

REVIEW AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The National Level of the Church of Sweden 2019



The direction of the mission is from the inside out

Ecclesiastical life is determined by our mission. Like many churches in Europe, we often agonise over how to get people into our buildings – how to attract and involve them and make them feel welcome. This has resulted in commendable efforts to be truly inclusive.

But we must not get caught up in an outside-in orientation of the Church. There is a risk that the way we account for our work and keep statistics makes us think in one direction alone: from the outside in. Do we count meetings “out” in other forums as much as those inside our own premises? Jesus advises His disciples to go out and surrender themselves to the hospitality of others (Luke 10:1–12). To follow Him and His journey all the way out to the margins. The direction of the mission is from the inside out.

We are also reminded of this in our ecumenical work. Where 2019 is concerned, I am thinking of the visit of Patriarch Bartholomew, our joint bishops’ conference with the Tanzanian bishops, the 20th anniversary of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification that is today accepted by Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Reformed and Anglican churches on a global scale. Movement from the inside out is also evident in our difficult and wonderful international work with Act Church of Sweden, something that the Göra Skillnad (Make a Difference) weekend in Uppsala in September highlighted.

When we see the spiritual core of the climate crisis, it becomes clear that our mission does not move in just one direction. The world is increasingly waking up to climate change and the menacing scenarios it entails. It would then literally be a sin not to speak the word of the Gospel, make the experiences of pastoral care available, contribute with humanitarian aid and help ensure a just transformation. I am pleased that the bishops’ letter on climate has now been published in an updated and revised edition. From the inside out. A fundamental part of our mission is teaching and learning. Today we are witnessing both spiritual longing and a lack of language skills. And by that, I mean language not only in the words expressed, but also the wordless language: actions, rites and symbols. We contribute to this “languagelessness” if we believe that how the Church addresses people must be easy to chew and digest.

At the turn of the year, the Convention on the Rights of



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

the Child became law in Sweden. It establishes the right of each child to the standard of living required for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. It is now high time for us to recognise that children’s right to spiritual development is also a mandatory concern for society as a whole. Consigning religious issues to the private sphere is not sustainable. This was also one of the messages in the written communication of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden to the 2019 thematic General Synod:

- We need to learn about and teach Bible stories and the Christian faith.
- We need to highlight Christian ethics, along with the Christian faith’s contribution to justice, peace and reconciliation.
- We need to interpret and express Christian faith so that its ability to give us as people meaning and courage becomes clear in our time.
- In other words, we need to account for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15).

All of us are called upon to be part of this mission!

ANTJE JACKELÉN
ARCHBISHOP

In constant motion — for a sustainable Church

It is gratifying to see how members choose to engage in the activities of the Church of Sweden by volunteering, singing in choirs, acting as elected representatives and working as employees. Or serving the Church as a deacon, priest or bishop as part of the church's ministry. All individuals contribute knowledge, experience and diversity, and together we make up the national church that the Church of Sweden wishes to be. Many people attend church services, children are baptised, young people are confirmed and the churches are filled with joy at weddings and with mourning during funerals. It is a fact that in 2019, nearly six million people wish to support the Church of Sweden's activities by being members. The activities of the national level are guided by the objectives of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden. One of the objectives involves the national level helping to enable the parishes to carry out their basic task locally and laying a firmer foundation for ecclesiastical life that is sustainable in the long term. Coordination and cooperation are essential elements in working towards this objective, not least in the administrative area where efficiency improvements are urgently required. Even in economic slow-downs, parishes must have sufficient resources to worship, teach, and practice diakonia and mission. Although the conditions vary locally, there should be equivalent, qualitative and sustainable activity throughout Sweden's parishes.

There are currently in-depth discussions taking place between the Central Board of the Church of Sweden and the Diocesan Boards regarding prioritisation in the organisation and in order to agree on a clear division of responsibilities. The aim is to ensure that the day-to-day



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

activities are maintained in the long run at a financially sustainable level that simultaneously allows scope for future development needs and initiatives. For the Church of Sweden is in constant motion based on Christian faith. To contribute to a good society in an environment that is constantly changing. With efforts characterised by caring for people in different situations and for Creation. And the members of the Church of Sweden are indispensable through their commitment and membership to creating a sustainable world in which people feel a sense of hope, meaning and context.

HELÉN OTTOSSON LOVÉN
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Facts about the Church of Sweden

Photo: Kristin Lidell/Ikon

The Church of Sweden has

5,8

million members

56,4

percent of the population



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon



Number of people baptised
46 600*

Number of people confirmed
26 700*

Marriages in the Church of Sweden
15 400*

Funerals in the Church of Sweden
65 400*

Number of attendances at
services of worship
14 000 000*

Number of parishes

1332

Number of parishes abroad

31

Number of children and young
people in drop-in activities
(number of visits/year)

1,4 millions*

Number of children and
young people in regular
activities

119 000 *

Number of adults in
drop-in activities
(number of visits/year)

2,7 millions*

Number of adults
in regular activities

137 600*



Photo: Johannes Frandsen/Ikon

* The figures are for 2018 and have been rounded off.

Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon



Diakonia

Number of occasions of contact

509 000*

Number of visits to hospitals,
prisons or sheltered housing

103 000*

Number of home visits

110 000*

Number of employees
– irrespective of age

22 400

Number of elected
representatives*

27 400

Photo: Johannes Frandsen/Ikon

Volunteers in pastoral
welfare work

30 900*

Volunteers in activities
for children and young
people

13 800*

Volunteering young
leaders

9 500*



Photo: Alex Giacomini/Ikon

Act Church of Sweden raised
SEK **200** million

In addition, the Church of Sweden received
grants of SEK **210** million, mainly from Sida
(the Swedish International Development
Cooperation Agency) and the EU for its
international work.



Photo: Josefín Casteryd/Ikon

Photo: Magdalena Martin/Ikon

The Church of
Sweden owns and
manages about
3,400 church
buildings, most of
which are protected
by the Historic
Environment Act.



The Church of Sweden Abroad has
staff posted in **40** locations in
23 countries, as well as mobile priests
on three continents.
31 of these are parishes according to
the definition in the Church Order.

* The figures are for 2018 and have been rounded off.

The past year

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

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 parish is the primary unit of the Church of Sweden. The basic task of a parish is to hold services of worship, provide religious instruction and to carry out diakonia and mission work. Regionally, the Church of Sweden takes the form of dioceses that have the task of promoting parish life.

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is responsible for the common affairs of the Church of Sweden at national level, such as representation in official relations, standardisation and management, and providing support for dioceses and parishes, including situation analysis and research. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is also responsible for official relations with other faith communities in Sweden and abroad, as well as for the umbrella organisations of which the Church of Sweden is a member.

This Review and Financial Summary relates to activities at national level. The mission is a great one, and the Church's work is therefore both widely spread and far-reaching. The parts described in this report on activities are merely examples from the past year.

The Church of Sweden in society

The Church of Sweden maintains good contacts with decision-makers, acts as a consultation body on material circulated for comment and is an active voice in the public debate. The message of the Church of Sweden must have a clear theological foundation, be well balanced between the different activities and perspectives of the Church and have a solid basis in adopted policies. This means providing theological perspectives on various social issues and speaking clearly about Creation

responsibility, human dignity, redress and freedom in the contexts in which important decisions are made and implemented, within politics, management and in civil society.

