

# *The British Lutheran*

*Vol. 58 No. 2 May 2015  
Special CRE Edition*



## From the Chairman Rev'd Jon Ehlers

Advertising campaigns impact us more than we think. I still remember an advert for an insurance company that ran



often it uses this imagery to

describe God's working salvation for us by His mighty hand and arm (Deuteronomy 4:34; Jeremiah 32:21).

It is in this context that we can hear the words of Jesus from the cross. Then Jesus, calling out in a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hand I commit my spirit." And having said this He breathed His last (Luke 23:46). Here we have Luke's account of the last words Jesus spoke during His earthly life. Words that

invoke the hand of God, a committing of His spirit into the 'good hands' of God.

Did you know that these words come from Psalm 31:5? In Psalm 31 David is in trouble. He cries out to the Lord, 'save me, come quickly to my rescue, free me from the trap, lead me and guide me' and the list goes on. His enemies are attempting to publicly disgrace and humiliate him even though he is innocent.

They cause him affliction, anguish of soul, his eyes, body, and soul are weak from sorrow, he is consumed with anguish, and he is like a broken vessel. He is undergoing these feelings because his enemies slander him, they conspire against him, and they desire to take his life. All of this has made David the contempt of his neighbours and the dread of his friends.

But David, in spite of fierce attacks from his enemies, overwhelming feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, betrayal by friends, and even questioning God's love for him, still clings to the Lord as his rock, refuge, and the one who will save him on account of His steadfast love. This culminates in his proclamation that into Your hand I commit my spirit.

It is these words that Jesus shouts out as He dies on the cross suspended between

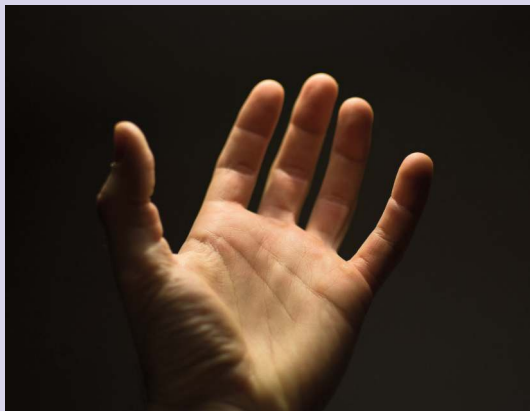


'909 Hand' by nebojsa mladjenovic | Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

back in the 1970s. It simply was a pair of hands cupped together and the slogan was, "You're in good hands with All State".

These words were meant to inspire feelings of security, confidence, and assurance for those holding policies with this company. You are in good hands, hands that will look after you, hands that will protect you, hands that will care for you, hands that can be trusted.

Human hands are incredibly strong: you can climb a sheer rock face just by hanging on with your fingertips. Human hands are also incredibly gentle: the sensitivity of the human hand is utterly remarkable. The Bible picks up on the versatility and wonder of the hand, as



2015089: Climbing Hand by Mike Holloway | Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

**Devotion**  
**Marta Naumann**  
**St David, Cardiff**



Recently, our toddler is up nightly, cutting teeth. Who sinned, this boy or his parents that he should wake with teething pain? I jest, but the disciples weren't joking when they asked a similar question in John 9. Jesus replied, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."

The disciples weren't completely incorrect. Sin, death and Satan, since the Fall of Adam, have corrupted the body of every human just as they have corrupted our souls. Children and adults all experience pain and weariness. All human bodies are limited in size and ability. Temptations attack our senses. We trade dependence on our parents for unhealthy addictions. We sin. Many experience severe illness or suffering. Our struggle to mature becomes a futile effort to dodge death. It's no wonder that we look in the mirror scornfully - that our "body image" is poor. While we are created in the image of God, that image has been corrupted by sin, so much so that, in baptism, our old self is crucified with Christ in order that it be brought to nothing (Romans 6:6). Our perception of our flesh reflects a spiritual reality. We bear the "body image" of Adam, through whom sin and death came into the world (Romans 5:12).

