



REVIEW AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2016

THE NATIONAL LEVEL OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

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Together in hope

THE ARCHBISHOP'S COMMENTS

This annual review presents you with a picture of the multifaceted work run by the national level of the Church of Sweden. It describes both continuing work and specific measures that meet current needs in the Church and society.

AT MANY TIMES in the past year we have heard that the Church is in crisis. That it trips itself up, for example regarding a new Book of Worship and regarding the distrust between the various levels of the Church; that we are political; that we do not believe our own message; that we engage in irresponsible travelling and hospitality events. And so on.

In such a situation there is always a danger of us ending up in one of two pitfalls. Either ignoring the difficulties and proclaiming that all is well, or deteriorating to the point of inertia and self-marginalisation: "Everything is bad and it can only get worse". But it's good to remember that when the Church truly makes a difference, society is provoked that has been indoctrinated with the principle that religion is a private issue. We therefore need a realistic picture of the situation, without for that matter denying that we are to blame in any way.

Someone might be tempted to believe that things were better in the old days, but in many aspects the Church has constantly been in crisis, ever since Early Christianity. We're living in the crisis that arises when the message of the Gospel encounters our own reality. Our Lutheran tradition has robust tools with which to manage such crisis awareness effectively: with a foundation in grace, acting constructively in the world.

The past year's discussions demonstrate the need for knowledge about the Christian faith. Our education and mission efforts are central to this, and *Share faith – share life* illustrates several promising working methods.

Alongside the research that has been conducted and what we have learnt from other churches, we have a stable foundation to build on. Together, we cannot now settle for anything less than a systematic, coordinated Christian educational programme for our Church.

A previously long-absent partnership between the state and civil society is now emerging in Sweden. In particular, the refugee situation has urged on this development. In autumn 2015 the Church of Sweden implemented measures at an early stage. In November the General Synod decided to increase support. And it has made a difference. Eight out of ten *pastorat*, groups of parishes, are today working with new arrivals and asylum seekers. In many ways we help people get a good start in Sweden. At national level, the support function to the parishes, *Support Migration*, has enabled heightened skills development, preparedness and better coordination.

The situation in the Middle East remains difficult. The decrease in Christian presence that we have seen since 9/11 and above all since the Arab Spring and the civil war in Syria is deeply tragic. As a Church, we assist in the emergency phase, by providing humanitarian aid to those affected, regardless of their faith, and by providing ecumenical support to Christian churches. Since last year, the Church of Sweden has earmarked an extra SEK 90 million for work with refugees and asylum seekers, both nationally and internationally. In addition there is SEK 10 million in funding specifically for the Middle East and SEK 17 million in government grants.



In my role as Archbishop, I have been in Jordan, Egypt, Israel and Palestine and have met Christians and other religious leaders in the region. At the time of writing, in January 2017, I have just got home from a trip to Iraq with a delegation from the World Council of Churches. During the trip we met people in refugee camps, listened to Christian young people and church leaders, and chatted with representatives of other religious communities, members of parliament and ministers. At present the need for basic safety is the top priority, but in the longer term – hopefully quite soon – it will be important to support people's opportunities to return to their local areas and rebuild houses, churches and infrastructure. Shattered trust and belief in the future must also be rebuilt. With our partners we want to be involved and make a long-term contribution to this process.

The Church of Sweden's *vitbok* (white paper) on the relationship with the Sami people was published during the year; it was commissioned by the Church and drawn up by Umeå University. Alongside the book on the Nomadic School, this white paper is much-needed documentation about dark chapters in Swedish history and about the special role of the Church of Sweden in this context. The aim is to create conditions with which to heal relationships, give people redress and increase understanding of Sami experiences. Sami life and experiences remain far too invisible and unknown in Sweden and within the Church of Sweden. A Christian church and a society that champion human rights must take issues of historic guilt seriously.

Church history was written on 31 October 2016 in Lund and Malmö. After exactly 499 years, and as a prelude to the anniversary year 2017, the Reformation was jointly commemorated by Catholics and Lutherans, together with ecumenical guests from many countries. Nearly 50 years of dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican had laid the foundation for

this Joint Commemoration. The liturgy in Lund Cathedral and the event in the Malmö Arena, *Tillsammans i hoppet*, (Together in Hope), have resonated in large parts of the world. The pictures of how the President of the Lutheran World Federation, Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan, and Pope Francis both signed the five imperatives from the report *From Conflict to Communion* and how Catholic and Lutheran church leaders embraced each other have sparked hope in many people.

The day was characterised by a strong three-note chord. The liturgy started by giving thanks for what unites us: the gift of the Gospel. It then expressed sorrow and regret about the pain that the rift has caused. With the boldness of faith, it then dared to take the step to a mutual obligation to bear witness together to the mercy of God in words and actions.

In the short time since 31 October, hopes have already been expressed that the five imperatives can become relevant in additional ecumenical relationships. With sufficient adaptation for each context, they could even be used in other situations in which people want to move from conflict to communion. In a world that is currently and increasingly plagued by four dangerous P's: polarisation, populism, protectionism and post-truth, what happened in Lund and Malmö may have a significance that extends far beyond Catholic-Lutheran ecumenism. It is also a good note to start on for the coming year of activity.

May God bless our Church with joy in celebrating services of worship, with insight and with proactivity!

+ Antje Jackelén

ANTJE JACKELÉN
ARCHBISHOP AND CHAIR OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

Cooperation for a sustainable church

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S COMMENTS

The activities of the Church of Sweden are broad and multifaceted, and the supporting and cohesive measures at national level are therefore extensive. The pages in this annual review can therefore only reflect a fraction of everything that we do. The life of the Church is lived in parishes and dioceses. At national level we cooperate with the dioceses so that the parishes receive support to fulfil their basic task every day. Together we work to strengthen and develop the activities of the Church.

2016 WAS FRAUGHT with conflicts and crises around the world that also had repercussions in Sweden. It is nearly always children who are the worst affected. That's why our Christmas campaign, *Let more children turn five*, which raised SEK 42.6 million for the international work of the Church, and the participation of the Church in *Juluppropet*, a Christmas appeal calling for a more humane refugee policy in Sweden, which was signed by more than 79,200 people, were both key initiatives for a church that works towards creating a sustainable future.

A SUSTAINABLE CHURCH

The contribution of the national level to sustainable development comprises support to the climate work of the dioceses and parishes, measures to improve the climate and environmental work of the national level, and development of the Church's social welfare work and addressing challenges in identity and human dignity issues. Sustainable development is often associated with climate issues, but it is naturally more extensive than that. Issues concerning climate change, use of resources, development and justice are not only scientific, technical, financial, social and political, but also ethical, existential and theological. Ethics and values are essential elements for influencing and developing asset management as well as structures for the best interests of children through child rights impact assessments.

One major and important task is to improve the efficiency of the Church of Sweden's administrative functions in collaboration with the dioceses and help each other with joint sustainable solutions. This achieves better and equal quality, and it makes the work cost-effective. We thereby free up local resources and respond to members' requests for our limited funding to be used wisely and responsibly in the core tasks of the Church.



Several new steps were therefore taken during the year with the aim of securing sustainable nationwide responsibility for the rich cultural heritage that we look after. In November the General Synod took several decisions following comprehensive investigation into issues regarding the property, churches and equalisation system of the Church of Sweden. In brief, the decisions enable joint work for management, heightened cost-effectiveness and sustainability. One new feature is that the inter-parish equalisation system of the Church must take account of how many children live in the parish, and whether the parish is in a rural location or in a socioeconomically vulnerable area. For more on the sustainability work of the Church of Sweden, refer to the *Sustainability Report for 2016*.

A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

Through humanitarian efforts primarily coordinated within *Action by Churches together, ACT Alliance*, the Church of Sweden saved lives and mitigated suffering in emergency situations in the Middle East, Africa and Haiti during the year. This is taking place in parallel with our long-term development work, in which we strengthen partner churches and organisations in more than 40 countries around the world to counteract injustice and poverty.

The Church's elected representatives, employees and volunteers have welcomed refugees in Sweden with open arms and contribute in many ways to their integration

into our own society. The national function *Support Migration* was launched in February. It is aimed at Church employees and others who work with migration issues in various ways, and it facilitates the sharing of experiences, knowledge and methods.

People seek meaning, an optimistic zest for life and a sense of context. People want to experience being inside the church building, drawing strength from a service of worship as an energy source and sharing faith and life with others. Many people also take part in the Church of Sweden's rich, broad and deep range of high-quality cultural and music events. Music in the Church of Sweden touches people and takes over when we are lost for words. These are some of the reasons why 6.1 million people choose to be members of the Church of Sweden.

It is hugely enjoyable to be part of and contribute to an eventful period in the Church of Sweden and in society. Cooperation is an important prerequisite for continued effective development, and the national level wants to remain a uniting force in the Church of Sweden, supporting the dioceses and helping to enable the parishes to perform their basic task locally.

HELÉN OTTOSSON LOVÉN
SECRETARY-GENERAL



About the Church of Sweden 2016

ORGANISATION, PEOPLE & FIGURES

- In 2016 the Church of Sweden consisted of 1,361 parishes and 30 parishes abroad. The task of the parishes is to hold services of worship, conduct training and educational activities, and carry out mission and social welfare work (*diakoni* in Swedish).
- The Church of Sweden has about 6.1 million members, 61% of the population.
- In 2016 about 400,000 services of worship were held, with almost 15.4 million participants.* A third of the services are baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals.
- A total of 100,000 people of all ages sing in around 5,000 choirs.*
- Visitors to the Church of Sweden's drop-in activities for children and young people aged 0–19 totalled about 1.7 million in 2015.*
- More than 28,000 young people and adults were confirmed during the year.
- Fundraising by the Church of Sweden's international work collected SEK 174 million. In addition, the Church received SEK 172 million, mainly from Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the charitable foundation Radiohjälpen and the EU for its international work.
- In 2016 there were 21,151 employees and about 35,000 elected representatives in the Church of Sweden. In addition, many people are involved as volunteers.
- Activities in the parishes are largely financed by the Church fee, 89% of which goes to the local parish and 11% to the diocese and the national level.
- According to MedieAkademin's annual confidence barometer (measuring public confidence in authorities, organisations, companies and the media), the population of Sweden has a lot or quite a lot of confidence in the Church of Sweden.
- As of autumn 2015 until October 2016, 82% of all groups of parishes and parishes have self-funded and run activities for and with asylum seekers and new arrivals. About 24,000 asylum seekers and new arrivals took part in these activities in an average month during this period.
- The Central Church Office manages about 10 social media accounts. These channels made a big impact in 2016 and all attracted additional followers. On Facebook and Twitter posts by the Church of Sweden were viewed about 43.5 million times during the year. The content has above all been disseminated as it has created involvement among its recipients, without paid marketing.