The Church of Sweden is represented primarily by the Archbishop, the other bishops, the chair of the General Synod, the first and second chairs of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden and the Secretary-General. Several meetings with ministers and authorities were held during the year on issues of concern to the Church of Sweden, such as the possibility for refugees to obtain a residence permit in Sweden, mental illness and the increased segregation and cutbacks that affect people with disabilities.

THE ARCHBISHOP

The Archbishop is often called on for comment in public discussions and debates. Issues in 2019 included the right of children to spirituality and faith, the climate, digitalisation, countering anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, vulnerable Christians in the world and the rights of indigenous peoples, and the need to create conditions for trust and democracy and safeguard cohesion and integration. One context in which the Archbishop herself invites guests to take part in long, reflective conversations is the podcast *Prata till punkt med ärkebiskopen* (Have your say with the Archbishop), which offers an opportunity to float ideas in a relaxed atmosphere.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND ETHICS

The rapid development of technology brings with it great opportunities for new solutions, services and innovations in society, but also risks and challenges. The technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including artificial intelligence, may entail profound changes in society and a new framework in which people will live their lives. Seizing the opportunities offered by new technologies and developments taking place in a way that



Archbishop Antje Jackelén meets with Minister of Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind. Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

benefits all citizens and an inclusive society are crucial issues going forward. The voice of the Church of Sweden, with its focus on existential and social sustainability, is in demand in several contexts, and the Archbishop and other representatives were invited during the year to talks with those developing technology and medicine, as well as those responsible for regulating the conditions for technical and medical applications, to contribute ethical and theological perspectives.

ALMEDALEN WEEK

The Church of Sweden participated in the Almedalen Week political forum in Visby in July with round table talks, seminars, exhibitions, cultural heritage and climate walks, as well as with worship, to make a contribution to issues related to social and existential sustainability. Dialogue was conducted with decision-makers, government representatives and other representatives of society, as well as socially engaged members of the public. Every evening, talks of a more personal nature were held in Visby Cathedral with representatives of the parliamentary parties. To remind people of the possibilities of church buildings and our responsibility for the climate, a midnight concert was held on one of the evenings in the cathedral, with the popular band Deportees attracting an

audience of 340 people. Den tomma stolen (The empty chair) was included in the Church of Sweden's seminar programme for the third year in a row. With the empty chair in place, the Church of Sweden wishes to draw attention to people who cannot, may not or dare not be present in Almedalen because they risk being subjected to violence, threats and harassment in Sweden and elsewhere in the world because of their ethnicity or sexual orientation, or because they are fighting for people's rights.

The Church of Sweden also participated in a similar event, Järvaveckan in Spånga in mid-June, including by taking part in a seminar on the contribution of religions to integration.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender equality are among the Church of Sweden's priority development issues internationally. Faith-based organisations play a crucial role in these areas. Therefore, it is important for the Church of Sweden to be present when the world's decision-makers meet to discuss and decide on these issues.

The Archbishop attended the UN's Nairobi Summit in Kenya in November, invited by the United Nations

Population Fund, UNFPA, to talk about faith and SRHR. The meeting focused on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 and 5 of the 2030 Agenda: good health and well-being, and gender equality.

Heads of state, ministers, parliamentarians, opinion leaders, civil society, faith-based organisations and other actors came together to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and prevent maternal mortality, sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage and female genital mutilation. When the Archbishop spoke at the closing ceremony, about 7,000 people attended.

DELEGATION TO BRAZIL AND COLOMBIA

The Archbishop led a delegation from the Church of Sweden that visited the Lutheran churches in Brazil and Colombia in October. The trip was an expression of the fellowship within the Lutheran World Federation, LWF, and of the Church of Sweden's involvement in the peace process in Colombia. In Brazil, the Archbishop was the keynote speaker at a national meeting of priests and deacon in Curitiba. In Colombia, the delegation met the Vice-President and other government representatives, as well as commissioners of the ongoing truth commission.

BISHOPS MET BISHOPS IN TANZANIA

The Bishops of the Church of Sweden visited the Lutheran Church in Tanzania in May as part of a longer exchange programme. The first joint meeting was held in Rättvik in 2015. The theme of the joint sessions was the discussion document from the Lutheran World Federation, *The Church in the public space*, and the meeting resulted in a joint document on what church leaders jointly wish to work for in their various contexts. After the joint

sessions, the bishops of the seven dioceses that have twin dioceses in Tanzania visited these dioceses, and the rest visited other dioceses for talks and visits to parishes and hospitals.

CULTURAL COOPERATION AND AWARDS

Each year the Church of Sweden awards culture grants totalling SEK 500,000 in the areas of music, film, literature, performing arts and pictorial arts. Similarly, the Sami Council of the Church of Sweden annually awards SEK 50,000 in culture prizes to those who have highlighted Sami ecclesiastical life and helped build relationships between people. Every year, a film director who highlights existential and social justice issues is awarded the Church of Sweden's Film Award of SEK 50,000, and at BUFF, the International Children and Youth Film Festival in Malmö, the Church of Sweden's Children and Youth Film Award of SEK 100,000 is presented each year. During the year the Church of Sweden's liturgy prize of SEK 50,000, intended to reward ongoing work with innovative music, dramaturgy, text and sermons, was awarded for the first time. The prize was awarded to organist Andreas Söderberg, who works in Nederluleå parish. The aim of the prize is to encourage greater participation in the service of worship and creative use of the new Book of Worship, and help develop smoother transitions between old, long-established parts of the service and new forms of expression.

Every year, the Church of Sweden hosts an extensive programme at the Göteborg Book Fair. The programme provides a forum where literature, culture, social and existential issues are in focus, mainly in the form of author talks on the *Se Människan* (See the Human Being)



During the General Synod, Thomas Marainen and Randi Marainen received the Culture Prize of the Sami Council from the Chair, Ingrid Inga. Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon



All author talks on the *Se Människan* (See the Human Being) stage are available on Youtube and as a podcast. Photo: Kristin Lidell/Ikon



Choir day on the theme "Sing to Joy" in Gothenburg Cathedral brought many singers together. Photo: Kristin Lidell/Ikon

stage, where current authors talk with representatives of the Church of Sweden. The talks are available on YouTube, and the total number of views from 2015–2019 currently amounts to just over 350,000. This year, on the initiative of Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter*, a climate evening was arranged at Gothenburg Concert Hall, with the Church of Sweden acting as co-organiser. The Archbishop participated in a stage conversation in which climate activist Greta Thunberg also participated via a link from New York. During the climate evening, a new revised edition of the bishops' climate missive was distributed to all visitors.

🌐 www.svenskakyrkan.se/bokmassan

🌐 www.svenskakyrkan.se/klimatbrevet

🌐 www.svenskakyrkan.se/kulturstipendium

Public services coordinated by the Central Board of the Church of Sweden

The Church of Sweden is the burial authority in almost the whole of Sweden. From 1 January 2019, each parish and group of parishes that is the burial authority is required to establish guidelines for the format for funeral activities. The aim is to strengthen and clearly define the work of the congregations and parishes. It has been made clear through additions to the provisions of the Church Order concerning the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's tasks that the Central Board will henceforth be responsible for overarching issues regarding funeral activities. Against that background, the Central Board started work during the year on building a cohesive function in this area. The diocese's task is to oversee how the congregations and parishes perform their funeral activities.

