, the Bergen congregation held its first ecumenical Maundy Thursday service with the Johanneskirken congregation (Church of Norway) and there are plans to build upon this relationship in the year ahead. The Bergen congregation will hold its first joint
Evensong service with Centralkirken, the Methodist congregation located also in the city center. This is scheduled to take place in the autumn of 2020.

Easter 2017, Mariakirken
(left to right; Bergen lay-reader Iris Evans-Bjørnø, Rev’d Eli-Johanne Rønnekleiv (Church of Norway), Rev’d Kirk Weisz, Bergen member Eirik Duerr, Rev’d Hildegunn Isaksen (Church of Norway), Rev’d Berit Andersen (Church of Norway)

Stavanger
In Stavanger, our small congregation organises an annual service of lessons and carols in the cathedral, which has a very high attendance and goodwill from the Bishop of Stavanger. The Stavanger congregation is more evangelical in churchmanship, as it reflects an area of the country known as the "bible belt" and has good relationships with English speaking international congregations and a local Free Church Congregation. There has been good ecumenical cooperation in the Stavanger area with the previous Assistant Chaplain and congregation actively involved in worship and other Christian events as well as ecumenical planning and meeting.

Trondheim
Founded on a relationship with the Church of Norway, the Trondheim congregation has perhaps come farthest in the development of Porvoo relations—and indeed Nidaros Cathedral was the site of one of the original Porvoo signings.

Each year the two congregations officially worship together using bi-lingual, Porvoo liturgies on both Ash Wednesday and also on Maundy Thursday (with the city’s City Mission also partnering
with this service). For a number of years, the Lutheran Student Congregation (from the NTNU that is under the umbrella of the Cathedral congregation) and Trondheim Anglican Congregation have held joint worship together in the Cathedral once a semester. We enjoy good relations with our CofN colleagues and hope in the near future to increase our involvement with the offering of bi-lingual or English services in the summer/tourist months. We also regularly take part in the Women’s World Day of prayer service and in the Taizé services held once a month.

**Mission and outreach**

**Oslo**

An independent Burmese congregation has the use of the Oslo church building Sunday afternoons, on the basis of a fairly generous donation. A congregation from the Faroe Islands comes once a year and other churches very occasionally. The Council of Churches for Norway has held meetings in our crypt from time to time.

One notable success has been to become part of the city-wide Culture Night in September and to have an open church building on that highly publicised evening. Given our spiritual role, we have offered traditional Anglican Choral Evensong at 5.30 pm to start the evening with an attendance of over 60, many seeing our church for the first time.

Building on some concerts held in St Edmund’s by the Norwegian Academy of Music, it has been possible to promote the church building as a concert venue for smaller intimate programmes in which the church building can "add value" to the event. For example, notable successes have been attracting the by:Larm modern concert festival each spring, who come for eight "reflective" concerts, and the Oslo Jazz Festival, who come for three "mellow" concerts in August. These are high profile and bring 2,000 young people a year now into our church building. This has also prompted other occasional concert bookings giving us about 25 rent-paying concerts a year, none of which carry financial risks for St Edmund’s.

We cooperate with the British Embassy and relevant Norwegian and Commonwealth authorities in relation to the annual Remembrance Sunday service and commemoration in Oslo. The events of World War II formed a close bond between Britain and Norway, and there is a Commonwealth War Cemetery outside Oslo, at which a commemoration is also held.
The annual Church Bazaar each November, held at the Swedish Church, makes a major impact for our visibility in Oslo as well as raising significant necessary church funds. It also provides a place of social meeting and the cafe is a key element in what is provided on the day. The timing, before our main Christmas services, enables us to promote these to those who come, supported by our choir singing carols on three occasions during the day.

**Bergen**

The ecumenical partnership with the Bergen Cathedral Parish through the Porvoo Agreement that began in June 2015 has been equally beneficial for the Bergen congregation and the Bergen Cathedral Parish in providing an English language service in *Mariakirken* every Sunday to the Bergen community and the many tourists who visit Bergen each year. The Carol services mentioned earlier provide the basis for the Bergen congregation’s outreach programme, both locally and internationally. The collection taken at the service at *Korskirken* is donated to the Bergen Bymisjon, and although the collection taken at the service at *Mariakirken* goes toward the Bergen congregation, the raffle held after the service generates substantial funds which are typically donated to outreach initiatives in Uganda.