Christ also bore Adam's image when He became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). He did not

avoid pain and weariness. He was not immune to the constraints of the body. He was tempted in every way. Yet, He remained dependent on His heavenly Father. As He forgave sin, healed infirmity, and reversed death, He took these burdens upon His own body to the cross. His body alone endured the weight of sin and separation from God.

This is because Christ's struggle towards the cross and grave was for our benefit. We who are baptised into Christ Jesus are baptised into his death. So, while our human natures flee from death, Scripture says we have died with Christ. We were buried with him in our baptism. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Christ's glory on the cross was revealed in His resurrection. Our bodies share this glory. (Romans 6:3-5)

Post-crucifixion, post-baptism, our body image is changed. Christ is free from sin; united with him, we are set free from sin: now we can struggle with sin because our new body image is Christ's. Our crucified-

and-resurrected-Christ-body isn't just free from sin, it is free from death: our new body image, received at baptism, lives! (Romans 6:7,8)

When we comfort our children, frown in the mirror, or struggle with death, we may say with St. Paul (Galatians 2:20): I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.





## The Mic

Rev. Jaime Kriger  
LRUK Manager

### Lutheran Radio's app

All the versions of LRUK's app are now functional and available. Download the one that is right for you and start enjoying our programme straight away.

Lutheran Radio UK's app has been rated 4.8 out of 5.0 by its users. Here are some reviews:

- Great app! Now Lutheran content is available to those of us in the UK remote from cities where Lutheran churches are located. KC, UK.
- Thank you for your devotion to the Lutheran Confessions and Christ's Church. God bless your work! KP, UK.
- Lutheran Radio UK APP! This is a great and



handy app, not only for yourself, but to share with your friends. JN, US.

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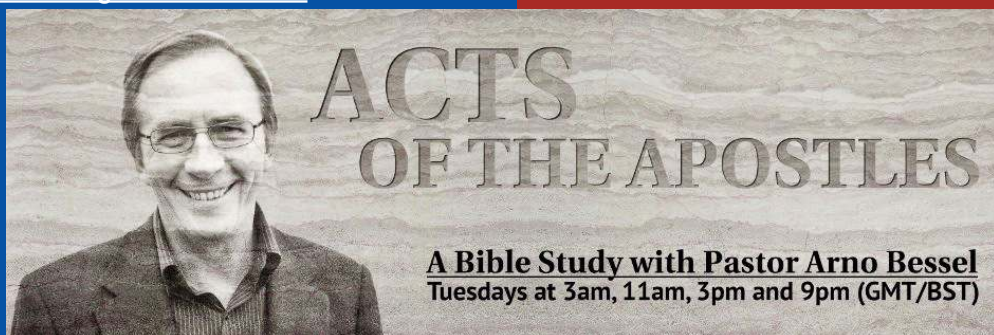


## **Lutheran Radio UK on the internet**

Google has ranked the global visibility of Lutheran Radio UK's webpage as "very good". Our SEO (Search Engine Optimization Score) is 55.3%<sup>1</sup>. This score accounts for how easy it is for search engines to find and understand our content. The score increases when we get links from other websites, which has been happening as for instance, more and more Lutheran congregations or institutions worldwide place links to LRUUK on their websites, usually under tabs like Resources or Media. Some no-cost or low-cost factors that help increase this score are: post-sharing on the social media, advertisements on the social media, visual advertisements such as Church bulletins and Church signs, handing out demonstration CDS and profile-raising at events such as conferences and exhibitions.