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 Read more at <http://www.svenskakyrkan.se/statistik>

*Precise data for 2016 will be available in June 2017.



Report on activities

DURING THE PAST YEAR

Our mandate

The Evangelical-Lutheran Faith Community of the Church of Sweden accommodates a wealth of different activities that express the basic faith, creed and doctrine that the Church of Sweden stands for. The primary unit is the parish, which has the basic task of holding services of worship, educating, and conducting social welfare and mission work. Regionally, the Church of Sweden takes the form of dioceses that have the task of promoting parish life.

At the national level, whose activities are described in this Annual Review and Financial Summary, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden is in charge of the Church's joint affairs:

- surrounding world and relations, which includes representation, official relations with other churches and faith communities and international mission and social welfare work;
- support to dioceses and parishes, which includes support for the basic task of the dioceses and parishes, training for professions and other work in the Church of Sweden, research, cultural heritage management, work among Swedes abroad, and administrative support functions;
- standardisation and management.

Surrounding world and relations

REPRESENTATION

The Church of Sweden exercises active representation by maintaining good relations with decision-makers, acting as a consultation body on material circulated for comment and by being an active voice in public debate. The message of the Church must have a clear theological

foundation, be well balanced between the different activities and perspectives of the Church and have a clear basis in adopted policies. This means providing theological perspectives and speaking clearly about responsibility, human dignity, redress and freedom in the contexts in which decisions are made and implemented, within politics, management, finances and in civil society.

The Church of Sweden is represented by, among others, the Archbishop, the chair of the General Synod, the vice chair of the Central Board and the Secretary-General. In 2016 the Church of Sweden submitted 31 responses to referrals that it received for comment in fields such as cultural heritage, climate and residence permits in Sweden. Several meetings with ministers and government agencies were held about issues of importance to the Church.

THE ARCHBISHOP AND THE BISHOPS

The Archbishop is often in demand in public discussions and debates, which involves several appearances in the media. During the year the Archbishop contributed to about 3,350 articles and notices in Swedish media, as a main or co-writer and took part in 233 interviews, 117 of which in national and 58 in international media. The topics included the anniversary year of the Reformation, the Book of Worship, migration issues, the canonisation of Elisabeth Hesselblad, and indigenous peoples. As the prevailing media climate is fast paced with few opportunities for long conversations, thinking aloud or finishing what you want to say, the contemplative discussions with invited guests in the podcast *Prata till punkt med ärkebiskopen* (Have your say with the Archbishop), which started in 2015, have continued. Several episodes with guests with various backgrounds, experiences and knowledge were recorded during the year. There are about 20 episodes available online.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/pratatillpunkt



In the book *Samlas kring hoppet* (Gather together in hope), which was published by Verbums förlag during the year, the Archbishop expresses her opinions on the meaning of the Gospel and the task of the Church. Via three portals: debate, detailed analysis and proclaiming the Word of God, she examines some of the most challenging issues of our time for the Church and society.

In the prevailing refugee situation, the Archbishop has raised the indispensable role of the civil society and faith communities in Sweden and elsewhere in Europe. Together with other bishops in Sweden and other religious leaders, the Archbishop has expressed her concern about a society that is increasingly fragmented; she has stated the need for creating conditions for trust and solidarity and for safeguarding cohesion and integration. Representatives of the Church of Sweden addressed ministers and government agencies regarding several issues during the year. *Ett biskopsbrev om diakoni* (A bishops' missive on social welfare work) was published at the start of the year containing background, reasons and the bishops' views of what social welfare work consists of in the 21st century. With their missive, the bishops want to provide starting points for further development of the social welfare work of the Church of Sweden.

In November, the Archbishop and 14 other European religious leaders took part in a meeting with EU leaders in Brussels. The discussion was about the challenges that Europe faces concerning the refugee situation, terrorist attacks, intolerance, xenophobia and hate crime. The message was that polarisation, populism and protectionism are threatening the hope and trust needed for a functioning

democratic society, and that better knowledge of faith and religion is required. They called for strong partnership between the state and civil society, including faith communities. The participants from the EU leadership included the First Vice-President of the European Commission and the Vice-President of the European Parliament. The meeting took place in accordance with Section 17 of the Treaty of Lisbon about dialogue between religion and society.

Sören Dalevi, Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies, was consecrated as Bishop of Karlstad Diocese in August. The ceremony took place in Uppsala Cathedral in the presence of a large congregation, including foreign guests and the bishops of the Church of Sweden.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Focusing on how children and young people are affected by existing migration policy, the Christian Council of Sweden initiated *Juluppropet*, a Christmas appeal for a more humane migration policy. The appeal urged the Swedish Government to give children and young people the right to security and belief in the future, give everyone granted asylum in Sweden the right to family life and remove obstacles to the reunion of families. The appeal was launched in mid-December and sparked national debate about compassion and churches taking a stand. The debate led to several influential opinion formers and editorial writers backing the appeal. At the start of February 2017, a petition of 79,224 signatures was submitted to Sweden's Minister for Justice and Migration.



ALMEDALEN WEEK AND THE GÖTEBORG BOOK FAIR

The week of political debates in Almedalen is an example of an important point of contact. The Archbishop, bishops, elected representatives and experts participated in the year's Almedalen Week in their own seminars, interviews and conversations in the arenas of other organisations as well as in services of worship. The seminars arranged by the Church of Sweden were about religion and development in society, the welfare state and where Sweden is heading. Together with Visby Diocese and Visby Cathedral Parish, the Church of Sweden organised a broad programme including evening discussions with parliamentary party representatives in the cathedral's talks called *Nikodemussamtal*. A new feature in 2016 was *Samtal under valven* (Talks under the arches) in the cathedral with various representatives from organisations in society, such as the Swedish Film Institute and the Swedish Sports Confederation. Seminars and discussions were also held in the international arena *Sverige i världen* (Sweden in the world) in cooperation with aid organisations.

The Göteborg Book Fair is another key meeting place. The year's programme on *Se Människan* (See the human being), the Church of Sweden's stage at the fair, comprised more than 70 conversations with Swedish and international authors, focusing on where culture, theology and existential issues meet. About 20,000 people downloaded one of these filmed conversations. The Church was also a co-organiser of 10 larger seminars, including one in which artist and author Patti Smith met the former Archbishop KG Hammar, as they both share an interest in Dag Hammarskjöld. Other seminars covered topics such as violence in the name of religion and the abuse of children in Mali by UN soldiers. A literary service of worship was broadcast live on the Swedish radio station P1 in conjunction with the book fair.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/semanniskan

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)

The LWF is an international cooperation body for Lutheran churches. It was founded in Lund in 1947 and has 145 member churches in 98 countries with more than 72 million members.

The World Council of Churches (WCC)

The WCC is a Christian fellowship of 345 churches (2012) whose main goal is Christian unity – for Christians all over the world to cooperate. The WCC brings together churches and faith communities from 110 countries and represents 500 million Christians from various traditions.



With solemnity and hope, the participants looked forward to the next era, without denying the conflict-filled past.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER CHURCHES, FAITH COMMUNITIES AND RELIGIONS

The Church of Sweden also has official relations with other churches and faith communities. Within the framework of this work, the Church of Sweden participates in ecumenical talks at various levels. They aim to encourage dialogue in order to gain in-depth knowledge of other churches, work through theological differences and seek joint wording and cooperation for peace and justice. The Church of Sweden is an active member of the Christian Council of Sweden and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), which groups Lutheran churches at a global level, as well as the World Council of Churches. The Interfaith Council of Sweden constitutes a hub in the work on topical issues about migration, the situation in the Middle East and the multicultural society.

A HISTORIC EVENT

One of the biggest events of the year was when the 500th anniversary of the Reformation was highlighted through a large joint commemoration with the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church on 31 October.

This commemoration started with an ecumenical service in Lund Cathedral on the theme of *From Conflict to Communion*, and during the event that followed in Malmö Arena on the theme of *Together in Hope* a joint agreement was signed by Caritas Internationalis and the World Service of the LWF, the two parties' organisations for international social welfare work. The refugee situation worldwide and especially in Syria was the focal point, and all ticket revenue was donated to support refugees from Syria.

The LWF was represented by its President, Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan, and its General Secretary, Dr Martin Junge. The Roman Catholic Church was represented by Pope Francis and Cardinal Kurt Koch of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The Church of Sweden and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Stockholm were the local hosts of the gathering.

A large number of international, ecumenical guests and several representatives of other religions took part in the Malmö Arena event that encompassed about 10,000 people. Many young people participated, as did a large number of choristers and musicians from Catholic and Lutheran parishes alongside established artists. Stories from other parts of the world were a central feature, such as athletes who competed at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro for the special refugee team and who here spoke of vulnerability and dignity.

In many locations worldwide, Catholics and Lutherans took part in the day's events via the internet. The service of worship was broadcast by 87 TV channels. The day attracted extensive media attention; more than 500 journalists had been registered, notably many of whom were international. The two press conferences were well attended, and the Archbishop took part in more than 60 interviews.

With solemnity and hope, the participants looked forward to the next era, without denying the conflict-filled past. The day was permeated by fellowship and reconciliation and a will to go forward focusing on the important aspects that unite us, without hiding our differences. The congregation at the Papal Mass the following day included invited church leaders from the Christian Council of Sweden.

The significance will be highlighted from many places for a long time, both locally and globally. The step from conflict to communion constitutes a joint ecumenical mandate to manage and develop. For a long time, the national level of the Church of Sweden has been ecumenically publishing literature, information, and study and inspirational materials to encourage more in-depth understanding and education about the Reformation. This was initiated because of the Reformation anniversary year that started in conjunction with the commemorative event. An intranet page was built up during the year and is available for the general public via the external website.

The document, *From Conflict to Communion*, the result of 50 years of ecumenical dialogue between Lutherans and Catholics led to the formulation of five joint imperatives in the continued dialogue: Catholics and Lutherans should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division; they must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other; they should again commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps; they should jointly rediscover the power of the Gospel; and they should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/reformationsaret2017

 internwww.svenskakyrkan.se/reformationsaret2017

OTHER ECUMENICAL GATHERINGS

A delegation led by Archbishop Vercauteren from the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht visited the Church of Sweden in November in conjunction with the second session of the General Synod, to celebrate the communion of churches decided on by the General Synod on behalf of the Church of Sweden in 2015. The delegation took part in the service of worship that concluded the session of the General Synod; the Archbishops also signed the agreement on the communion of churches during the service.

In the autumn the General Synod decided on an ecumenical agreement with Eumeniakyrkan (Uniting Church in Sweden), which came into force on 1 January 2017 and enables local agreements to be drawn up between the parishes that have suitable theological conditions. Due to different views on sacraments and mandates of office/position, there is no foundation for full church communion between the faith communities at this point in time.