**Stavanger**

Given the number of young families that were coming from the UK and North America in connection with the oil industry, this church’s mission has focused on families, both in terms of accessible worship and a strong emphasis on work with children and young people. The congregation has had a focus on serving social need and prioritised supporting a “shoe box” Christmas gift charity, with their gifts going to children in Romania.

**Trondheim**

The carol services continue to be very popular, having grown to an attendance of over 500, most of whom are non-Anglicans, and include one of the Cathedral’s Choirs. In 2016 we held the first Christmas Church Service for Birralee International School (preschool, primary and junior high school) that had taken place in 7 years—the response was very positive, and the service has continued annually since.

**Publications and communication**

**Oslo and Chaplaincy**

Together, the quarterly Chaplaincy wide magazine formerly known as Outpost, dates back some 60 years and provides a forum for each of the congregations. Though much of the content overlaps with the Oslo website (where the magazine is also posted), it provides a reassuring outreach to many remotely located Chaplaincy members.

The Oslo website was redeveloped in 2012 as part of our current focus on marketing ([www.osloanglicans.no](http://www.osloanglicans.no)) with links to the websites of Trondheim, Bergen, and Stavanger. The chaplaincy websites have been of increasing importance in the past few years, beginning with
the regular posting of recorded sermons and now, at time of writing during the Covid 2019 shutdown, providing links to reflections, prayers, inspirational materials and virtual services.

Our Facebook page was created in conjunction with the concert series, and while focusing on these, needs to be expanded to include regular services in the congregation. Linked to a weekly events register in Oslo, the capacity to draw foreign and Norwegian residents and visiting tourists to afternoon concerts has been clearly demonstrated.

The history of St Edmund’s and the Anglican Chaplaincy has been chronicled in two separate works. The first, a scholarly work by Dr Kingston Derry, is available in book form from the Chaplaincy. The second, an updated and informal history written by historian Trond Werner Pettersen for the 125th anniversary in 2009, is available as a booklet and posted on our website.

Bergen
The Bergen congregation hosts the website Bergenanglicans.net and a Facebook page with the name Bergen Anglican Church. Both are regularly updated to inform and invite tourist and local populations alike to our services and events. As part of our mission to serve the tourist population, the congregation also has a dedicated group of members who regularly distribute calling cards to hotels and the local tourist information office. The Bergen congregation does not have its own publication but does contribute to the Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway newsletter Together, which is published online quarterly.
Financial situation.

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The Stavanger congregation is currently in the process of reestablishing their website with domain www.stavangeranglicans.net which provides also links to the other sites in the Chaplaincy.

Trondheim

The congregation has several places of contact within the general and specific Trondheim communities. We use the networks available to expat communities for Anglophones. We use Facebook and our own website for a public face (http://www.trondheimanglicans.net/ https://www.facebook.com/The-Anglican-Church-in-Trondheim-104432350146077 and have a closed Facebook page too. Skype services have been established during the coronavirus situation.

Financial outlook

Oslo and Chaplaincy as a whole

This is an ongoing area of focus for the Chaplaincy Council. It costs in excess of three million Norwegian kroner a year to run the Chaplaincy (about £300,000), half of which comes from state and kommune (municipal) contributions (based on a Norwegian membership list) and half from voluntary giving of one kind or another, in addition to fundraising activities such as the bazaar.

The finances of the Chaplaincy are well managed though in the past two years have shown a slight deficit. Given our current membership, regular increases in tax-efficient planned giving combined with partial VAT refunds on all receipts are the two most effective means of increasing our income. In the spirit of Porvoo and in accordance with the law we endeavour to maintain salary levels relative to Presteforeningen (the Norwegian Priests Association) and seek to support the recent initiatives put in place by the Diocese of Europe. Our structure of the past 10 years, with the Senior Chaplain in Oslo and Assistant chaplains Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim, has recently been supplemented on a trial basis with part time paid administrative position in Oslo. We see the need for a reassessment of this structure on the horizon and are currently beginning conversations across the Chaplaincy to investigate how our financial and organisational models could be adjusted in future.