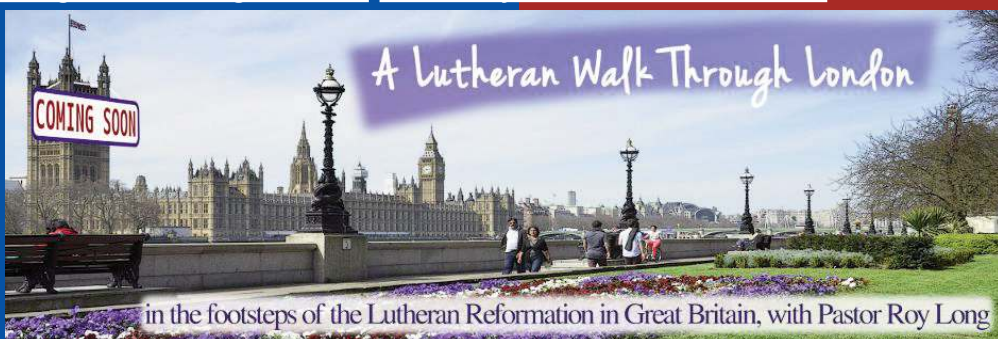
<sup>1</sup> Source: statscrops.com

## **A New Programme – out now!**



The Book of Acts is unique in the history of religions. Why? Because in this book we find a sober and religious sense of history, the absolute conviction that God is the God of history, who clothes Himself in a garment of mighty deeds in order to reveal Himself to us. In the Book of Acts we find the conviction of faith that God's Word is a force, or to state it precisely, God's Word is 'the' force in history. This is one of the reasons why studying the Book of Acts is so valuable. It provides us with the historical information that is indispensable for reconstructing the historical background of many New Testament books, especially the letters written by the apostle Paul.

## **Coming soon – building for the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation**



## **A Lutheran Walk through London**

Follow Pastor Roy Long in the footsteps of the Lutheran Reformation in Great Britain.


## **The Five Thomases**

Work is already underway on Pastor Long's next series entitled The Five Thomases (i.e. Thomas Moore, Thomas, Cromwell, Thomas Bilney, Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Wolsey) and will explain

why some of these men were pro-Lutheran while others aggressively against.

**Please pray**


Please keep LRUk and its worldwide mission field in your prayers. Please pray also for our presenters as they continue to produce content with a God-given drive and give thanks to God with me for all those who pray for and support LRUk financially.



J. S. Bach

### Sunday Cantata

with Pastor *Tapani Simojoki*  
every Sunday at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT)





### Faith




with Pastor **Gordon Naumann**  
every Wednesday at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT)

### that functions

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Weekly reflections on the Psalms with Denise Seaman. Every Thursday at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT/BST)



Denise Seaman

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By Paul Hill

An acute reading of what makes the news through the eyes of a Lutheran journalist with Paul Hill. Friday at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT/BST)





with Pastor **Jon Ehlers**

### The Lutheran Inquisitor

every Monday at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT)



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# After the Counting ...



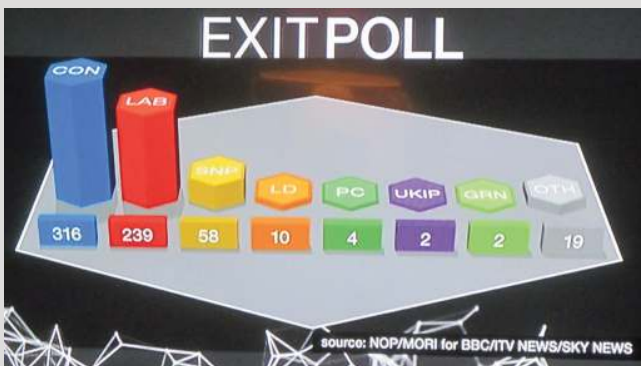
## Post-Election Ruminations in the Kingdom of the Left-Hand

*Dr Joel Humann*

As I sit down to write these brief remarks on the role of civil government as understood in Lutheran theology the dust is just beginning to settle on our own 2015 General Election in the United Kingdom. (As I write the polls have closed just 24 hours ago.) There certainly seems to be a lot of dust that needs to settle ... the surprising result, given the predictions and punditry leading up to the election, the remaking of the political map of Scotland, the attrition of the Liberal Democrats, the disappointment of Labour, the return to a majority Tory government after nearly two decades. There are winners and there are losers. There is relief. There is disappointment. There is joy. There is anger and outrage. And in some quarters, there is sheer disillusionment and apathy.