THE ARCHBISHOP IN EGYPT

As a return visit in response to the visit of Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II to the Church of Sweden in 2015, the Archbishop visited Egypt as part of a delegation at the end of November with the aim of developing relations between the Church of Sweden and the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt. The Archbishop also visited the Mariadöttrarna (Daughters of Mary), a Lutheran religious order in the “garbage city” of Ezbet el-Nakhl, a suburb of Cairo, where the Church of Sweden has contributed to elevating the economic and social standard for people who live on what other people have treated as garbage. The visit also included a meeting with the Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria.

SUPPORT IN CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS

The Church of Sweden supports the climate work of the World Council of Churches (WCC) by helping to coordinate the work. In 2016 this included creating effective collaboration between ecumenical partners and attending meetings with the delegations of various actors during COP22 in Marrakesh in Morocco. The ecumenical presence intended to highlight the perspective of the most vulnerable and urge wealthy countries to reduce their climate impact and work towards a fair and just conversion to a sustainable society. The Church of Sweden attended seminars and played an active part in the interfaith cooperation, as well as addressing plenary sessions on behalf of the WCC.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION AND SOCIAL WELFARE WORK

The Church of Sweden strives to bring about internationally and ecumenically coordinated mission and social welfare measures (*diakoni* in Swedish) as well as long-term development cooperation. The activities are designed on the basis of long-term, strategic cooperation with other churches, ecumenical networks and development organisations. The task of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden also includes coordinating, planning and developing the work, involvement and financing of the Church and its parishes regarding international mission and social welfare work. The international work is mainly financed using funds raised (collections and donations), grants received from Sida and the general equalisation fee. The international activities of the Church are assessed by *the Swedish Fundraising Control* organisation. Our international work constitutes one of the first aid organisations in the world that has received certification for *Core Humanitarian Standard*, CHS, which means that accountability and quality permeate the international work of the Church of Sweden, and that people who live in vulnerable situations are to be involved and that they, as well as the organisations that provide funding for the work and all the individuals who make donations, are to have confidence in the partners of the Church of Sweden.

LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The Church of Sweden supports and collaborates with churches, organisations and networks in 40 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The aim of the long-term development cooperation is to work with the root causes of injustices and poverty problems. This is achieved by the Church of Sweden strengthening and helping cooperation partners to take rights-based action in the civil sector for sustainable, democratic societies that are imbued with justice and equality. Such a working method bolsters people’s own resources and involves them in processes to improve their living conditions.

HUMANITARIAN AID

The Church of Sweden saves lives and mitigates suffering in acute humanitarian situations. This aid increased by about SEK 10 million during the year. The work is primarily coordinated and performed within *Action by Churches Together, ACT Alliance*, but also in collaboration with other partners.

Following the two-year occupation of Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul, military operations were carried out against *Daesh* in order to retake the city in autumn 2016, which severely affected the civil population. In this very difficult and complex humanitarian situation, the Church of Sweden's local partner operated within *ACT Alliance* to give people emergency aid in refugee camps, clean water, food, toiletries, emergency housing and medical assistance. One of the most vulnerable groups comprises young women and girls who have been forced into marriage at a young age during captivity in Mosul. During the year the Church of Sweden provided support to psychosocial measures for people who have been subjected to sexual and gender-based violence.

SUPPORT IN NATURAL DISASTERS

Several countries in Africa suffered the effects of the weather phenomenon, El Niño, during the early part of the year, which caused delayed or total lack of rains and extreme drought, resulting in ruined harvests and starvation. In Ethiopia alone, 10 million people were hit by the worst drought in 30 years. The Church of Sweden had a presence there through *ACT Alliance* and contributed to emergency measures such as the distribution of food and water, medical care, seed and new cattle as well as income support. Zimbabwe in southern Africa is another country that has been seriously affected, and the Church of Sweden has provided support for measures in the most heavily hit rural regions. Collections benefiting those hit by drought in Eastern and Southern Africa were adversely affected by a lack of media interest in the region.

The Church of Sweden also provided relief efforts in Haiti following Hurricane Matthew's impact in the Caribbean, which caused extensive material damage, serious flooding and landslides. The local partner of the Church took part in the national coordination work to be able to assist the population affected in one of the most impoverished countries in the world,

Many countries are regularly hit by periods of drought or flooding that jeopardise access to food. That is why the Church of Sweden is also conducting long-term efforts to reduce risks and vulnerability in extreme weather, for example through the planting of trees and bushes that stop water flows, and the provision of knowledge of more efficient cultivation and harder crops as well as water resource management.

ACT Alliance

The Church of Sweden's international work is part of ACT Alliance, Action by Churches Together, a global collaboration between churches and organisations for disaster relief, development and advocacy.



The Jourhavande Präst (Duty Priest Service) is available in three channels at times of the day and night when other support services are closed.

SUPPORT TO PEOPLE PERSECUTED DUE TO THEIR FAITH
Churches are being attacked and Christians persecuted, subjected to violence and murdered in many places worldwide – mainly in the Middle East. During the year the Church of Sweden yet again condemned all violence that is perpetrated in the name of religions. At the same time, people of other faiths such as Muslims and Jews and minorities such as Yazidis in Iraq and Syria are also being persecuted and murdered. These people are also included in the prayers and support of the Church of Sweden.

Together with churches and partners worldwide, the Church of Sweden works in support of conflict resolution and human rights. The Church of Sweden strengthens Christian minorities and attempts to establish dialogue between people of different faiths. The Church of Sweden supports Christians in African countries and Pakistan. The support for vulnerable people in the Middle East has increased in the past year. The Church of Sweden collaborates with *the Middle East Council of Churches*, *the World Student Christian Federation – Middle East* and *the Near East School of Theology*, which trains priests in Lebanon. Some of the work of the Church of Sweden is conducted silently behind the scenes for safety reasons out of consideration for individuals and organisations.

Together with the Christian Council of Sweden and the Interfaith Council of Sweden, the Church of Sweden also safeguards the development of society in our own country and reacts when people and religious premises are attacked.

OM DU KOMMER HÄRIFRÅN

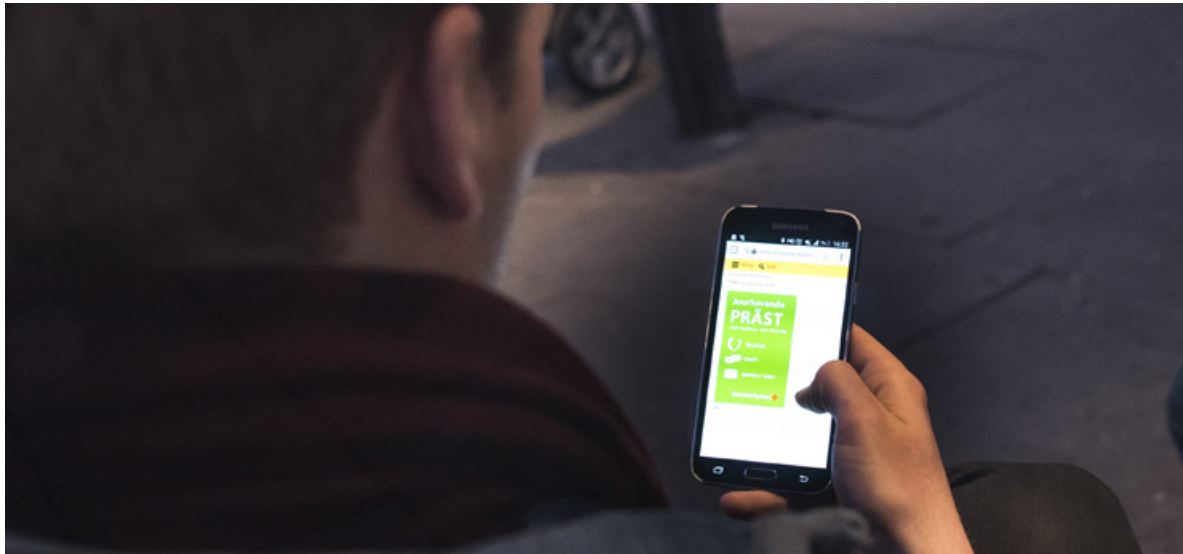
Om du kommer härifrån (If you come from here) is a documentary by freelance journalist Marika Griehsel about the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, where nearly 200,000 people live. For two years the film producers

have documented three of the inhabitants and their attempts to steer their lives in the right direction despite difficult circumstances. Together with the Lutheran World Federation, the Church of Sweden has worked in the camp since it opened in the early 1990s. The film, which had its premiere in 2016, is about psychosocial work, focusing on the humanitarian work of the Church of Sweden.

Support to dioceses and parishes

One of the tasks of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden is to support the dioceses' efforts to develop parish activities. Support to parishes is provided either directly or via the dioceses. Some development work takes place in cooperation with one or more dioceses that have special interest and involvement in an area of activity. The national level provides support in four overall areas that have been defined by the Central Board together with the dioceses: support to the basic task of the parishes, communication, situational analysis and research, and administrative cooperation aiming towards creating a sustainable church. For detailed information about the climate and sustainability work of the national level of the Church of Sweden, refer to the *Sustainability Report for 2016*.

More in-depth cooperation has been developed between the Central Board and the diocesan boards, and at office staff level through the management at the diocesan offices. Strategic development efforts are undertaken with the dioceses within several areas of activity, including administrative cooperation. The support given to dioceses and parishes by conducting child rights impact assessments before



decisions are made is continuing, and has been established in the Church Ordinance as part of the Church of Sweden's decision-making processes; however, further reflection and quality development will be required.

Krafttag konfirmation is the joint project on confirmation run by the Church of Sweden. Nearly 53% of parishes are aware of the material that has been drawn up, and more than 32% of the parishes use it. Efforts to create a digital search tool for all confirmation work conducted in the Church were initiated during the year, and the tool will be launched in 2017.

internwww.svenskakyrkan.se/Konfirmation

www.svenskakyrkan.se/konfirmation

The *Jourhavande Präst* (Duty Priest Service) is available in three channels at times of the day and night when many other support services are closed. People can reach this service by phone by calling the emergency services number 112 and online via digital letters or the chat function; the service is coordinated at national level but is staffed locally. About 70,000 calls were answered in the phone service in 2016. Use of the other two channels is constantly increasing; the number of chats per evening has doubled since 2015 because the chat function is reaching new target groups – above all young people. The Church of Sweden also offers a Finnish duty phone service and a Sami crisis network.

In a project spanning several years, the national level and three dioceses are drawing up guidelines on how social welfare work in the Church of Sweden and its contribution to Swedish welfare services should be developed. Today the Church exists in new arenas, and social welfare activities are partly evolving into new forms. This raises new questions about the mandate and identity of the Church.