Emergency response within the Church of Sweden is

coordinated at national level. A number of priests are prepared, on behalf of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and under the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, to serve as support contacts in the event of serious incidents that affect Swedes abroad. During the year, work to clarify the role and responsibilities of the Church of Sweden in total defence was initiated.

The Church of Sweden is present in many countries and has good contacts with Swedish consulates and embassies. *Duty Priest* is an established service that offers emergency pastoral counseling via three different channels: telephone, email and chat. The channels are open and staffed during the hours of the night when many other community functions are closed. Everyone can use the service anonymously when they are worried, in crisis and in need of counselling. The calls are handled via SOS Alarm and the phone number 112. In 2019, *Duty Priest* received approximately 78,400 phone calls.

The ecclesiastical cultural heritage is a community resource for sustainable social and cultural development, and the spiritual dimension of cultural heritage permeates the work of the Church of Sweden in its entirety. The financial conditions for parishes meeting their responsibility to safeguard and develop ecclesiastical cultural heritage have gradually deteriorated since the turn of the millennium, while the cultural heritage remains unchanged in its extent. The ecclesiastical heritage grant from the state is necessary, but not sufficient, compensation for the additional costs of the Historic Environment Act. The conclusions stated in the official reports of the Swedish National Heritage Board and the county administrative boards to the Government essentially provide a positive image of the Church of Sweden's expertise in and work with ecclesiastical cultural heritage. In December 2019, Sweden's Riksdag (Parliament) decided to maintain the level of compensation to the Church of Sweden at SEK 460 million/year during the years 2021–2025, to be distributed to the dioceses for the care and maintenance of ecclesiastical cultural heritage.



Skara Cathedral is cleaned about every ten years. Painting conservator Ninni Ekre uses a soft brush and vacuum cleaner to remove most of the dust that has accumulated on the altarpiece and then a dry soot sponge to remove the rest. Photo: Gustaf Hellsing/Ikon



ACT Alliance

Act Church of Sweden is one of about

150 members

of the ACT Alliance, Action by Churches Together. ACT Alliance was founded in 2010 and is a global collaboration between churches and faith-based organisations for disaster relief, development and lobbying in more than 100 countries.

The World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a communion of **348** churches with the main goal of Christian unity and cooperation between churches for peace and justice. The WCC brings together churches and faith communities from over 110 countries and represents **500 million** Christians from various traditions. The Church of Sweden has been a member since the WCC was founded in 1948.



The Lutheran World Federation

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) brings together

145 churches

within the Lutheran family of churches for fellowship and work to change people's living conditions. The LWF represents

74 million people in **98 countries.** The Church of Sweden has been a member since the LWF was founded in Lund in 1947.

Child impact assessment

Child impact assessments are carried out in the Church's activities when decisions are made. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is used to assess whether the consequences of the decision are positive or negative from a child's perspective.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/barnkonsekvensanalys



Photo: Alex Giacomini/Ikon



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

The Swedish Theological Institute (STI) in Jerusalem

STI is an institute for theological studies in Jerusalem focusing 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.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/STI

The Church of Sweden's Educational Institute

At the Church of Sweden's Educational Institute, future deacons, parish educational officers, church musicians and priests complete their pastoral theology training. During the autumn term of 2019, more than

200 students were enrolled.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/utbildningsinstitutet



Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon



Erik Lysén, Policy Director at the International Department of the Church of Sweden, presents the new name and the new logo at the Make a Difference conference. Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

ACT Alliance

LAUNCH OF ACT CHURCH OF SWEDEN

On Sunday 5 May, the international work of the Church of Sweden changed its name. What started as the Church of Sweden Mission at the end of the 19th century and Lutherhjälpen (Church of Sweden Aid) after the Second World War has now become Act Church of Sweden. The name change is part of a larger effort to increase awareness of the Church of Sweden's international work and to establish the link with the joint work of 150 churches and organisations internationally within the ACT Alliance.

A major initiative took place during the year to create awareness of Act Church of Sweden through television advertising, cinema advertising, digital billboards and social media. Several films have been produced to establish the new visual identity and show situations and snapshots of life for people from four continents while inviting people to become monthly donors. Before the launch of Act Church of Sweden, the gift shop and function for memorial and tribute gifts, web and blog linked to the Church of Sweden's international work changed their graphics profile to Act Church of Sweden.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/act

LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Through Act Church of Sweden, the Church of Sweden strives to bring about internationally and ecumenically coordinated mission and pastoral welfare initiatives, as well as long-term development cooperation. The activities are shaped through collaboration with other churches, ecumenical networks and development organisations. The international work is financed mainly through funds raised and grants from Sida and is reviewed by *Swedish Fund-raising Control* and certified in accordance with the *Core Humanitarian Standard*, which means that responsibility and quality should permeate the business. The aim of the development cooperation is to counteract injustices and poverty by focusing on their root causes. This is achieved by strengthening and helping cooperation partners to take rights-based action in the civil sector for sustainable, democratic societies imbued with justice and gender equality. This bolsters people's own resources and involves them in processes to improve their living conditions. Facts about the ACT Alliance, LWF and WCC can be found on page 10.

HUMANITARIAN AID

Act Church of Sweden saves lives and mitigates suffering in acute humanitarian situations all over the world. During the year, for example, Act Church of Sweden provided support

to the families most affected by the earthquake in Kashmir. After the floods and the cyclones that hit southern Africa at the beginning of the year, Act Church of Sweden has provided supplies and psychosocial services through the Church of Sweden's psychosocial pool of experienced employees able to go to other countries at short notice in the event of a disaster. A new initiative aimed at South Sudanese refugees aims to strengthen their economic empowerment and reduce their dependence on aid. Refugees are offered access to loan and savings facilities so they can set up small-scale businesses in areas such as agricultural production, shop and market stalls, tailors and bakeries.

More than 80,000 fires ravaged Brazil during the year, more than half of them in the Amazon, where some 430,000 indigenous people live. Act Church of Sweden has provided food and also resources to fight the fires. Also, via the local Methodist church in Bolivia, Act Church of Sweden has helped ensure that people affected by forest fires in the Santa Cruz region have shelter, access to water and food and sanitation. In northern Iraq, people are trying once again to piece together daily life after the defeat of the terrorist groups. Act Church of Sweden has for a long time provided humanitarian aid to Iraq,

focusing on internally displaced persons in recent years. Work is now underway to build up long-term development cooperation. Turkey's military offensive against northeastern Syria, which began in October, caused some 200,000 people to flee their homes. During two weeks in October, emergency relief fundraisers for Syria took place via the Church of Sweden's Facebook and Instagram accounts.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

Freedom of religion and belief is under threat in many parts of the world. Act Church of Sweden works together

with the Lutheran World Federation to support Christians and people of other faiths in vulnerable situations of discrimination and persecution, for example internally displaced persons in Rakhine State, Myanmar. Members of the ACT Alliance are struggling to gain access to the camps, where the situation of the Rohingya is tough. Employees from the psychosocial pool spent a few weeks training staff and volunteers in psychosocial work. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden continues to engage in dialogue with social actors, politicians and international bodies regarding human rights shortcomings in Myanmar. The work is supported by a resolution adopted by the European Parliament in September. Employees from the Church of Sweden made a trip to northern Iraq/Kurdistan during Easter week to mark their support for the churches living in a state of political vulnerability and to take part in the Easter services of local parishes.