Recent change in Norwegian law no longer allows for the benefit of provision of accommodation for Ministers, and where such accommodation is provided, it must be rented out at market value. (Recent salary increases through Presteforeningen are in part meant to address this issue). For the Senior Chaplain, the Chaplaincy owns (without mortgage) a very pleasant furnished duplex apartment with four bedrooms in a good area of Oslo (Majorstuen) with excellent public transport links. The upper floor has two independent entrances, and may easily be partitioned from the main floor, providing a Chaplaincy office and meeting room, thus reducing the rental requirement. The possibility of downscaling the current flat in order to free up funding within the Chaplaincy is also an option currently under discussion.
The current Chaplaincy-wide housing policy aids resident clergy in Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger in the purchase of suitable accommodation, such as now applied in Bergen. There is a need to reassess this housing policy across the Chaplaincy, also considering possible future changes to our financial and organisational models.

The annual Christmas Bazaar, mentioned above, represents a significant contribution to our finances, thanks to the efforts and contributions of a large part of the Oslo congregation.

It should be noted that the Oslo congregation subsidizes to various degrees the Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger congregations. There has been a steady process of working towards greater transparency and communication of the financial modelling of the Chaplaincy as a single entity. This process is somewhat complicated by the varied history and initial independence of each congregation. Discussions aimed at an increased awareness of our financial model across the Chaplaincy may continue in 2020, in order to provide groundwork for further development upon the arrival of the new Senior Chaplain.

**Bergen**

The congregation in Bergen is a generous community, in time, talent and financial support. The church pays monthly rent for the use of Mariakirken at significant expense. However, the use of Mariakirken is viewed as a key element to the long-term stability and future growth of the congregation. In recent years, the congregation has focused significantly on fundraising to manage their expenses. In 2018, three initiatives were taken, one of which boosted our coffers and two of which have been a basis for consistent fundraising since their introduction. Over six Sunday afternoons throughout May to October, 2018, a volunteer group of church members picked up litter from an area assigned to us by Bergen Kommune, as part of their sponsored ‘Litter Pick-up’ programme, a contract which generated 25,000 kr for our coffers. All involved benefited from the opportunity to interact and get to know one another better as well. A cookbook, with recipes from our own membership, was published in 2018, as were notecards with artistic images of Mariakirken, Johanneskirken and Bryggen, as donated by a fashion-design student from Taiwan, who worked in Bergen for the summer of 2018 and quickly became a valued member of our church community. The sale of cookbooks and cards, as well as paperback books, donated by our members, now make up our ongoing offering to tourists who grace our doorstep.

*Litter pickup project volunteers, August 2018*
Stavanger
The Stavanger accounts have, largely due to the extremely generous contributions of several families, built up a considerable reserve over the past 10 years. These key contributors have unfortunately returned to their home countries as a result of the downturn in the oil industry, and in combination with a smaller congregation the local balance is in gradual decline. This may point towards a restructuring of Chaplaincy staffing, and discussion of possible scenarios is an item which may be investigated in 2020, as groundwork in preparation of the arrival of the new Senior Chaplain.

Trondheim
Trondheim are generally in good financial health although are especially fortunate in not having to pay for office or worship accommodation. The accounts given in the overall application reflect a changing congregation whose financial capacity is restricted. There are many retired members on limited pensions and many students who typically and genuinely have little spare cash. The financial position improves somewhat in the summer with tourists attending services, but this is erratic and in 2020 will be negligible.

Throughout the year finances are supplemented thought sales of homemade goods and produce as well as book fairs, which are attended by church members, passing tourists and locals. These, together with the support of the Trondheim Norwegian Church help to keep the congregation financially solvent.

What we want to do

Oslo and the Chaplaincy as a whole
Our congregations in Norway seek to be a spiritual home for people from different cultures, coming together as a community that:

- cares deeply, listens attentively and prays earnestly, with a concern for social justice and the poor;
- values English-language worship that is well prepared, reverent as well as personal, and in which we can be alive to God's presence and saving grace, and through which we can be encouraged to explore questions of Christian faith;
- welcomes the gifts and contribution of all those who are willing to be involved;
- desires that members of all ages grow closer to the God we find in Jesus, and closer to one another, feeling inspired, supported and equipped to be Christian disciples in every part of their lives.

In different ways, congregations have a concern for:

- the vital importance of our ministry to children, families and young people;
• the significance of continuing to offer a supportive spiritual home for post-graduate and undergraduate students, with many of these people coming from overseas, sometimes with families, for a limited period of time;
• giving a welcoming home to all in Norway who may be drawn to a church that has a clear Anglican format for worship and music, and which seeks worship to be relevant for our lives, engaging us personally and open to participation for everyone.