The Church of Sweden's gender and diversity work strengthens parishes' knowledge of LGBTQ issues to develop environments in which people are welcomed.

NEW BOOK OF WORSHIP

Services of worship constitute a source of energy for activities in daily life. The project, spanning many years, to renew the Book of Worship aims to facilitate parishes' opportunities of developing their services of worship. The Book of Worship contains orders of service for various kinds of services and includes prayers and other texts as well as music.

A revised proposal for a new Book of Worship was circulated for comment to all parishes in spring 2016, and experts in music and theology were re-consulted. The opportunity for all parishes to test the entire proposal necessitated the development of various support functions. This involved making parts of the the music available and updating a web tool with which to create orders of service. Translation of the revised Book of Worship started during the year. The book will be translated into Finnish, Meänkieli, North Sami, Lule Sami, Southern Sami, Swedish sign language and four varieties of Romani Chib.

Using comments submitted after the proposal was circulated, a revision group has drawn up a new proposal that the Central Board of the Church of Sweden will examine in spring 2017. The General Synod will then examine the written communication with the proposal for the new Book of Worship in autumn 2017. The plan is to start using the new Book of Worship in 2018.

SHARE FAITH – SHARE LIFE

In collaboration with dioceses and parishes, a special focus on the Church's education and mission is under way: *Dela tro – dela liv* (Share faith – share life), with the



aim of boosting parishes in their basic task and finding new paths in the practical work. With this venture, the Church of Sweden wants to give people of all ages the opportunity to grow and develop in their ability to talk about and live in faith. The Board of the Church has decided on sub-measures nationwide, such as developing knowledge and stimulating the exchange of experiences. The year's national conference took place in Gothenburg and attracted about 560 delegates for reflection, knowledge building and inspiration. The Board is also planning a systematic and cohesive programme for learning and teaching in the Church of Sweden.

THE REFUGEE SITUATION

The Church of Sweden has been working with asylum seekers and refugees for a long time for both the short and long term. Since autumn 2015 the activities in many Swedish parishes have changed because of the large number of people who have sought refuge in Sweden, fleeing conflict, violence and destitution. Through co-workers,

often volunteers, many parishes have offered measures such as language practice, excursions, activities for children, pastoral counselling and psychosocial support. Cultural activities have proved to be an opportunity through which to bridge language barriers and deal with traumatic experiences. Some parishes have invested in work-oriented activities such as trainee positions. Several parishes describe xenophobic tendencies, which they have tried to counteract through mutual meetings and advocacy. There has been extensive motivation in many parishes and a pronounced will to make a difference and joy in doing so, at the same time that it involves intense pressure and a feeling of inadequacy.

In November 2015 the General Synod decided to grant a further SEK 75 million to the Central Board of the Church in 2016 for the work with refugees and new arrivals in Sweden. A long-term approach and collaboration with other organisations have constituted the starting point in the allocation of funds. The largest proportion of the funding has been allocated to the work in



Swedish parishes and groups of parishes, but a large proportion has also been allocated to the international measures, such as humanitarian relief efforts and development, primarily in the Middle East. The Church Board has earmarked extra resources to the diocesan organisation for local coaching of volunteers and employees. Funding for training has been distributed to Sensus study association and *Ideellt forum i Svenska kyrkan*, a forum in the Church promoting greater involvement. *The Swedish Refugee Advice Centre*, of which the Church of Sweden is one of the principals, has reinforced its legal expertise thanks to extra funding. Materials used in services of worship have been translated into various languages, including Persian/Farsi, Dari, Arabic and Tigrinya. The social welfare bodies *Vårsta diakoni* and *Bräcke diakoni* have also received funding and boosted their knowledge development in psychosocial and social welfare approaches, and *Fairways* has been established, which, in cooperation with parishes, is to offer accommodation for asylum seekers and child refugees travelling alone.

Karlskoga Parish is one example of a parish that runs a language café for people in their long wait for asylum and entitlement to language courses from SFI, Swedish for Immigrants. The parish has also employed a psychologist who speaks Arabic and Persian to give people supportive conversations in cooperation with psychiatric healthcare services, healthcare services for children and young people and Karlskoga hospital, with the help of funding from the Central Board of the Church of Sweden. In Mora Parish activities have included homework help, drop-in preschool, floorball and handicrafts. Stress management has also been on offer. With the support of a textile artist, Övre Älvdal Parish has encouraged women seeking asylum to embroider their experiences of being refugees. The artworks will be able to convey encounters with refugees to future generations.

In December 2015 the Swedish Government decided to grant SEK 17 million to the Church of Sweden for its work with asylum seekers and refugees in Sweden. This has contributed to the continuity in the extraordinary situation of many new arrivals and the need for integrating measures. In 2016 the activity that was initiated in autumn 2015 was expanded, and a large number of parishes have for example continued to run language cafés, offer help in contacts with authorities and provide psychosocial support.

With the support of a textile artist, Övre Älvdal Parish has encouraged women seeking asylum to embroider their experiences of being refugees.

The artworks will be able to convey encounters with refugees to future generations.



SUPPORT MIGRATION

The function *Support Migration* was launched at national level in February. The support is designed for employees, elected representatives and volunteers who work with migration issues in various ways. It is a two-part support function consisting of an intranet and a phone and email service. The function is run by a communications officer and an editor who work with a group of experts. *Support Migration* facilitates the exchange of experience, knowledge and methods between parishes. The employees who are connected to the function arrange training in topics such as psychosocial approaches and welcoming techniques for employees in dioceses and parishes – some in collaboration with other organisations. The intranet section is open to the general public and other actors.

internwww.svenskakyrkan.se/supportmigration

AGREEMENT WITH THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

The Church of Sweden, the Church of Sweden Employers' Association and the Swedish Public Employment Service signed a national agreement for increased collaboration during the year. The aim is that more people will receive support to enter the labour market via the parishes of the Church of Sweden. There has long been co-operation at local level in many locations between the parishes of the Church of Sweden and the Swedish Public Employment Service to open doors to the labour market through rehabilitation, supported work experience and work placements under supervision. The new agreement signed in 2016 will further strengthen and assure the quality of the work. *Mer än jobb – Svenska kyrkans stöd till människor i arbetslöshet* (More than work – support from the Church for the unemployed) is a national

ongoing project aimed above all at those groups who are currently far from the labour market, such as young people, people with disabilities and new arrivals. Successful activities include those available in S:t Johannes Parish in Norrköping, where several people born abroad are taking language courses for new arrivals; Linde-Bergslag Parish in Lindsberg, which runs a social enterprise including candle making, a handicrafts workshop and a bakery; as well as Katarina Parish in Stockholm, which has an activity based on the Alcoholics Anonymous 12-step programme, where a café and restaurant operation has been built up with the help of trainees. In the autumn of 2016 a total of 1,300 people were in some form of labour market policy measure in the parishes and groups of parishes of the Church of Sweden. Most of them are in the programmes of measures for new start jobs or wage-subsidised employment or in security employment.

CULTURE

The Church of Sweden strives to provide rich, multi-faceted and open cultural activities and wants to conduct dialogue with artists and others who work with culture and who address major existential issues in our time. The Church of Sweden therefore awards culture grants every year with the aim of contributing to the creation of new artworks linked to Christian tradition and Bible stories. A total of 420 applications were submitted in 2016, and interest increases year by year. Six culture grants were awarded in 2016, for example as funding for the *En Luthersymfoni* project, in which a composer was commissioned to compose music based on four hymns by Martin Luther. Other grants were awarded to pictorial arts, performing arts, film, and literature.

At the film festival in Gothenburg the film *The Girl Who*

Saved My Life was announced as the winner of the Church of Sweden film award, *Angelos*. The film is a documentary based on the conflict in Iraqi Kurdistan. The Church of Sweden's 2016 Youth Film Award was presented to the French film *Microbe & Gasoline* during BUFF, the Young People's Film Festival in Malmö. The Church of Sweden arranges seminars and other activities at both festivals.

The Sami Culture Grant was awarded to Lars Anders Baer who, through his actions and commitment to Sápmi (the land of the Sami) and in international contexts, has helped develop the law of indigenous peoples and deepen understanding of the existential issues and living conditions of the indigenous peoples.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Church of Sweden manages the country's largest cohesive collection of cultural heritage. The Church's cultural heritage is both tangible and intangible: cemeteries and memories, churches and traditions, instruments and music. The Church of Sweden owns 3,400 churches and chapels, 3,000 of which are protected by the Swedish Cultural Heritage Act. The Church receives an annual ecclesiastical heritage grant from the Government for the extra costs incurred through care and maintenance of the ecclesiastical heritage that is covered by the Swedish Cultural Heritage Act. The Central Board of the Church has the task of deciding how to distribute this SEK 460 million grant and reporting on how it is used.

Modern Churches in Sweden is a popular science book that was published during the year for the general public. The book presents about 30 churches, intertwining experiences with facts, and highlighting the unique characteristics of each church. There are both Swedish and English editions of the book..

THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN AND THE SAMI

During the spring the Church of Sweden published its *vitbok* ("white paper"), a two-volume scientific anthology titled *De historiska relationerna mellan Svenska kyrkan och samerna* (The historical relations between the Church of Sweden and the Sami). The Church wants the anthology to present an account of the violations and wrongs that the Church is guilty of and to scrutinise its accountability towards the Sami as an indigenous people in a colonial past. The anthology confirms the history of the Sami and consequences of the violations, which many of the Church's decision makers and employees and the general public are not currently aware of. The anthology does not claim to be the last word on the matter; it must instead be regarded as a source of inspiration for further steps along the path to building a lasting relation in reconciliation with the Sami people.

THE BASIC TRAINING OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN AND THE SWEDISH THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

The Church's educational institute, with activities run in Uppsala and Lund, has the task of training future deacons, parish educational officers, church musicians and priests. During the autumn 10 students received the opportunity to visit South Africa and Tanzania, where they, with students in these countries, highlighted issues regarding children's involvement, migration and gender-aware theology at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the Pietermaritzburg Campus at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and at Tumaini University Makumira. The students also took part in parish work in the Lutheran sister churches.

At year-end 2016–2017 there were a total of 258 students, 80 of whom on two-year distance learning courses for the positions of deacons and parish educational officers. As it has proved difficult to recruit students to the pastoral theology semester for church musicians, a pilot project was run during the 2015–2016 academic year that offered the training as a half-time course, which resulted in a slightly higher number of students. In addition, the educational institute is responsible for the training that authorises vicars to head a parish and the course *Kyrkoherde idag* (Being a vicar today).

The Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem, STI, focuses on the theology of religions and meetings between religions, especially between Christianity and Judaism, as well as ecumenical contacts with Christians from various church traditions. The institute provides short and long courses in these fields, and people meet from different religious and political groups in the area. Students are theologians, priests and other groups of church staff from the Church of Sweden and partners around the world. The annually recurring international course with participants from churches and theological institutions in 12 countries was run in January–March.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Analyses and research findings are continually presented via publications, presentations and conferences. Anthologies, research overviews and scientific and popular science articles are also published. One of the studies presented during the year, *En bra plats att vara på* (A good place to be), describes how practical work on diversity can be run in the Church of Sweden. The study was published in the magazine series *Forskning för kyrkan* (Research for the Church) and is part of the research venture *Meningskapande och lärande* (Creation of meaning and learning). *Tidens tecken* (Signs of the time) is a new annual magazine published by the Church of Sweden. The theme of the first issue, published in September, was the consequences of the new media and information landscape.

WORK AMONG SWEDES ABROAD

The Church of Sweden has a presence with its own staff and premises in 39 locations in 23 countries worldwide. Services of worship are held regularly at another 100 or so locations. The recruitment and training of employees and staff stationed abroad are also part of the Central Board's remit. The parishes have crisis preparedness in place, which was put into practice in March for the Church of Sweden in Brussels, which is a few hundred metres from the metro station where a terror attack took place.

During the Olympic Games and the Paralympics in Rio, the Church of Sweden offered meeting places for Swedes and was on site to provide, among other things, the opportunity for dialogue and crisis support.

NEW WEB PLATFORM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The Church of Sweden's updated web platform with 550 subsites and more than 200,000 published pages was launched in April. Throughout the spring about 1,000 editors in parishes, groups of parishes, dioceses and at the national level worked on transferring and processing material for the new website. The *svenskakyrkan.se* domain has been redesigned and adapted to users' service needs. There is greater scope for social media flows, and the website has been adapted to the fact that more than half the visitors access the Church of Sweden website via a mobile phone or tablet computer. Work on film developed during the year, and on average one film was produced per day for the website, to complement existing texts.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se

Ever more people are accessing the social media channels of the Church of Sweden. Some people ponder on major life issues; others want to discuss a religious reflection or to say a prayer for someone. Many deacons, parish educational officers and priests have had a presence online for many years in the channels of the Church and other arenas. For example, with more than 52,700 followers on the official Facebook page of the Church of Sweden and 16,200 followers on the Facebook page of the international work of the Church, there is an increased need for the priests online. The tasks vary between answering factual questions and providing pastoral counselling. Sometimes they can point a person to a different priest in his or her local area.

 www.facebook.com/svenskakyrkan

ALL SAINTS' DAY

About half of Swedes light candles at a graveside during the weekend when All Saints' Day is commemorated, but not everyone has the opportunity to visit a cemetery. A survey commissioned by the Church of Sweden and conducted by research company Kantar Sifo reveals that

80% of respondents think that it is important to remember those who have died, and a total of 38% would like to do more to honour their memory. That's why the Church of Sweden has taken the initiative for the hashtag *#taenminut* (take a minute), to encourage people to take a break to remember someone they miss with a film recorded in 360° published on YouTube and Facebook. The film, which is one minute long, enables viewers to pay a virtual visit to a cemetery. Irrespective of whether you are in a cemetery or on the internet, there is space for grief, and it acts as a reminder that the Church of Sweden is available and that no one needs to grieve alone. Together with parishes throughout Sweden, 87,000 candles were distributed during the weekend when All Saints' Day is commemorated.

CHURCH OF SWEDEN PREPAREDNESS

The Central Board is responsible for preparedness in the Church of Sweden and, through advice and instructions, for providing guidelines on how emergency management and preparedness work should be run in the Church. Within the framework of the Central Board's emergency preparedness and emergency management, support is provided to the activities of parishes abroad, to staff stationed abroad in the international work and to other parts of the national level of the Church. The Church continually collaborates with *the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency*, MSB.

ADMINISTRATIVE COOPERATION

Development work is in progress for greater collaboration within administration in the Church of Sweden. This is taking place with the dioceses and aims to create conditions that enable parishes to free up additional energy and resources to devote to their basic tasks. The work also contributes to sustainable development and consistent quality throughout the Church of Sweden.

The five prioritised areas of activity that the dioceses and the Central Board of the Church of Sweden have decided on together are: IT, properties, accounting and payroll administration, case management mechanism and purchasing support. The joint IT platform, GIP, is a central prerequisite for administrative cooperation, which is why the cost per user and the parishes' connection to GIP are subsidised. The number of parishes and dioceses that are connected to GIP amounted to 365 at year-end 2016–2017 with a total of 12,682 users. The Church of Sweden Youth and the Church of Sweden Employers' Association also use the system. The number of users rose by 2,210 during the year, which corresponds to a 22% increase. A total of 65% of all employees in the Church of Sweden are connected to GIP.

The joint administrative solutions are rapidly gaining new users. The number of parishes and groups of parishes



Together with parishes around Sweden, 87,000 candles were distributed during the weekend when All Saints' Day is commemorated.

that are either connected to or are preparing to connect to the joint financial and payroll processes currently totals 98 – an increase of more than 50% in a year.

Regarding property, about 30 support tools and templates have been created and made available through the intranet's property and cultural heritage portal. The portal was continually updated with relevant facts during the year. During the year, the number of unique visitors rose from 500 per month to about 1,500.

The Church of Sweden has the potential to affect trade and industry, as framework agreements are signed for the entire Church and we simultaneously save money. SEK 117 million was saved through framework agreements in 2016. During the year all suppliers in framework agreements, about 70 in total, accepted the Church of Sweden Code of Conduct for suppliers, which places demands on environmental consideration, working conditions, other human rights and a ban on corruption. Following a detailed analysis of suppliers who present a higher risk to sustainability, two suppliers were suspended while they further develop their work.

Major procurements for work clothes and tools, office supplies and cleaning products, recycling of metals after cremations and fuel took place

during the year. Various sustainability issues were highlighted in assessment criteria and in specifications of requirements, adapted to the relevant activities, for example, stipulating a large proportion of eco-labelled products, or demanding that working conditions in factories in low-cost countries are followed up.

Through a new purchasing portal on the Church of Sweden's intranet, parishes and diocesan offices can access sustainability assessments and other information that helps purchasing units within the Church make active choices and if necessary change their own behaviour to reduce their climate impact.

PROPERTIES, CHURCHES AND EQUALISATION SYSTEM

Joint responsibility within the Church of Sweden is required to free up financial resources for the basic tasks of the parishes and to work nationwide. Cultural heritage comprising churches and other buildings must be managed more efficiently. This is the essence of a General Synod decision made in autumn 2016 concerning the written communication by the Central Board, KsSkr 2016:06 *Gemensamt ansvar – fastigheter, kyrkor och utjämningsystem* (Joint responsibility – properties, churches and equalisation system), which followed an inquiry and used all parishes as consultation bodies. In a future with fewer members, the Church of Sweden will need to work more cost-effectively in several areas. Regarding properties in particular, it is thought that considerable resources can be freed up if the parishes gain better tools for monitoring and effective management. The annual costs of the management of all properties including churches and chapels amount to about a quarter of the total costs payable by the Church of Sweden. Stewardship is a core starting point for future work; it means that we must integrate environmental aspects in the work ahead, in parallel with achieving financially sustainable property management.

In brief, the decision means that a central register of all buildings will be drawn up, as will premises supply plans describing how parishes intend to use their buildings. A church maintenance grant will be introduced to bolster the parishes' maintenance of their church buildings. The decision also means that parishes, in consultation with dioceses and the Central Board of the Church, can transfer church buildings that they no longer use to the Church of Sweden Faith Community. The decision will be gradually implemented in coming years; the register will be the first step and will be in place by 1 January 2019.

The proposals also include changes to the financial equalisation system of the Church of Sweden. One such change is that the calculations of the equalisation amount at local level, for example, will be based on the number of children living in a parish and factors such as whether the parish is located in a rural or socioeconomically vulnerable area.

MANY MEMBERS HAVE LEFT

The trend in the past decade has been that somewhat fewer members have left the Church of Sweden each year, both in normal years and when there are Church elections. Falling membership is a pattern seen in other organisations in Sweden, but over time the Church of Sweden has lost relatively few members compared to the political parties and other communities. The number of cancelled memberships corresponds to the level that the Church forecast in the long term. However, 90,000 members left the Church of Sweden in 2016; most of them in the second half of the year following the investigation by several media into parishes' trips and the Church of Sweden Abroad that received widespread media coverage in early June.

The media scrutiny led to updates of Church routines and policies and a shake-up of several administrative procedures at all levels in the Church. There is potential for higher membership numbers in the Church of Sweden; many people are on the threshold of becoming members because the Church is increasingly in demand in troubled times to respond to a longing for fellowship and a need for services in the community.

Standardisation and management

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden prepares decisions for the General Synod on amendments to the Church Ordinance regarding stipulations about the Church's faith, preaching/creed and doctrine; the books of the Church; services of worship; sacraments and other ceremonies; belonging to the Church and the ordained ministry; the Church's organisation and the rules that parishes, dioceses and national-level bodies must comply with when performing their tasks. The work focuses on producing suitable documentation for establishing a consensus, reflection and decisions on changes to the Church Ordinance.

One example of standardisation can constitute regulations about the preservation and storage of documents in the Church archive in terms of what writing and storage equipment is to be used, the lending and returning of documents, the submission of documents for review, and when to sort out and remove documents from the archive.

ENDOWMENTS TO THE CHURCH AND NATIONAL-LEVEL CAPITAL

Through management of its endowments, with a total market value of SEK 29.1 billion on 31 December 2015, the Church of Sweden is the country's largest agricultural manager and its fifth largest forest manager. The endowments of the Church are managed by the dioceses, and the



SEK 117 million
was saved through
framework
agreements in
2016.

Central Board provides advice, support and help in management-related issues. The Board's remit also includes issuing more detailed stipulations that apply to the management.

The national level manages capital of approximately SEK 7.4 billion as at 31 December 2016, with a required return of 3% per year over a rolling 10-year period, above inflation. The return from the asset management is regarded as a resource with which to pay for long-term commitments and high priority areas in dioceses and parishes. The capital must be managed effectively, in an ethically defensible way. The financial policy adopted by the Central Board of the Church governs the work, and delegated responsibility for the work lies with the Asset Management Council.