FUNDRAISING

In 2019, the Church of Sweden's international work raised more than SEK 200 million from individual donors, as well as from parishes and dioceses. The excellent result was partly due to hard and successful work, but many gifts and a major bequest also contributed. During the year, the Church of Sweden's volunteers and employees actively contributed to *Radiohjälpen's* (Radio Aid's) campaigns *Världens Barn* and *Musikhjälpen*, and from these campaigns Act Church of Sweden has distributed more than SEK 7 million to projects including those in the refugee camps Dadaab in Kenya and Kismayu in Somalia. This work aims to make it easier for refugees with disabilities and to counteract exclusion.



Act Church of Sweden supports mentor mother projects in South Africa, Eswatini and Ethiopia. Mentor mother Nelsiwe Mamba visits a family consisting of mother Bhekiwe Dube, 19 years, father Jacinto Matinbe, 20 years, and baby Sethu, 3 weeks. Photo: Josefin Casteryd/Ikon



A budkavle (message roll) containing the statement from the General Synod was distributed to all the bishops, to emphasise the message that the contents should be spread to all corners of the Church. Photo: Magnus Aronson/Ikon

GÖRA SKILLNAD CONFERENCE

On 7–8 September, 750 delegates, employees and elected representatives met in Uppsala for the *Göra skillnad* (Make a Difference) conference about the work of Act Church of Sweden. Also participating were international guests working with partners, with expertise in humanitarian disaster management and gender justice. The purpose of the conference was to spread knowledge, provide opportunities to share experiences and to inspire continued involvement within Act Church of Sweden.

Support to dioceses and parishes

TEACHING AND LEARNING

This year's General Synod in Uppsala was thematic for the first time. Via the theme of *Teaching*, the focus was on the contribution of the Christian faith in our time and on the Church's task of interpreting and expressing Christian faith so that its ability to give us as people meaning and courage in life becomes clear.

The motions discussed by the General Synod focused on the theme, and the decisions made will contribute to the activities in the area. The theme meant that the General Synod was organised somewhat differently than usual, with seminars, thematic blocks and discussions in various forums. The General Synod made a unique statement about what the Christian tradition can offer and about the Christian faith's contribution to justice, peace and reconciliation. The statement highlights the need for teaching and interpreting Bible stories related to people's existential questions and to convey the foundation of

hope in the Church. The General Synod also called upon the entire Church of Sweden to make a concerted effort and a long-term and systematic investment in teaching and learning in order to increase insight into the essence and importance of faith for society as a whole. During the closing ceremony, bidding sticks with the General Synod statement were handed over to the bishops to be shared throughout the Church of Sweden.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/kyrkomotets-uttalande-om-undervisning

REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND INTEGRATION

In 2019, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden allocated SEK 60 million in financial grants to the Church of Sweden's work on refugees, asylum seekers and integration. The funds have been allocated to the activities of parishes, to the support initiatives of the dioceses and to the refugee projects of the international organisation. The Church of Sweden was also awarded SEK 15 million by the Swedish Government in 2019 to combat homelessness, primarily among unaccompanied minors. The year's funds have been distributed to dioceses and parishes.

The programme *Interreligiös praktik för fred – En värld av grannar* (Interfaith Practice for Peace – A world of neighbours) aims to safeguard and develop relationships within the Church of Sweden and with the surrounding world. By linking the work that is performed and the experience present in the Church of Sweden within the field of interfaith practice and migration with the experiences of other Christian and faith-based actors around Sweden and Europe, the programme is to help to deepen



A language café in Nyköping Parish. Photo: Johannes Frandsen/Ikon

understanding between people and strengthen the inter-faith infrastructure.

The network can become a collective resource for peaceful coexistence and a strong common voice in society. The programme links together an increasing number of actors in the work for a socially sustainable Europe. Seven international and interfaith working groups work on issues particularly crucial for religious communities and for organisations working with and for refugees. Seminar days were also held during the autumn in the dioceses of Gothenburg, Skara, Strängnäs and Uppsala. One problem for many faith-based actors working with refugees is the difficulty of making positive voices heard in a often polarised media landscape. On that basis, an international and interfaith working group consisting of practitioners from Poland, Germany, Italy and Sweden is in particular focusing on communication in faith-based contexts, how hatred of religious groups should be addressed and how to highlight other experiences. Conclusions from the working party were included in the pre-summit arranged by the Church of Sweden in January 2020 in Malmö ahead of a final summit in February 2021.

In the first half of the year, the situation of refugees in the Mediterranean once again came to the fore. The change in the regulatory framework, which critics describe as the criminalisation of solidarity, which was introduced by the Italian government and which makes search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean more difficult, led to protests, not least from church quarters.

TRUST AND DEMOCRACY

During the year, ten diocesan boards decided to work together in the long-term programme *Social hållbarhet*

fokus Tillit och Demokrati 2020–2023 (Social sustainability, focus on Trust and Democracy 2020–2023). The programme will take stock of the efforts in this area already under way in the dioceses, develop ways to educate and develop methods, conduct advocacy work, and theologically strengthen employees in matters of human worth and dignity, as well as in issues of trust and democracy. The programme will seek opportunities for external funding.

CLIMATE STRATEGIES

The 2018 General Synod decided to instruct the Central Board of the Church of Sweden to devise procedures for a national programme of climate strategies, and intensive development work was carried out during the past year.

Studies and dialogue with elected representatives in the dioceses have shown there is a willingness to take long-term responsibility for the Creation, but that capacity varies among dioceses and parishes. For that reason, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden, in cooperation with the Diocesan Boards, has planned to bolster the personnel resources it provides to the dioceses, in order to increase the capability for intensified efforts. As a first stage, SEK 25 million per year has been budgeted for the planned climate initiative starting in 2020, with sights set on climate neutrality in 2030.

In August, in order to provide greater opportunities to take responsibility for the Creation, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden launched the Church of Sweden's digital environmental training programme. It aims to give employees and elected representatives at the Church of Sweden a common understanding of the environmental challenges of our time and how these are linked to the activities and identity of the Church of Sweden. The



Many people come together when it is time for worship at the Church of Sweden in San Agustín, Gran Canaria. Photo: Lena Sjöström/Ikon

programme spans both theology and practice and can be accessed through *Hållbarhetsportalen* (Sustainability Portal), which was launched in the spring to bring together common solutions and other support for local sustainability efforts. It also includes the new theological reflection material *Omtanke* (Consideration), which provides further opportunities for reflection and joint discussions on sustainable development.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/hallbarhetsredovisning

HEARING ON TRANS PERSPECTIVES AND TRANS PEOPLE

In November, a hearing was held in Uppsala on trans perspectives in the Church of Sweden. The hearing was a collaboration between the Church of Sweden and *Ekumeniska grupperna för kristna hbtq-personer* (Ecumenical groups for Christian LGBTQ people), EKHO. The aim was to provide more in-depth knowledge of aspects including transgender expression, gender identity and gender dysphoria. This is to better accommodate transgender people's needs, rights and contributions in the Church of Sweden's parishes and in society at large.