Pray, pay and obey is how I was taught to behave towards government in my traditionalist Lutheran upbringing. Pray for the government, pay one's taxes and obey the laws of the land. All this is true but beyond this we have a duty to participate our democratic realm according to our God-given reason and conscience. Our participation is exercised in the polling booth and in whatever other capacity engage as citizens. Well known to Lutherans is the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms, the two ways in which God works in creation towards two ends. The church is God's 'kingdom of the right hand' which proclaims the Gospel while the secular, civil realm, the so-called 'kingdom of the left hand' constitutes the temporal realm overseen by civil government.

God is at work in the church and the world through the work of both of these two 'hands'. And so Lutherans view their life of citizenship

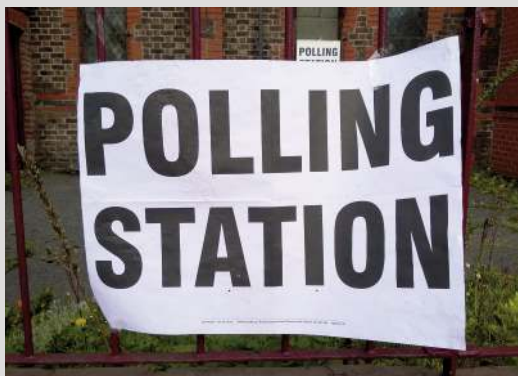


General Election Results 2015 003 Exit Poll by David Holt | Flickr (CC BY-SA 2.0)

within this paradigm. Whether we are voting, participating in political parties, engaging in our communities in various organizations and charities, we know that God is at work in this 'left-handed' manner.

But it is not just the citizenry whose vocations are described and articulated in Lutheran theology. The Lutheran confessions themselves have significant things to say about the role and responsibilities of the government itself and its ministers within the 'kingdom of the left hand'. Christians indeed have an obligation towards this 'political authority' but the government has its own role to play. Firstly, government exists to protect the people; through the rule of law and 'using the sword and physical penalties it protects the body and goods against external violence' (Augsburg





Polling station by comedy\_nose | Flickr (CC BY 2.0)

Confession, Article 28). Civil order in the 'left-hand kingdom' is maintained through 'laws, learning, teaching, governments, and penalties' (Apology, Article 4). In the Explanation of the Fourth Commandment of the Large Catechism, Luther compares government to parental authority in the family in that it is like a 'father'. "Through civil rulers ... God gives us food, house and home, protection and security, and he preserves us through them."

Also stressed by Luther is what we would now consider to be the positive 'social' role of government. For example, in his commentary on Psalm

82 written in the same year as the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, Luther elaborates on the 'princely virtues' which good government ought to possess. Among these virtues is the administration of justice towards help for 'the poor, the orphans and the widows'. This virtue consists of 'good laws and customs; when everything is regulated in an orderly way; and when order is kept by people in all ranks, occupations, trades, businesses, services, and works, so that it is not said: "The people are without laws"'. Such orderly regulation of society in its social and economic dimensions is necessary otherwise all of the 'buying, selling, inheriting, lending, paying, borrowing, and the like' will lead, without just laws, to the oppression of the poor and weak in society. Like a 'divine hospital', society ought to be so governed and laws enacted to ensure that aid comes to 'the really poor, widows, orphans, travellers, and other forlorn folk' preventing them from becoming beggars. Luther also comments on this high calling of government in the 'left-hand' kingdom in his commentary on Psalm 101 written four years later. Whereas the church, the 'spiritual government' should 'direct the people vertically toward God that they may do right and be saved', so also the secular government 'should direct the people horizontally toward one another' that peace and security might ensue. In



Parliament by David Marilyn Hunt | Flickr (CC BY 2.0)



time, the government is called upon to provide for the welfare of its citizens, and encourage social well-being among the people, one to another.

Which brings me back to today. We, the people of the United Kingdom, have cast our votes and Her Majesty's government for the (presumably) next five years is now taking shape. Like Martin Luther, we understand our obligations towards that government but also understand that we should have high expectations for this government and its ministers. Though it is a secular government it is nevertheless called upon to do God's work in the 'kingdom of the left', that is, the protection of populace, the establishment of laws towards the maintenance of peace and security

in the land, the administration of justice particularly towards the poor and oppressed, that our society might be a just society. For this reason we also need to be active, not just at the polls, but as engaged participants in our common social and democratic political life, working towards the well-being of our fellow neighbours. Let's get to work!