Within the framework of the sustainability work Ethos funds are available for the entire Church. There are currently three funds: one Swedish and one global equity fund and one Swedish fixed income fund. The entire management of the national capital follows the UN's *Principles for Responsible Investment*, PRI. The focus is on investing in well-run companies that integrate sustainability into their operations. To achieve this the capital is

invested with external managers who are very skilled at integrating *Environment, Social and Governance*, ESG, factors into their investment decisions and their asset management work. The Church of Sweden also wants to be an active owner and uses various collaborations and corporate dialogue as tools with which to try and influence companies and the financial market to take a sustainable approach. In addition to PRI, the Church of Sweden is part of *Hållbart värdeskapande* (a collaboration for sustainable value creation), SWESIF, *the Global Network Initiative*, GNI and *the Portfolio Decarbonization Coalition*, PDC. Members of the PDC undertake to play an active part in attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest in solutions to climate change. Climate issues are very much in focus in society and in the Church of Sweden, which in 2008 started selling its shares in coal and oil companies and instead invested in companies that help counteract climate change and offer various forms of solutions. For a more detailed account, refer to the *Sustainability Report for 2016*.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/hallbarutveckling

How the Church of Sweden is run

PARISHES, GROUPS OF PARISHES, DIOCESES AND NATIONAL LEVEL

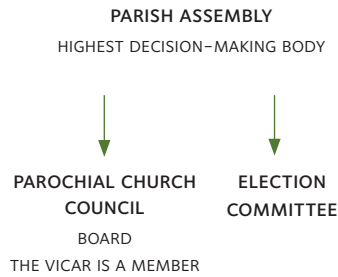


Members of the General Synod for the 2014–2017 period of office

Organisation 2016

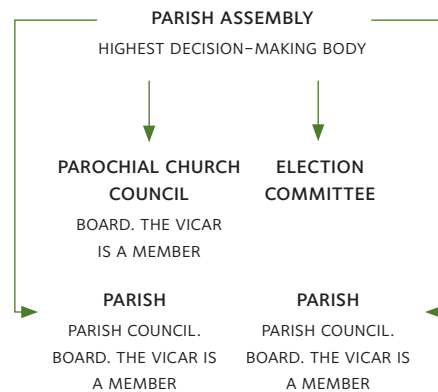
Parish

- THAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN A GROUP OF PARISHES
 - THE LOCAL PASTORAL AREA
- CARRIES OUT THE BASIC TASK OF THE PARISH



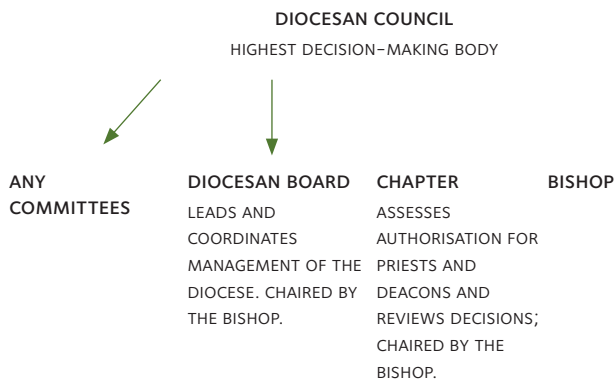
Pastorat (group of parishes)

- PASTORAL AREA
- OVERALL LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THE PARISHES PERFORM THEIR BASIC TASK
 - FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



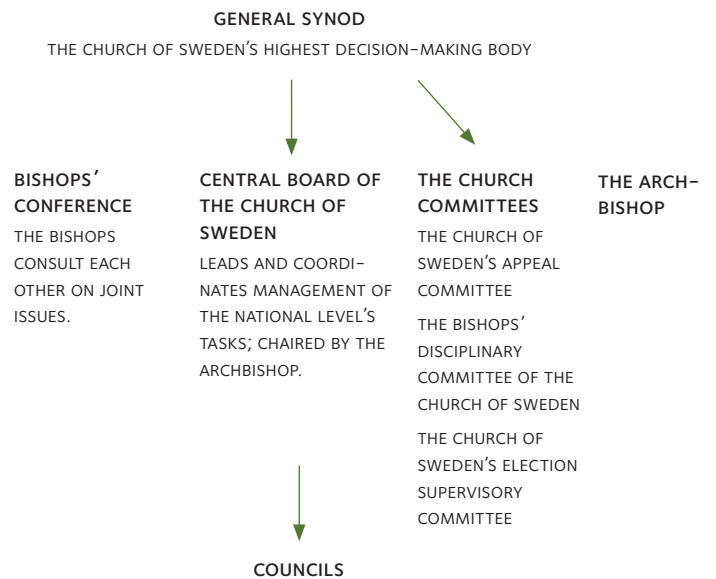
Diocese

- THE REGIONAL PASTORAL AREA
- SUPPORTS AND SUPERVISES PARISH LIFE



National level

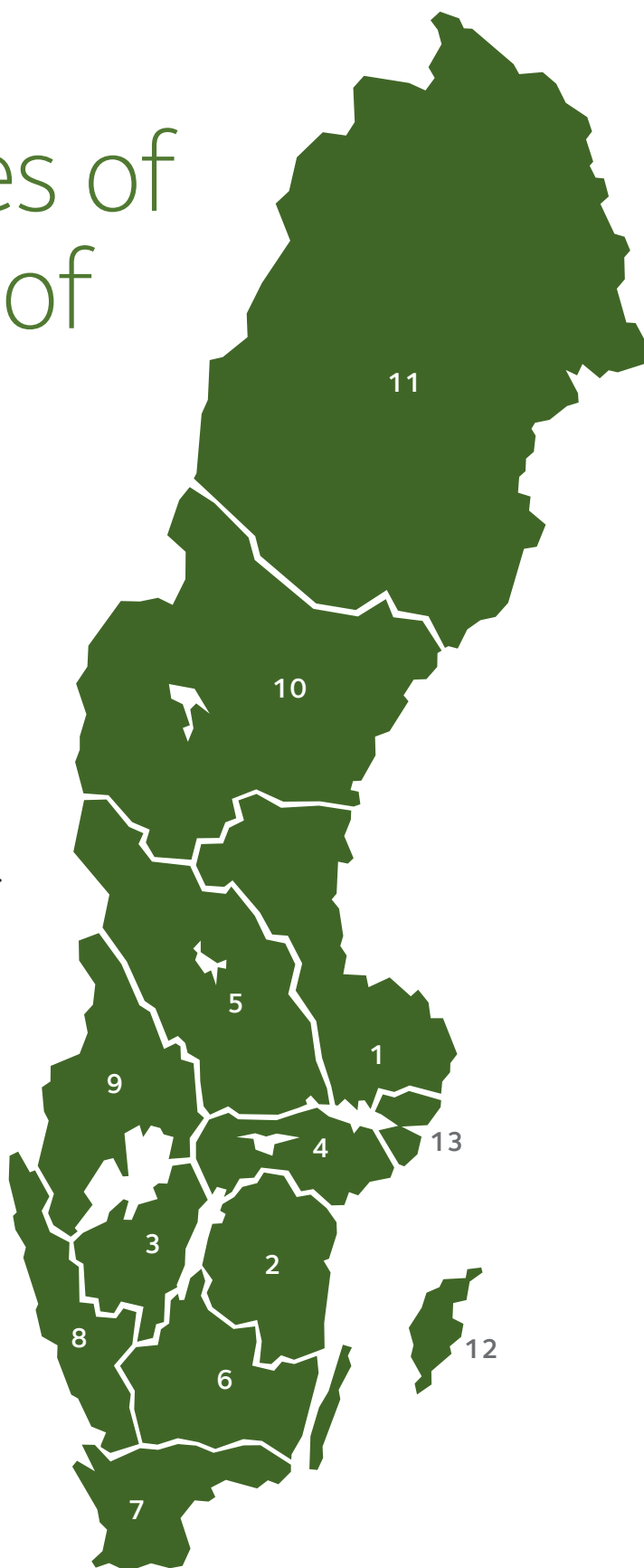
- RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN'S JOINT AFFAIRS AND REPRESENTS THE CHURCH NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.



The dioceses of the Church of Sweden

14 BISHOPS IN 13 DIOCESES

In 2016 the Church of Sweden was made up of 13 dioceses divided into a total of 1,361 parishes and 30 parishes abroad, and counted 61 per cent of Sweden's population among its members.





1. UPPSALA DIOCESE
 BISHOP: RAGNAR PERSENIUS
 64% MEMBERS
 127 PARISHES
 ARCHBISHOP: ANTJE JACKELÉN
 (Uppsala Diocese has two bishops
 with different areas of responsibility)



2. LINKÖPING DIOCESE
 BISHOP: MARTIN MODÉUS
 65% MEMBERS
 103 PARISHES



3. SKARA DIOCESE
 BISHOP: ÅKE BONNIER
 66% MEMBERS
 119 PARISHES



4. STRÄNGNÄS DIOCESE
 BISHOP: JOHAN DAHLMAN
 57% MEMBERS
 72 PARISHES



5. VÄSTERÅS DIOCESE
 BISHOP: MIKAEL MOGREN
 65% MEMBERS
 75 PARISHES



6. VÄXJÖ DIOCESE
 BISHOP: FREDRIK MODÉUS
 65% MEMBERS
 176 PARISHES



7. LUND DIOCESE
 BISHOP: JOHAN TYRBERG
 60% MEMBERS
 168 PARISHES



8. GOTHENBURG DIOCESE
 BISHOP: PER ECKERDAL
 59% MEMBERS
 180 PARISHES



9. KARLSTAD DIOCESE
 BISHOP: SÖREN DALEVI
 consecrated on 28 August 2016,
 succeeding Esbjörn Hagberg.
 71% MEMBERS
 85 PARISHES



10. HÄRNÖSAND DIOCESE
 BISHOP: EVA NORDUNG
 BYSTRÖM
 71% MEMBERS
 98 PARISHES



11. LULEÅ DIOCESE
 BISHOP: HANS STIGLUND
 73% MEMBERS
 57 PARISHES



12. VISBY DIOCESE
 BISHOP: SVEN-BERNHARD FAST
 68% MEMBERS
 39 PARISHES



13. STOCKHOLM DIOCESE
 BISHOP: EVA BRUNNE
 52% MEMBERS
 62 PARISHES



Report of the Board

MANDATE AND OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The mandate of the national level is to be a cohesive force and help the Church of Sweden fulfil its obligations nationwide by taking responsibility for the joint affairs of the Church in various areas. It covers the

- surrounding world and relations, which includes representation, official relations with other churches and faith communities and international mission and diaconia (social welfare work);
- support to dioceses and parishes, which includes support for the basic task of the dioceses and parishes, training for work and professions in the Church of Sweden, research, cultural heritage, work among Swedes abroad, and administrative support functions; as well as
- standardisation, supervision and management.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Activities at national level are conducted in the registered Church of Sweden Faith Community, organisation registration number 252002-6135 with its registered office in Uppsala. The General Synod is the Church of Sweden's highest body at national level and its 251 members are elected by members of the Church of Sweden, of whom 249 in direct elections and the remaining two are selected by the 30 Parochial Church Councils in the Church of Sweden Abroad. The General Synod appoints a Central Board for a four-year period. The Archbishop is the chairperson. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is the Church's highest responsible body when the General Synod is not in session. It leads and coordinates the management of the national level's tasks. The Central Board deals with issues as stated in the Church Ordinance,

decides on all overall and day-to-day issues at national level and represents the Church of Sweden. The Central Board is the General Synod's drafting and executive body. This means that the Central Board can put forward proposals regarding various issues through written communications to the General Synod. It also carries out the tasks set by the General Synod.