WORK AMONG SWEDES ABROAD

The 31 parishes around the world of the Church of Sweden Abroad receive a total of around 700,000 visits per year. In another 100 places in the world, Swedish priests have a regular presence. The mission of the Church of Sweden's parishes abroad is the same as for a parish in Sweden. The parishes hold services of worship, baptisms and wedding ceremonies, offer opportunities to talk and provide children's, youth and choir activities.

More than 100 Swedes in custody outside Sweden are visited by church employees, as well as Swedes in hospitals and on boats. During a week in August, 300 people involved in the Church of Sweden Abroad came together. New employees were introduced, staff received training and elected officials and representatives were given inspiration for their work going forward.

www.svenskakyrkan.se/iutlandet

SOCIAL MEDIA – CHURCH ON THE INTERNET

Being a church online involves creating digital spaces for encounters between people and between people and God. The official accounts of the Church of Sweden are mainly on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, with daily activity. The

JUDGES' STATEMENT – BEST WEBSITE:

"It is easy to be uplifted by the Church of Sweden's website and thoughtful online presence. Since the launch of the new website a few years ago, they have settled in the top tier of the Top 100 list. It is impressive that such a traditional organisation continues to develop its digital presence in order to reach people with its message. Last year, it launched a mobile app aimed at children and tirelessly highlighted its presence on social media to support people in

need. The Church of Sweden also allowed itself to become a bit more informal, recently launching the app *Bibelvers eller Mellovers* (Bible Verse or Eurovision Verse) on Facebook, where we were supposed to guess whether a line of text came from the Bible or a Eurovision hit. Whether you are a believer or not, we recommend a visit to the Church of Sweden's website, where everyone who works with digital channels can find something to be inspired by."

Church of Sweden's Instagram account is curated by different people, with hundreds of people taking turns to talk about their faith, life and involvement in the Church of Sweden. The account had just over 11,000 followers at the end of the year.

During Easter, several posts were created on Facebook to highlight Easter stories, including a quiz, a video with emojis and a text message conversation between Simon Peter and Mary Magdalene. These posts achieved a wide circulation. The Easter posts had a total of over one million views. In connection with the bombings in Sri Lanka, the Church of Sweden posted on Twitter and Instagram. A prayer written by Bishop Åsa Nyström was shared on Facebook, and several of the other bishops' posts were retweeted.

At the end of March, people were invited to a prayer night on Facebook. Four priests and two editors worked on a Saturday night to receive people's intercession topics and pray together. The post reached 18,620 people and about 175 prayers were written there. During the Friday and Saturday of All Saints, the prayer web had about 37,000 visits. Those who visited the web posted 246 written prayers there and lit 3,600 candles.

Every year the IT news site IDG.se, in collaboration with Webbdagarna, presents a list of Sweden's 100 best websites. This year the Church of Sweden won first prize in the organisation category, see explanatory statement below.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

In order for the Church of Sweden to operate nationwide, the parishes need to free up resources for their basic task and keep a tight hold on their purse strings. Long-term sustainable ecclesiastical life requires common administrative solutions. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden therefore works in cooperation with the dioceses to develop effective administrative support. One of the areas in which the Church of Sweden has the opportunity to achieve major efficiency improvements is linked to payroll and fee management, and the General Synod has decided that a joint payroll management centre for the entire Church of Sweden should be set up by 2022. Such improvements can also be achieved

by developing digitised working methods for the entire Church of Sweden in order to support employees, elected representatives and volunteers. By creating the conditions for administrative efficiency and digital solutions, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden is helping to ensure that parishes will, in the long term too, have sufficient financial resources to hold services of worship, conduct teaching and practice diakonia and mission.

PROPERTY REGISTER

A common property register was established in the Church of Sweden during the year. At the turn of 2019/2020, the register contained properties for almost all economic units. The register contained 19,900 buildings, of which just under 4,000 are churches or chapels, with a total area of 4 million square metres of useable floor area, and 11,000 plots with a total area of 75,000 hectares. Approximately 85 percent of all buildings are measured in accordance with the provisions of the Swedish standard, and for about 80 percent of all buildings, the title deeds have been investigated and properly handled.

LOCAL SUPPLY PLANS

According to the General Synod's decision, all groups of parishes and parishes that are not part of a group of parishes must have a local supply plan. This shall support the planning of the property holdings based on prioritised needs and financial conditions. The role of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden in the work is to ensure ecclesiastical regulation and provide various types of support tool for the work of the dioceses, groups of parishes and parishes. In April, an introductory package including an introductory video was delivered to the dioceses, for use in their promotional and educational work. At the beginning of December, a guide was published to support the work of dioceses and parishes on local supply plans. The guide includes a recommended working model and examples of how a local supply plan can be designed. Three training courses in the use of the guide were held around the turn of the year for employees in the dioceses.



There is a wide variety in the Church of Sweden's properties. Pictured here is *Domkyrkocentrum* in Växjö (Växjö Cathedral Center).
Photo: Ingela Stewén/Ikon

Report of the Board

GENERAL INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES

The distribution of tasks within the Church of Sweden is regulated via the Church Order. The parish is the local pastoral level within the Church of Sweden, with the basic task of holding services of worship, teaching and performing diakonia and mission. The dioceses, which are the regional pastoral level, promote and oversee parish life, while the national level provides its support for the development of ecclesiastical life mainly through the dioceses. This support takes different forms according to the differing needs of the parishes in each diocese.

The national level is a cohesive force for the Church of Sweden and contributes to the mission being implemented nationwide and via international cooperation. This takes place through responsibility for the Church's joint affairs, including the issues of ecclesiastical norms, review of decisions, joint information, education/training, ecumenical relations, and international diakonia and mission. The mission also includes being the voice of the Church of Sweden in both Swedish society and internationally, and contributing to the Church of Sweden as a whole as a positive force for society in terms of staying together and not pulling apart.

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 by the 31 Parochial Church Councils in the Church of Sweden Abroad. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is the Church's highest responsible body when the General Synod is not in session. The Archbishop is the chair, and the General Synod appoints other members for a period of four years. It leads and coordinates the management of the national level's tasks. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden deals with issues as stated in the Church Order, decides on all overall and day-to-day issues at national level and represents the Church of

Sweden. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is the General Synod's drafting and executive body. This means that the Central Board of the Church of Sweden 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 of Sweden 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 of Sweden appoints bodies such as the International Commission, the Council for the Church of Sweden Abroad and the Asset Management Council. During the year, the Central Board appointed two new councils: the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's Music Council and the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's Council for Administrative Cooperation. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is responsible for all overarching operations. The Central Church Office in Uppsala is organised into ten departments 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 of the Church of Sweden, Secretary-General and heads of departments, mainly consists of processes for planning and follow-up of activities and financial matters. Each year a 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 of Sweden 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 Church of Sweden's national level includes 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 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 four branches, comprising three within the Church of Sweden Abroad organisation – located in Thailand, Hong Kong and Italy – and the Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem, Israel.