**The Rev. Dr Joel Humann is Preceptor of Westfield House, Cambridge**



Pastor George Samiec

## Straight Answers to Awkward Questions



Answers to those intriguing questions you always wanted to know but were too afraid to ask with Pastor George Samiec. Saturdays at 3am, 11am, 3pm and 9pm (GMT/BST)

## NEWS

### **The Rev. Dr Boris Gunjević installed as Tutor at Westfield House**

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March The Rev. Dr Boris Gunjević was installed as Tutor at Westfield House in Cambridge by ELCE Chairman, Pastor Jon Ehlers. Dr Gunjevic teaches NT Gospels, Philosophy of Religion, Reformation Histories, World Religions, Readings in Luther and Lutheran Confessions.



### **Favourite Bookmarks:**

[www.lutheran.co.uk](http://www.lutheran.co.uk)  
[www.lutheranradio.co.uk](http://www.lutheranradio.co.uk)  
[www.westfieldhouse.org.uk](http://www.westfieldhouse.org.uk)



L to r:  
G Samiec,  
B Gunjević,  
J Humann,  
J Ehlers

## *From the Chairman, continued from p2*

heaven and earth. While He speaks this portion of Psalm 31, it seems Jesus had been publicly slandered, condemned, and shamed; He was betrayed, abandoned, and held in dread by His friends. It is in this context that Jesus cries out and commits His spirit to the Lord.

Jesus enters death with a declaration of total commitment to His Father's steadfast and redeeming love. Jesus did not avoid suffering or come down from the cross, as the taunting onlookers tempted Him to do. Instead He sought refuge in the hands of His Father. In confident hope, Jesus trusted His Father to vindicate Him, even at the point of death, even when it appeared all was for naught and all had been in vain. But Jesus trusted in God knowing that death had been defeated, the power of sin had been destroyed, and life and light would triumph over the grave.

As Christians, we too, should regularly commit our spirit into the hand of our heavenly Father. In fact, in Luther's Evening Prayer he bids us to do exactly that as we pray, '... for into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things'. But beware: do not think that this committing of your spirit into God's hand will exempt you from suffering, scorn, or death. Be warned: this is a dangerous act because committing our spirits in this manner is to give up control over our lives and allow our Father to work with us as He sees fit. We surrender our expectations and demands of



God, and merely trust in His redemptive and steadfast love as revealed through Jesus Christ, come what may.

Suffering, ridicule, betrayal, doubts, anguish, distress, and death do not suddenly disappear; no, they remain painfully real. But the refuge, joy, and peace that come from knowing we are in God's hands is even more real. Ultimately, these taunts, sufferings, and even death will not harm us, for we are in Christ and He has vanquished them all. As Jesus, the one who committed His spirit into the Father's hand said in John 10:28, I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. You are in those nail-scarred hands, you are forgiven, and Christ's victory over our worst enemies is your victory. You are in good hands.



Take me by the hand by Andrea Schunert | Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