Other Church bodies directly appointed by the General Synod are: the Doctrinal Commission, the Bishops' Disciplinary Committee, the Election Supervisory Committee and the Appeal Committee. The Central Board of the Church appoints bodies such as the International Commission, the Council for the Church of Sweden Abroad and the Asset Management Council. The Central Board is responsible for all overarching operations.

The Central Church Office in Uppsala is organised into nine departments and two secretariats that carry out activities at national level. The work of the Central Church Office is led by a Secretary-General.

The annual governance, in the relationship between the General Synod, Central Board, Secretary-General and heads of departments mainly consist of processes for planning and for follow-up of activities and financial matters. Each year a framework budget is drawn up for a period of three years as well as a detailed budget for the coming year. The follow-up processes take place continually during the year, and dialogues and reporting back to the Central Board of the Church take place every four months. Additional follow-up takes place through the Secretary-General's continuous reporting to the Central Board during the year.

LEGAL STRUCTURE

The national level of the Church of Sweden owns a subsidiary in the form of the management company Svenska kyrkans förvaltningsaktiebolag and the dormant

education and training subsidiary Svenska kyrkans utbildningsaktiebolag. Svenska kyrkans förvaltningsaktiebolag owns and manages the Fjärdingen 15:2 property in Uppsala, which meets the main part of the Central Church Office's requirement for office premises. The national level of the Church of Sweden also owns shares in the associated companies Fairtrade Sverige AB and Berling Media AB. With reference to Chapter 7 Section 3a of the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, no consolidated accounts are drawn up due to the limited extent of the above activities in relation to the total activities at national level.

The framework of the activities encompasses six branches, comprising five within the Church of Sweden Abroad organisation – located in Thailand, Hong Kong, Italy, Spain and Greece – and the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem in Israel.

FOUNDATIONS

The national level of the Church of Sweden manages 92 (90 in the previous year) foundations with affiliated management. The foundations are separate legal entities, and separate annual reports/compilations are drawn up for them pursuant to applicable legislation. They are therefore not included in the income statement and balance sheet of the national level of the Church. At year-end the carrying amount of the assets in the foundations was SEK 217 million (SEK 207 million in the previous year). The return from the foundations is largely allocated to the activities run at national level in the Church of Sweden. Certain foundations also award grants to recipients outside the Church of Sweden depending on what causes they promote. The foundations can be divided up into the following categories: international mission and diaconia (social welfare), education and training, research and culture, and the Church of Sweden Abroad.

KEY EVENTS IN 2016

The year's activities contributed in many ways to the objective of the faith community: to bring the Gospel to life and make the Kingdom of God known. A few of the most significant examples are listed below. For a more detailed description of the year's activities, see the Report on activities.

- One of the biggest events during the year was when the 500th anniversary of the Reformation was highlighted through a large joint commemoration with the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church on 31 October in Lund.
- In November 2015 the General Synod decided to grant SEK 75 million to the Central Board of the Church of Sweden for the work with refugees and new arrivals in

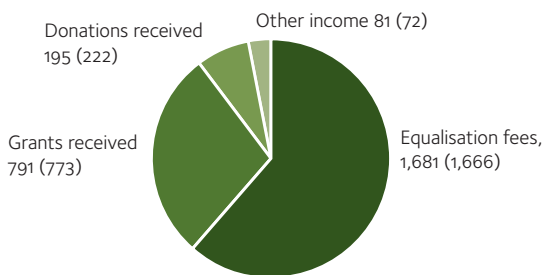
Sweden in 2016. The bulk of the funding has been distributed to dioceses and parishes, but funding was also distributed to the international work.

- In December 2015 the Swedish Government decided to grant SEK 17 million to the Church of Sweden for its work with asylum seekers and refugees in Sweden. This has contributed to the endurance of the extraordinary situation of many new arrivals and the need for integrating measures. In December 2016 a further SEK 8 million was received from the Government for equivalent work in 2017.
- Joint responsibility is required to free up financial resources for the basic tasks of the parishes and to work nationwide. Cultural heritage comprising churches and other properties must be managed more efficiently. This is the essence of a General Synod decision made in autumn 2016 concerning the written communication by the Central Board KsSkr 2016:06 *Gemensamt ansvar – fastigheter, kyrkor och utjämningsystem* (Joint responsibility – properties, churches and equalisation systems), which followed an inquiry and used all parishes as consultation bodies. In a future with fewer members, the Church of Sweden will need to work more cost-effectively in several areas. Regarding properties in particular, it is thought that considerable resources can be freed up if the parishes gain better tools for monitoring and effective management. The annual costs of the management of all properties including churches and chapels amounts to about a quarter of the total costs payable by the Church of Sweden. Stewardship is a core starting point for future work; it means that we must integrate environmental aspects in the work ahead in parallel with financially sustainable property management. In brief, the decision means that a central register of all properties will be drawn up, as will premises supply plans describing how parishes use their buildings. A church maintenance grant will be introduced to bolster the parishes' maintenance of their church buildings. The decision also means that parishes, in consultation with dioceses and the Central Board of the Church, can transfer church buildings that they no longer use to the Church of Sweden Faith Community. The decision will be gradually implemented in coming years; the register will be the first step and is to be in place by 1 January 2019. The proposals also include changes to the financial equalisation system of the Church of Sweden. One such change is that the calculations of the equalisation amount at local level, for example, will be based on the number of children living in a parish and factors such as whether the parish is located in a rural or socially disadvantaged area.

TOTAL INCOME AND EXPENSES

The financial result amounted to SEK 547 million (preceding year: SEK 305 million). Total income was SEK 3,376 million (SEK 3,060 million in the previous year), including the return from capital (asset) management. The largest income item comprises the equalisation fee. It is mainly redistributed in the Church's equalisation system in the form of equalisation grants. The second-largest income item comprises grants received – mainly the ecclesiastical heritage grant, which is recognised as income to the extent that it is used. Other grants are received from Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the EU, the charitable foundation Radiohjälpen and various foundations and are primarily used in the Church's international work. Donations received form another key source of income, especially for the international work.

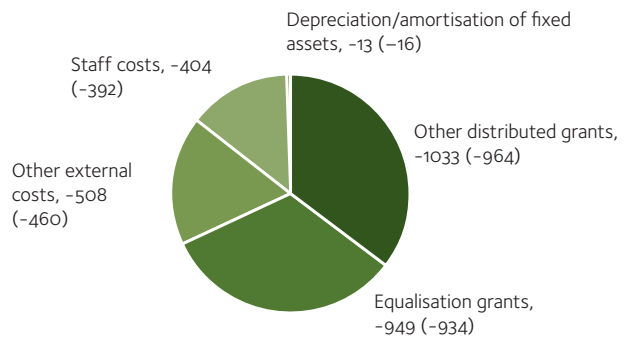
DIAGRAM 1: INCOME* 2016
(SEK MILLIONS, PREVIOUS YEAR IN PARENTHESES)



*excluding asset (capital) management.

The work is based on the Church Ordinance and the decisions made by the General Synod and the Central Board of the Church of Sweden. Total expenses amounted to SEK 2,907 million (SEK 2,765 million in the previous year). Other distributed grants mainly refer to grants for the ecclesiastical heritage grant, SEK 586 million (SEK 581 million) and distributed grants from the international work, SEK 290 million (SEK 280 million). The international grants refer to grants for development cooperation, disaster relief and cooperation abroad. Distributed grants also include the largest proportion of the General Synod's focus on refugees and asylum seekers. The equalisation grants refer to diocesan grants and general equalisation grants for church maintenance, cost equalisation and equalisation related to the proportion of members. The increase in other external costs relates to, among other things, preparations for the church elections in 2017. Staff costs increase when vacancies are filled. Total expenses are within the agreed cost framework for 2016.

DIAGRAM 2: EXPENSES 2016
(SEK MILLIONS, PREVIOUS YEAR IN PARENTHESES)



FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The market value of the assets in the asset (capital) management operation stood at SEK 7,388 million on 31 December 2016 (previous year: SEK 6,759 million). The result reached SEK 628 million (previous year: SEK 326 million), corresponding to a return of 9.3% (5.1% for the previous year). This can be compared to the benchmark index of 8.8% (previous year: 2.6%) during the corresponding period.

All asset types in the portfolio contributed positive returns. The asset type Global equities generated the highest return in terms of percentage: 15.3%. In relation to its benchmark, however, the asset type Properties was the highest performer: 9.5% compared to 4.8% for the benchmark. In total, investments in equities generated a positive outcome of SEK 510 million, of which SEK 483 million constitutes unrealised changes in value. Fixed-income investments including cash and cash equivalents, property funds and alternative investments contributed a total of SEK 118 million, of which SEK 26 million comprises unrealised change in value. The preponderance of above all global equities compared to fixed-income and other asset types had a positive impact on the result. Exchange rate changes during the year had a positive impact on the result of the global equities portfolio (including emerging markets) amounting to about 4%. This is above all because nearly half of the portfolio comprises shares denominated in dollars.

OTHER NON-FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In 2016 a large number of policy documents were updated at national level. For instance, the Central Board adopted a new code of conduct, and it was decided that the national level would work on the environmental management system of the Church of Sweden, *Miljödiplomering*.

For other non-financial information on the sustainability and HR work of the national level, read the *Sustainability Report for 2016*, which is published in Swedish on the Church of Sweden website.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se

FUTURE TREND AND MATERIAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Significant risk areas to take into account for the national level of the Church of Sweden comprise the risk of damaged confidence, activity-related risks, risks in financial management and external risks.

The Church of Sweden's most important resource is people's confidence in the Church. Considerable importance is therefore attached to updates and training regarding, among other things, the Code of Conduct, the policy to counteract corruption and embezzlement, the policy against discrimination and guidelines for prevention of sexual assault.

Activity-related risks arise, for example, as the national level has many employees who travel to or live in environments with poor road safety or other safety risks. There are guidelines about managing the risks, and all staff stationed abroad receive training in these guidelines. Other activity-related risks comprise the fact that the national level also has many critical systems that are managed within the framework of our IT policy.

Risk management in the financial management operations aims to ensure that the management of the financial assets is conducted satisfactorily. This is achieved by continuously monitoring, evaluating and checking the financial risks. The structure of this activity must ensure that the management complies with agreed strategies and guidelines. The risks are managed through good internal control, for instance regarding secure management of transactions, clearly defined and delimited areas of responsibility and documented descriptions of routines.