In short, this is about being a church which is intelligent, liturgical, international and open to a range of theologies.

The scope of the Chaplaincy, with four congregations, each with resident priest, is widespread, both in distance and number. With increasing costs, we are generally dependent upon an increase in our numbers if we are to sustain our current scope and structure. Our outreach is remarkable and made possible largely by the degree of public funding we currently receive, by the substantial efforts of a large volunteer base, the multicultural diversity of our membership, and the strength of our Porvoo relations.

While we have seen fairly good growth in Oslo and Bergen these past few years, the general decline in oil industry and number of positions available to foreign applicants in combination with the governmental shift in post-graduate funding from Africa to Asia has somewhat reduced the base from which we have drawn many of our new members in past decades. This applies particularly to Stavanger and to a lesser extent to Oslo with regards to the oil industry, but to all four congregations with regards to the academic community. There may well be the need to adjust our course in terms of how we attract new members and how we can better focus our efforts in the not too distant future.

**Bergen**

At present, the Bergen congregation is a valued and respected church community in the city center. This is evidenced by their strong ecumenical relations and a growing membership, both in terms of international people and local Norwegians. The faithful and consistent leadership from both clergy and lay persons has helped to create a stable ministry with significant potential for future growth. The Bergen congregation hopes to build upon this foundation of stability by further developing a ministry that is inclusive, inspiring, distinctly Anglican and most importantly Christ-centered. During this past year the church committee has been developing a Mission Action Plan to narrow down three priorities for ministry in the coming years; music development, youth work and hospitality to newcomers. We believe strongly that hospitality from a biblical perspective is central to the Gospel and to our mission here in Bergen. The Anglican Chaplaincy in Bergen offers an invaluable gift of ministry to an increasingly diverse population of international people who are adjusting to Norwegian life and culture. This gift is brought to life by offering worship in the English language, gathering for fellowship and shared meals, providing educational opportunities for spiritual growth, and most importantly providing a welcoming, caring, and inclusive community of faith where everyone can encounter God’s grace and love.
Stavanger
Given the number of young families coming from the UK and North America in connection with the oil industry, this church’s mission has focussed on families both in terms of accessible worship and a strong emphasis on work with children and young people. If the current economic trends continue, the approach may need to focus more consciously on nurturing adults in their Christian understanding and discipleship, as well as children and young people.

Trondheim
One of the main challenges for Trondheim is keeping a small, diverse and fairly transient congregation unified and involved. We worship in three different spaces, at two different times, with four different liturgies, and with a wide range of different guests (Bymisjon and tourists in Vår Frue, tourists, students and Church of Norway congregants in the Cathedral). We hope to work with the Trondheim Cathedral in finding a single place of worship, which would help to consolidate the current hybrid nature of our current situation.

Trondheim’s Anglican community is in a state of ordered change moving from one, historic identity of a church based around the needs of young mothers with children, to one that attracts bright and socially transient professionals as well as long-term locals, parents and academics. We still benefit greatly from those who helped found this congregation while also looking forward to offering an Anglophone sphere of worship and study. In essence we are tolerably intellectually well-grounded in our faith, we have fun and we are fairly mature in our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. We seek to understand better the ways of Christ and to share that understanding with the community in which we live, work, move and have our being.

Summary: the way forward

Overall assessment

The Chaplaincy in Norway is quite different in character compared to a typical parish in an English-speaking country. Our congregations were originally founded by their members, and have developed over many years, often without the regular presence of a Chaplain or ordained minister. The development of the Chaplaincy in the past ten years has led to our current structure with the Senior Chaplain in Oslo and resident Assistant Chaplains in Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim. Our intent has been to enable further growth in the Chaplaincy in terms of depth, impact and numbers. Factors such as the increased presence of the Chaplain in each of the congregations, the holding of one Chaplaincy Council meeting yearly in Bergen, Stavanger or Trondheim, the virtual attendance of the entire chaplaincy at CC meetings, and the ever increasing transparency in our Chaplaincy-wide financial structure have brought out the beginnings of a common understanding of the Chaplaincy as one body. We need to grow with each other our sense of unity. The renaming our Chaplaincy magazine as “Together” is symbolic of this, and the current Covid-19 situation has provided us with the opportunity to exercise
cross-chaplaincy communication through widely attended virtual meetings. Following on this, the Chaplaincy is currently beginning discussions to map and hopefully unite our quite varied views on the structure of Chaplaincy finances and staffing. In parallel there have been great achievements within the context of the Porvoo Agreement, particularly in Trondheim and Bergen, which have been central to giving the Chaplaincy both voice and visible presence within Norway. Both of these areas could prove essential in enabling sustained growth within the Chaplaincy.