FOUNDATIONS

The national level of the Church of Sweden manages 77 (77) foundations and associated management. The foundations are separate legal entities, and separate annual reports/compilations are therefore drawn up for them in compliance with applicable legislation; they are not therefore included in the income statement and balance sheet of the Church of Sweden's national level. At year-end the carrying amount for the assets in the foundations was SEK 270 million (SEK 205 million). 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 diakonia, education and training, research and culture, and the Church of Sweden Abroad.

KEY EVENTS IN 2019

The year's activities contributed in different ways to the objective of the Faith Community: to bring the Gospel to life and make known the Kingdom of God. 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.

- On Sunday 5 May, the international work of the Church of Sweden changed its name. What started as the mission of the Church of Sweden at the end of the 19th century and Lutherhjälpen after the Second World War has now become Act Church of Sweden. The name change is part of a larger effort to increase awareness of the Church of Sweden's international work and to establish the link with the joint work of 150 churches and organisations internationally within the ACT Alliance.
- This year's General Synod in Uppsala was thematic for the first time. Via the theme of Teaching, the focus was on the contribution of the Christian faith in our time and on

the Church's task of interpreting and expressing Christian faith so that its ability to give us as people meaning and courage in life becomes clear. The motions discussed by the General Synod focused on the theme, and the decisions made will contribute to the activities in the area. The theme meant that the General Synod was organised somewhat differently than usual, with seminars, thematic blocks and discussions in various forums.

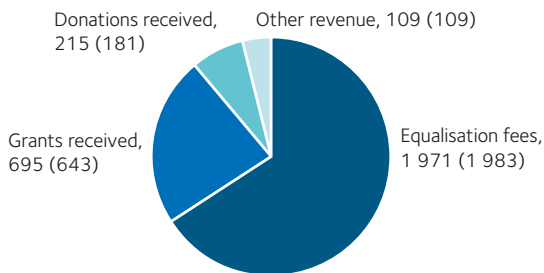
- In 2019, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden allocated SEK 60 million in financial grants to the Church of Sweden's work on refugees, asylum seekers and integration. The funds have been allocated to the activities of parishes, to the support initiatives of the dioceses and to the refugee projects of the international organisation. The Church of Sweden was also awarded SEK 15 million by the Swedish Government in 2019 to combat homelessness, primarily among unaccompanied minors. The year's funds have been distributed to dioceses and parishes.
- The 2018 General Synod decided to instruct the Central Board of the Church of Sweden to devise forms for a national programme of climate strategies, and intensive development work was carried out during the past year. Studies and dialogue with elected representatives in the dioceses have shown there is a willingness to take long-term responsibility for the Creation, but that capacity varies among dioceses and parishes. Therefore, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden, in cooperation with the Diocesan Boards, has planned to increase the human resources provided to the dioceses in order to strengthen competence and, in turn, enable more intense efforts. As a first stage, SEK 25 million per year has been budgeted for the planned climate initiative starting in 2020, with sights set on climate neutrality in 2030.
- In 2019, the General Synod decided that a joint payroll management centre for the entire Church of Sweden should be set up by 2022.

TOTAL REVENUE AND EXPENSES

The financial result amounted to SEK -1,460 million (SEK -26 million). Total revenue was SEK 4,572 million (SEK 3,059 million), including the return from asset management. The increase in revenue compared to the previous year is due to a large surplus in asset management. Strong growth in the Swedish and international markets explains the upturn. The largest revenue item is the equalisation fee. It is mainly redistributed in the Church's equalisation system in the form of equalisation grants. The second-largest revenue item comprises grants received – mainly the ecclesiastical heritage grant, which is recognised as revenue to the extent that it is used. Funds not yet used are recognised as a liability in the balance sheet.

Other grants are received from e.g. Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), the EU, Radiohjälpen and various foundations, and are primarily used in the Church's international work. Collections and donations form another key source of revenue, especially for the international work.

FIGURE 1: REVENUE* 2019 (SEK MILLIONS, PREVIOUS YEAR IN PARENTHESES)



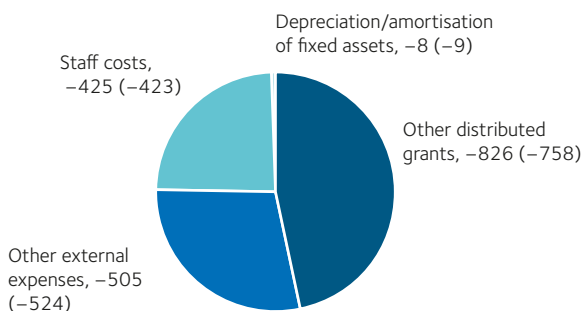
*excluding asset management.

The work is based on the Church Order and the decisions made by the General Synod and the Central Board of the Church of Sweden. Total expenses amounted to SEK 3,073 million (SEK 3,044 million). Other distributed grants mainly refer to grants distributed for the ecclesiastical heritage, SEK 454 million (SEK 415 million), and grants distributed from the international work, SEK 244 million (SEK 212 million). The international grants refer to grants for development cooperation, disaster relief and cooperation abroad. Distributed grants also include the main part of the General Synod's initiative for refugees and asylum seekers.

The equalisation grants refer to diocesan grants and parish grants for church maintenance, cost equalisation and equalisation related to the proportion of members.

The Church of Sweden at national level budgeted for a result of SEK 156 million in 2019. The discrepancy between result and budget is largely due to a better result from asset management of SEK 1,581 million (budget SEK 408 million).

FIGURE 2: EXPENSES 2019 (SEK MILLIONS, PREVIOUS YEAR IN PARENTHESES)



FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The market value of the assets in the asset management operation stood at SEK 9,626 million (SEK 8,295 million) on 31 December 2019. Earnings for 2019, including bank and management fees, amounted to SEK 1,582 million (SEK 143 million), corresponding to a return of 19.1 per cent (1.8 percent). The weighted benchmark index for the period was 17.9 percent (-0.6 percent). The return of 19.1 per cent is 14.3 percentage points higher than the target for return and the second highest for a single year since management was taken over by the Faith Community in 2000. The result for the year is the highest since the change in relationship with the state.

It is also the eighth consecutive year that the return has exceeded the return of the combined normal portfolio. The over-return against index is entirely attributable to an overweighting in shares of between six and nine percentage points over the year, compared to the normal portfolio. Thanks to the strong growth in recent years, returns since the start of 2000 have almost caught up with the target for return in the same period. Management was taken over by the Faith Community at the turn of the millennium. The cumulative return at year-end was 153.2 per cent, as against the target return of 156.5 per cent. The very poor stock market years of 2001, 2002 and 2008 are the main cause of the weak returns of the past decade.

EQUITY MANAGEMENT

Equity management contributed SEK 1,407.7 million net. However, only three of the seven managers outperformed their benchmarks, net of fees. The Ethos Equity Fund (managed by SEB) showed the highest return, 37.0 percent (index 35.0), and the Ethos Global Equity Fund (managed by RobecoSAM), reported 35.1 percent (index 34.4).

FIXED-INCOME PORTFOLIO

The Swedish fixed-income portfolio yielded a 1.6 per cent return, 0.5 percentage points higher than index. The corporate bond fund yielded 9.4 percent, 2.8 percent higher than index.