The external risks include macroeconomic factors such as the economy, employment, interest rates, etc. The national level therefore conducts external situational analysis work, which monitors and analyses developments in these areas.

The Church of Sweden is in a time of change and faces major challenges in the present and in the future. These challenges are made up of changes in both society and the Church.

The forecasts made of the future number of members and future income from the Church fee display a downward trend, which means that the Church will in future

need to substantially reduce its costs. Although the financial forecasts point to a need for cost cuts, there is currently built-up capital, both locally and nationally. The national capital constitutes a joint resource for the entire faith community, and its returns provide resources for emergency measures as well as strategic measures for Church life that is sustainable in the long term.

Within the framework of the drafting work regarding the capital situation of the Church, the Central Board has been in dialogue with the dioceses and reached a consensus that more joint responsibility is required in order to fulfil the task of the Church of Sweden in the future. The dialogue with the dioceses, in which discussions on distribution of responsibility and joint priorities are among the central parts, will continue in 2017.

The Church of Sweden must prepare itself to use fewer resources to build stronger relations and work with joint solutions for administrative cooperation. To achieve this, the courage to change and the ability to see new solutions are both required. The Church of Sweden also needs to clarify its role and task in various contexts to a greater extent. Future development is addressed in the publication titled *The Key to the Church of Sweden, Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan – en skrift om organisation, verksamhet och ekonomi* (about the organisation, activities and finances of the Church).

EQUITY

In 2016 the General Synod decided that the capital of the national level was to be a minimum of SEK 6,500 million at the end of 2016. The target for the amount of equity will be adjusted annually taking account of the consumer price index. Unrestricted equity totalled SEK 7,619 million at year-end 2016, of which SEK 2,049 million refers to unrealised gains in financial management.

It is important for the Board to continue the dialogue with the dioceses to secure Church life that is sustainable in the long term.

PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

Other aspects of the operation's performance and position at year-end are specified in the following income statement and balance sheet.

FIVE-YEAR SUMMARY*)

Amounts are in SEK millions

Income statement	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
<i>Income</i>					
Equalisation fees	1,681	1,666	1,633	1,622	1,574
Collections and donations	195	222	200	179	178
Capital (asset) management	628	326	885	613	423
Other income	872	845	784	786	680
Total income	3,376	3,060	3,502	3,200	2,855
<i>Expenses</i>					
Equalisation grants	-949	-933	-962	-976	-1,001
Staff and other costs	-1,958	-1,832	-1,754	-1,707	-1,587
Total costs	-2,907	-2,765	-2,716	-2,683	-2,588
Other income statement items	37	-4	39	34	46
Net income for the year	506	291	824	553	
Change in designated funds	41	15	9	11	0
Net income for the year after redistributions	547	305	834	563	313
Balance sheet					
Assets	13,144	12,967	11,913	9,878	9,187
Equity including designated funds	7,767	7,260	6,970	6,145	5,369
Liabilities, provisions	5,377	5,706	4,943	3,733	3,818
Equity/assets ratio**	59%	56%	59%	62%	58%
Personnel					
Average number of employees					
Sweden	394	377	333	321	298
Abroad	95	96	93	97	99

*) In accordance with rules in K3 data for 2010–2012 was not restated (recalculated) upon transition to K3

**) Equity as a percentage of total assets.

Income statement

Amounts in SEK thousands	Note, see the Swedish version	2016	2015
Income from operations			
Equalisation fees	4	1,681,080	1,665,922
Donations received	5	194,580	222,426
Grants received	6	791,254	773,030
Returns from capital (asset) management	7	628,353	326,320
Net revenue	8.10	75,760	67,014
Other income from operations		5,468	5,380
Total income from operations		3,376,494	3,060,092
Expenses from operations			
Equalisation grants	4	-949,166	-933,659
Other distributed grants	9	-1,033,222	-964,025
Other external expenses	10,11,12	-508,396	-460,055
Staff costs	13	-403,603	-391,792
Depreciation/amortisation and impairment of tangible and intangible fixed assets	14	-13,097	-15,632
Total expenses from operations		-2,907,484	-2,765,163
Income from operations		469,010	294,929
Income from financial investments			
Income from financial fixed assets	15	27,201	2,018
Other interest income and similar income statement items		10,456	-6,080
Interest expense and similar income statement items		-326	-144
Total		37,331	-4,207
Net income for the year		506,341	290,722
Change in designated funds			
Net income for the year according to the income statement		506,341	290,722
Utilisation of designated funds from previous years		48,854	28,854
Provision (reservation) of designated funds received during the year but not used during the year		-8,064	-14,180
Net income for the year after redistributions		547,130	305,396

Balance sheet

Amounts in SEK thousands	Note, see the Swedish version	31/12/2016	31/12/2015
ASSETS			
<i>Fixed assets</i>			
<i>Intangible fixed assets</i>			
Capitalised development expenditure for computer programs	16	8,376	14,374
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>			
Buildings and land	17	98,475	101,034
Equipment	18	9,016	12,054
Total		107,492	113,088
<i>Financial fixed assets</i>			
Participating interests in Group companies	19	55,774	55,774
Receivables from Group companies		30,000	30,000
Participating interests in associated companies	20	57,740	42,333
Capital (asset) management	21	7,388,362	6,759,468
Other long-term securities	22	344,467	336,132
Other long-term receivables	23	411	369
Total		7,876,754	7,224,076
Total fixed assets		7,992,622	7,351,538
<i>Current assets</i>			
<i>Inventories</i>			
Inventories		2,711	1,451
<i>Current receivables</i>			
Accounts receivable, trade		12,582	11,031
Receivables from Group companies		2,451	2,663
Current receivables		17,967	13,946
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	24	19,108	20,901
Total		52,109	48,541
<i>Current investments</i>			
Current investments	25	3,925,972	4,079,421
<i>Cash and bank balances</i>			
Cash and bank balances	25,29	1,170,093	1,485,643
Total current assets		5,150,884	5,615,056
TOTAL ASSETS		13,143,506	12,966,594
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
<i>Equity</i>			
Equity brought forward		7,071,446	6,766,050
Designated funds		148,124	188,914
Net income for the year after redistributions		547,130	305,397
Total		7,766,701	7,260,360
<i>Provisions</i>			
Provisions	26	171,659	256,906
<i>Current liabilities</i>			
<i>Accounts payable, trade</i>			
Accounts payable, trade		47,114	59,251
<i>Debt to subsidiary account holders in the Church account</i>			
Debt to subsidiary account holders in the Church account	25	4,727,458	4,852,518
Debt regarding grants received but not used	27	147,748	279,460
Other liabilities		214,962	205,292
Accrued expenses and deferred income	28	67,864	52,806
Total		5,205,146	5,449,328
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		13,143,506	12,966,594

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden

A PRESENTATION OF THE BOARD AND ITS WORK

The national level of the Church is responsible for the joint matters of the Church. This applies to the area of the surrounding world and relations, which includes representation, official relations with other churches and faith communities, and international mission and diaconia (social welfare); the area of support to dioceses and parishes, which includes supporting them in their primary task, basic training programmes, research, cultural heritage, work among Swedes abroad, joint information and administrative support functions; and the area of standardisation, supervision and management.

The General Synod is the highest decision-making body of the Church of Sweden, but it may not decide on individual issues that a parish or diocese has the task of deciding on.

The General Synod appoints a Central Board, which leads and coordinates the management of the national level's tasks as stipulated in the Church Ordinance. The Central Board represents the Church of Sweden Faith Community, for example as a consultation body and in statements and official contacts. The Board consults the Bishops' Conference on theological and ecumenical issues.

The Central Board carries out the tasks set by the General Synod and it can submit communications containing various proposals to the General Synod. Each year, the Central Board submits a plan of operations and an annual review and financial summary for the national level to the General Synod.

The Central Board consists of the Archbishop and 14 members with an equal number of deputies; they are elected for a period of four years. Additionally, another bishop is elected as a deputy for the Archbishop. The

Archbishop is the chair of the Central Board and there are also two vice chairs. The daily work at the Board's office is led by the Secretary-General, who is appointed by the Board.

According to the Church Ordinance the Central Church Board's tasks include to:

- represent the Church of Sweden faith community,
- be responsible for the Church's official relations with other churches and faith communities,
- support the work of the dioceses to develop parish life,
- state the conditions for admission to the basic church training programmes, decide on their syllabi and ensure that there are sufficient places available on these programmes,
- coordinate the Church's and its parishes' responsibility for international mission and international diaconia (social welfare),
- be responsible for the Church's work among Swedes abroad,
- be in charge of the Church's financial equalisation system (for distribution of financial resources from fees),
- deal with overall issues regarding the joint IT system of the Church,
- promote research that is significant to the Church, and
- work to provide rich and multifaceted cultural activities that promote dialogue about religion and approaches to life.



THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN, 2014-2017 (INCLUDING DEPUTIES)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Birger Wernersson | 12. Ylva Wahlström Ödman | 18. Sofia Särqvist |
| 2. Sven-E Kragh | 13. Georg Lagerberg | 19. Lars Johnson |
| 3. Nils Gärder | 14. Karl-Gunnar Svensson | 20. Helena Nordvall |
| 4. Margareta Andersson | 15. Göran Karlsson | 21. Tommy Eriksson |
| 5. Margareta Nisser-Larsson | 16. Ulla Rickardsson | 22. Anna Lundblad |
| 6. Britt Sandström | 17. Eric Muhl | 23. Erik Sjöstrand |
| 7. Jesper Eneroth | | |
| 8. Marta Axner Ims | | |
| 9. Mats Hagelin | | |
| 10. Antje Jackelén | | |
| 11. Dag Sandahl | | |



Not shown:

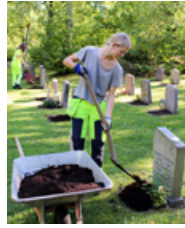
Wanja Lundby-Wedin, Cecilia Brinck, Birgitta Halvarsson, Per Eckerdal, Margareta Carlenius, Lars-Ivar Ericson and Katarina Wedin.



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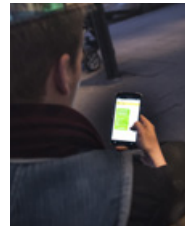
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For those of you who want to find out more

CONTACT, INVOLVEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP

MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

Would you like to get involved and help make the world a better place? Do you have any questions about life or need someone to talk to? The Church of Sweden is a fellowship and a context in which you can meet other people and look at your faith in more depth. Your and other people's involvement and support are important to the Church. Everyone can contribute in some way.

The broad activities of the Church of Sweden welcome you, whoever you are. You are welcome to get in touch with your parish; for contact details visit the website svenskakyrkan.se.

READ MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

svenskakyrkan.se.

www.facebook.com/svenskakyrkan

<https://twitter.com/svenskakyrkan>

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