Balestrand, with its central location, could prove a useful venue for growing the Chaplaincy as a whole. The Oslo choir and members of the Bergen congregation now travel regularly to help with the opening of the Balestrand church after Easter. This event could potentially become a Chaplaincy-wide gathering, with focus on the strengths of each congregation, providing growth, understanding, and an increasing sense of unity.

Although we occasionally draw on the services of Norwegian Church clergy, strengthening our Porvoo relations in Stavanger and Oslo and obtaining a Chaplaincy wide vision of Porvoo is another challenge and opportunity for growth that lies ahead. Ministry to tourists, immigrant workers and students is also a theme which can build a sense of unity within the Chaplaincy.

Within Oslo lies the continuing challenge to provide a greater variety of services, recognizing and accommodating each and every sensibility and background. At the same time, it is important to maintain regular patterns of Eucharist and liturgy, which are so meaningful to established members of the congregation. The good work achieved in bible study should continue, while ministry to housebound parishioners is also an important though less visible aspect which requires ongoing attention and perhaps further development. There is great possibility in providing outreach to the English speaking population of Norway, to grow well beyond our current numbers, be passionate about the love of God and be part of it.
Hopes and expectations

The Senior Chaplain will be the Chaplaincy’s spiritual leader, whose attention should be focused on vision and willingness to enable and empower each of the congregations, their clergy and lay readers, and to have an awareness of the diversity of various forms and traditions of worship and churchmanship, while maintaining a keen sense of Anglican distinctiveness. In gathering the Chaplaincy in unity and rooting the Chaplaincy firmly in the context of Porvoo as important goals for growth, the Senior Chaplain will need good administrative and diplomatic skills as a communicator and collaborator, and have the capabilities of a strategist, facilitator and ecumenist.

A willingness to travel regularly, visiting and taking in the workings of each congregation is an important prerequisite. An excellent command of English is essential, and though not a legal requirement for applicants within the EU, a willingness to adjust to Norwegian culture and obtain some degree of familiarity with the Norwegian language is a vital asset in the further development of ecumenical work and Porvoo relations.

Of equal importance, the Senior Chaplain will be the presiding priest for St Edmund’s Oslo, emphasizing growth in depth, numbers and impact, and celebrating the cultural diversity of the congregation. The ability to expand and engage a representative core congregation to even greater degrees of involvement is a key issue. This will also entail a certain amount of training and oversight of the laity, readers and priests.

The position of Senior Chaplain offers enormous scope and challenge, requiring a calm and steady nerve, and a great deal of spiritual wisdom and insight, as well openness in dealing with quite complex and varying circumstances. The resilience to persist, to encourage others, and receive encouragement will prove a valuable asset in the daily operations of the Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway.
Appendix: Norwegian practicalities

Norway enjoys a high standard of living, with excellent public services. As with any country, there are a few specific practicalities that should be mentioned to those thinking of moving here.

Under Norwegian law, holiday pay is accumulated throughout the calendar year and paid out in full the following summer. New residents often find this somewhat disconcerting, as it reduces the amount of “take home” salary during the first summer of employment in Norway. However, it is important to understand that this only affects the timing of payment, and not the amount eventually received. It also does not affect in any way the entitlement to time for annual leave.

Social benefits such as maternity leave, childcare, health care and education are exceptional. Private schooling in French, German and English is available, but the cost of English-language private education (in particular) is extremely high. There are now several Norwegian state schools which offer a Norwegian curriculum in English.

Importing a foreign-registered vehicle is difficult and under most circumstances extremely costly. Purchase of a vehicle in Norway or membership in one of several carpools in Oslo is a much better option.

The Norwegian authorities have produced a very clear and extensive web page, www.nyinorge.no, which covers any issue that a new resident would encounter.