PROPERTY FUNDS

The property funds asset class contributed a 10.8 per cent return. However, the return is largely based on annual external valuations of the stocks in the various property funds that the Church of Sweden has invested in. These valuations are made annually but are often set well into the first quarter, which is why there is a lag of one year in the value growth. The return in the 2019 results is therefore based on the valuation at 31 December 2018. At the time the Review and Financial Summary were prepared, there were no relevant factors known by the national level to give reason to believe that the 2019 valuation would be significantly lower than the 2018 valuation.

ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS

Alternative investments yielded a return of 5.3 per cent, slightly higher than the benchmark of inflation plus 3 per cent. However, as previously noted, the current valuation of, above all, the equity-related illiquid assets can often be associated with a large measure of uncertainty.

As in previous years, SEB's microfinance funds contributed to a steady ongoing return within this asset class; in most other holdings, the result cannot be determined until the maturity of the asset.

For more detailed information on the results of asset management, including from a longer-term perspective, please refer to Årsrapport hållbara investeringar 2019 (the Annual Report on Sustainable Investments 2019). The national level's work on sustainability in asset management is also presented in this report.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/ansvarsfulla-investeringar

OTHER NON-FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Faith Community works to integrate spiritual, social, ecological and economic sustainability perspectives throughout its organisation, both when planning activities and in their performance. The work is based on our task of safeguarding human dignity and managing both ecological and financial resources in a responsible way. The Church of Sweden at national level is obliged to comply with the new reporting requirements under the Swedish Annual Accounts Act 6:10, and the Report of the Board must therefore contain a sustainability report.

The national level has chosen to draft the report separately from the Review and Financial Summary in accordance with the Annual Accounts Act 6:11. The sustainability report in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, sections 6:12–14, is an integral part of the year's Sustainability Report, which has been prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) Standards, Core level, and is published on the Church of Sweden's website.

 www.svenskakyrkan.se/hallbarutveckling

ANTICIPATED FUTURE TRENDS 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 work of the Church of Sweden rests largely on people's trust. Considerable importance is therefore attached to updates and training regarding, for example, the Code of Conduct, the anti-corruption policy, the policy against discrimination and guidelines on prevention of sexual assault.

Activity-related risks concern, for example, programmes or projects in Sweden or abroad having limited effects compared to what was planned, or staff being exposed to risks, especially in international work.

The work to minimise these risks consists of planning and following up on completed projects and training staff travelling abroad. Other activity-related risks relate to the fact that the national level 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 procedures.

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

Based on the analysis by the Central Board of the Church of Sweden, several challenges have been identified. These include a greater need for teaching and learning, securing future skills provision, the shrinking points of contact of the Church and its weaker relationship with the young, and greater psychosocial ill-health in society.

The Church of Sweden is in a time of change and faces major challenges in the present and in the future. The challenges arise from changes in both society and the church such as climate responsibility, the welfare challenge and the risk of reduced aid.

The forecasts made of the future number of members and future revenue from the Church fee display a downward trend. This means that the Church of Sweden will in future need to reduce its costs, even if initiatives take place in parallel to retain members and obtain new ones, and to persuade the people who have left the Church to rejoin. 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 ecclesiastical life that is sustainable in the long term.

In view of the forecasts previously produced for 2030, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden confirms that the declining number of Church members will adversely affect Church finances in the long term, which is why focus and prioritisation are necessary in the Central Board's long-term planning efforts.

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden's communication *Verksamhet och Ekonomi 2019–2021* (Activities and Finances 2019–2021), which the General Synod approved in November 2018, defines three long-term goals for 2030 that aim to describe the Central Board's long-term ambition:

- By 2030 we will have strengthened our ability to contribute to a parish life that, based on local conditions, is able to cope with contemporary challenges.
- By 2030 we will have reinforced the relevance of and commitment to the work of the Church of Sweden, based in Christian faith, for a sustainable society in Sweden and worldwide.
- By 2030 we will have helped develop effective governance, administration and management in the Church of Sweden, so that the parishes can fulfil their basic task.

Under each goal, there are one or more sub-goals that form the basis of planning, implementation, follow-up, learning and development throughout the organisation for the planning period. Every sub-goal has associated initiatives that must be performed in order to lead towards the goal. By defining goals, sub-goals and initiatives in the planning and follow-up processes, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden ensures that the work at national level contributes to the defined goals in the long term.

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 *Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan – en skrift om*

organisation, verksamhet och ekonomi (The Key to the Church of Sweden – about the organisation, activities and finances of the Church).

EQUITY

The situation analysis that underpins the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's planning indicates continued changes in the conditions for all parts of the Church of Sweden in the coming decades. 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 ecclesiastical 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 of the Church of Sweden 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 central, will continue in the years to come.

In accordance with KsSkr 2016:7 Capital situation of the Church of Sweden, the General Synod has decided that the target for the size of the national level's equity should be at least SEK 6,500 million. The target level is then calculated annually, taking into account the consumer price index. Unrestricted equity totalled SEK 9,674 million at year-end 2019, of which SEK 3,422 million refers to unrealised gains in financial management.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

For more information on the organisation's financial performance and position at year-end, see the following Income Statement and Balance Sheet with accompanying notes.

FIVE-YEAR SUMMARY

Amounts in SEK millions

Income Statement	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<i>Revenue</i>					
Equalisation fees	1 971	1 983	1 731	1 681	1 666
Collections and donations	215	181	179	195	222
Asset management	1 582	143	761	628	326
Other revenue	804	752	874	872	845
Total revenue	4 572	3 059	3 545	3 376	3 060
<i>Expenses</i>					
Equalisation grants	-1 308	-1 330	-1 011	-949	-933
Personnel and other expenses	-1 765	-1 714	-1 943	-1 958	-1 832
Total expenses	-3 073	-3 044	-2 954	-2 907	-2 765
Other income statement items	8	3	6	37	-4
Net income for the year	1 508	18	596	506	291
Change in designated funds	-48	-44	25	41	15
Net income for the year after redistributions	1 460	-26	621	547	305
Balance Sheet					
Assets	16 584	14 353	14 060	13 144	12 967
Equity including designated funds	9 674	8 381	8 363	7 767	7 260
Liabilities, provisions	6 695	5 972	5 697	5 377	5 706
Equity/assets ratio*	58%	58%	59%	59%	56%
Personnel					
Average number of employees					
Sweden	412	396	387	392	377
Abroad	66	74	85	97	96

* Equity as a percentage of total assets.