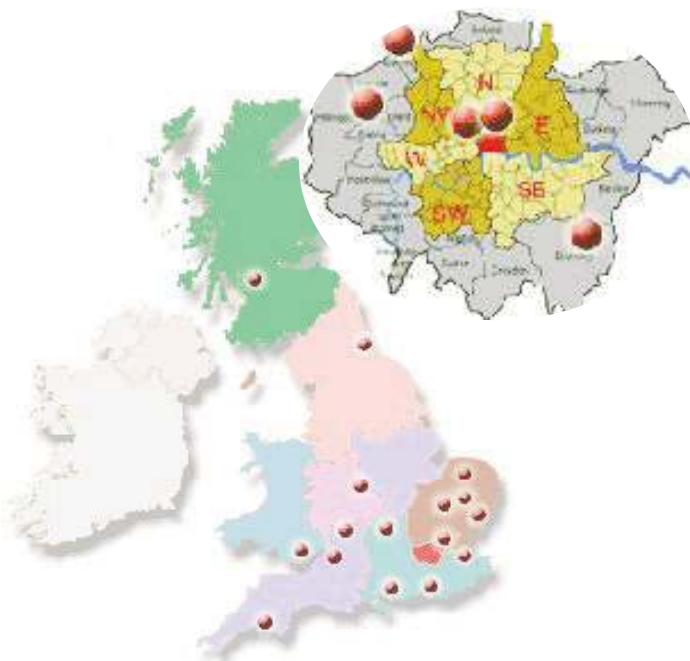
## **Supporting The British Lutheran**

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***Cheques need to be in Sterling and made payable to the ELCE.  
Thanks for any help you can give to help us produce The British Lutheran.***

**ELCE On-line**  
**www.lutheran.co.uk**

*See Directory for a list of all ELCE  
Congregations and Missions*



**In London**

**Borehamwood** – St Paul

**Kentish Town** – Luther-  
Tyndale

**Petts Wood** – Christ Church

**South Ruislip** – St Andrew

**Tottenham** – Holy Trinity

**In England, Scotland,  
and Wales**

**Brandon** (Suffolk) – Ascension

**Cambridge** – Resurrection

**Cardiff** – St David

**Coventry** – Good Shepherd

**East Kilbride** – St Columba

**Fareham** – Our Saviour

**Harlow** – Redeemer

**Plymouth** – St Peter

**Sunderland** – St Timothy

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**The**  
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**Next Issue:** June 2015

**Letters to the Editor:** Letters to *The  
British Lutheran* are welcomed. Short let-  
ters (less than 250 words) will be given  
preference. Letters may be cut or edited.



*The British Lutheran* is the  
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Lutheran Church of England.

The magazine also provides a  
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£20 per column inch (3 column page).

**Acknowledgements:**

Thanks to Jaime Kriger, Marta Naumann,  
and George Samiec for supplying or help-  
ing with photos.

**Front cover:** Sunrise over Lake Galilee

**Specific pictures:** Page 7 - PM David  
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# ***The Last Word***

## ***Rev'd George Samiec***

The photo shows me on the Snake Path going down from Masada with the Dead Sea in the background. I greatly enjoyed my recent trip to Israel on an ecumenical educational 'journey of reconciliation' sponsored by The British Trust for Tantur. (More on that in the next issue.) This was my first trip to Israel. Though I had been on the other side of the Jordan River before and had an appreciation of the Syrian and Jordanian landscapes, visiting places previously only read about was very good. What had been two dimensional became three dimensional and where I could walk around and explore, I did. So when the offer was made to walk down Masada after our visit of the stronghold, I was keen.

Masada is actually a plateau that is about 190 feet above sea level but about 1500 feet above the Dead Sea. It is about 23 acres on which was situated a considerable complex of palaces, garrison, terraces, storerooms, synagogue, observation points, bath houses, water cisterns, and dwellings. It is believed King Herod greatly expanded it and it is probably best known as the last place to be overcome by the Romans in 73/74AD when Josephus Flavius records that its inhabitants preferred to die than to be taken captive as Roman slaves. What I hadn't appreciated – and this struck me continually throughout my travels – was that the history of all these places can exist apart from the Bible and continues after I close the New Testament! This is what the archaeological research of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is revealing. It is good to know the full story rather than snippets.

This special issue of *The British Lutheran* however is a snippet of the regular issue. It has been put together for the Christian Resources Exhibition for Lutheran Radio UK's unexpected and sudden inclusion. The CRE is a massive showcase of seminars, literature, media, products (from pulpits to puppets) and networks to help equip and empower the Church. The Church is in the 'communication business' (among other things) of telling the world who God is and what he has done to rescue us from sin and death in the person of Jesus and what that means for living today. More than that, the Church is the Body of Christ walking around bringing the blessings of God to this world. To do that well, we need to listen to those we meet and hear their stories (their histories) so that we are best able to understand and serve.

I hope you enjoy walking around the CRE this year – whether it is your first time or you're a 'regular' – and thank you for picking up *The British Lutheran* for a snippet into what and how the ELCE 'walks and talks'.