Income Statement

Amounts in SEK thousands	NOTE	2019	2018
Revenue from operations			
Equalisation fees	4	1 971 058	1 983 348
Donations received	5	214 682	180 987
Grants received	6	695 333	643 390
Returns from asset management	7	1 581 935	142 933
Net revenue	8,10	101 106	91 543
Work performed by the organisation for own account and capitalised		1 979	1 774
Other revenue from operations		6 341	15 206
Total revenue from operations		4 572 435	3 059 181
Operating expenses			
Equalisation grants	4	-1 308 108	-1 329 846
Other grants provided	9	-825 961	-758 234
Other external expenses	10,11,12	-505 259	-523 788
Personnel expenses	13	-425 314	-422 805
Depreciation/amortisation of property, plant and equipment and intangible non-current assets	14	-8 489	-9 285
Total operating expenses		-3 073 130	-3 043 959
Income from operations		1 499 305	15 222
Income from financial investments	15		
Income from non-current financial assets		6 113	2 389
Other interest income and similar income statement items		2 767	530
Interest expenses and similar income statement items		-520	-183
Total		8 360	2 737
Net income for the year		1 507 664	17 959
Change in designated funds			
Net income for the year as per income statement		1 507 664	17 959
Utilisation of designated funds from previous years		9 380	7 099
Provision (reservation) of designated funds received during the year but not used during the year		-56 968	-50 704
Net income for the year after redistributions		1 460 077	-25 646

Balance Sheet

Amounts in SEK thousands	NOTE	2019-12-31	2018-12-31
ASSETS			
<i>Non-current assets</i>			
<i>Intangible non-current assets</i>			
Capitalised development expenditure, computer software	16	10 357	5 600
Licences and similar rights	17	29 504	24 449
Total		39 861	30 050
<i>Property, plant and equipment</i>			
Buildings and land	18	108 004	109 589
Equipment	19	5 660	6 884
Total		113 663	116 473
<i>Financial non-current assets</i>			
Participating interests in Group companies	20	55 774	55 774
Receivables from Group companies		30 000	30 000
Participating interests in associated companies	21	57 740	57 740
Asset management	22	9 625 916	8 294 826
Other long-term securities	23	83 595	83 733
Other long-term receivables	24	276	356
Total		9 853 302	8 522 430
Total non-current assets		10 006 826	8 668 952
<i>Current assets</i>			
Inventories		2 772	2 913
<i>Current receivables</i>			
Accounts receivable, trade		13 534	14 682
Current receivables		4 868	6 006
Prepaid expenses and accrued income	25	24 978	25 347
Total		43 380	46 035
<i>Current investments</i>			
	26	4 963 746	4 469 582
<i>Cash and bank balances</i>	26, 30	1 567 465	1 165 754
Total current assets		6 577 364	5 684 284
TOTAL ASSETS		16 584 190	14 353 236
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
<i>Equity</i>			
Retained capital		8 214 331	8 239 977
Designated funds		214 394	166 806
Net income for the year after redistributions		1 460 077	-25 646
Total		9 888 802	8 381 138
<i>Provisions</i>			
	27	34 271	42 840
<i>Current liabilities</i>			
Accounts payable, trade		62 334	64 708
Liability to subsidiary account holders in Church account	26	6 210 465	5 550 326
Liability, grants received but not used	28	117 482	83 795
Liabilities to Group companies		1 875	90
Other liabilities		135 885	153 431
Accrued expenses and deferred income	29	133 075	76 909
Total		6 661 116	5 929 259
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		16 584 190	14 353 236

Central Board of the Church of Sweden

A PRESENTATION OF THE BOARD AND ITS WORK

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden leads and coordinates the management of the national level's tasks as stipulated in the Church Order. 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 of the Church of Sweden carries out the tasks set by the General Synod, and it can submit written communications containing various proposals to the General Synod. Each year, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden submits a plan of operations and an annual review and financial summary for the national level to the General Synod.

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden 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. In order to ensure that ecclesiastical life in the Church of Sweden is sustainable in the long term, improve efficiency and contribute to the division of responsibilities between dioceses and the national level, in-depth discussions are in progress between the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's working committee and the presiding officers of the Diocesan Boards. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden and the Bishops' Conference also meet continuously in separate discussions. The Central Board of the Church of Sweden invites representatives of the chapters to joint deliberations. Similarly, the dioceses' property management units meet for consultation on the management of church endowments. During the year, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden met seven times and the working committee held eleven meetings. As part of the Central Board's proficiency development, the Board

visited the diocese of Västerås for two days in September to get to know its activities.

The daily work at the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's office, the Central Church Office, is led by the Secretary-General, who is appointed by the Central Board. According to the Church Ordinance, the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's tasks include to:

- represent the Church of Sweden Faith Community,
- be responsible for the Church of Sweden'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 of Sweden's and its parishes' responsibility for international mission and international diakonia,
- be responsible for the Church's work among Swedes abroad,
- be in charge of the Church's 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,
- work to provide rich and multifaceted cultural activities that promote dialogue about religion and approaches to life, and
- be responsible for overall issues regarding funeral activities in the Church of Sweden.

svenskakyrkan.se

Here you can read about the Church of Sweden's **mission** and **history**.
About the **organisation**, the General Synod and the **Archbishop**.

You will also find finance and **statistics** here, as well as
information on how to contact your parish.



THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN, 2018–2021 (INCLUDING DEPUTIES)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Daniel Larson | 8. Anna Karin Hammar | 16. Antje Jackelén |
| 2. Åsa Ingårda | 9. Marie Rydén Davoust | 17. Karl-Gunnar Svensson |
| 3. Julia Kronlid (resigned,
replaced by Daniel Engström) | 10. Mats Hagelin | 18. Nils Gårder |
| 4. Aron Emilsson | 11. Sofia Särdaqvist | 19. Daniel Tisell |
| 5. Marja Sandin-Wester | 12. Margareta Winberg | 20. Agneta Hyllstam |
| 6. Fredrik Modéus | 13. Wanja Lundby-Wedin | 21. Elisabeth Rydström |
| 7. Erik Sjöstrand | 14. Torvald Johansson | 22. Marie Johansson |
| | 15. Lars Johnsson | |



Not in picture:

Jesper Eneroth, Sara Waldenfors, Cecilia Brinck, Sebastian Clausson, Daniel Engström,
Carl Seved Tigerhielm, Lars-Ivar Ericson, Britt Sandström and Berth Löndahl.

The Board of the Church of Sweden Faith Community. We have submitted our audit report.

UPPSALA, 26 MARCH 2020

ANTJE JACKELÉN
ARCHBISHOP, CHAIR

WANJA LUNDBY-WEDIN
(1ST DEPUTY CHAIR)

DANIEL TISELL
(2ND DEPUTY CHAIR)

ARON EMILSSON

JESPER ENEROTH

NILS GÅRDER

MATS HAGELIN

AGNETA HYLLSTAM

LARS JOHNSON

BERTH LÖNDAHL

MARIE RYDÉN DAVOUST

ELISABETH RYDSTRÖM

BRITT SANDSTRÖM

ERIK SJÖSTRAND

MARGARETA WINBERG

We have submitted our audit report.

UPPSALA, 31 MARCH 2020

GUNVOR HAGELBERG
AUDIT CHAIR

OLLE BURELL

STAFFAN HOLMGREN

OLA ISACSSON

LENNART SACRÉDEUS

CONNY TYRBERG

ERIK ALBENIUS
AUTHORISED PUBLIC
ACCOUNTANT, PWC

AUDIT REPORT

to the General Synod in Trossamfundet Svenska kyrkan (the Church of Sweden Faith Community), org. reg. no. 25002-6135

Report on the Review and Financial Summary

OPINIONS

We have carried out an audit of the Review and Financial Summary of the Church of Sweden Faith Community for 2019. The Review and Financial Summary of the Faith Community is included on pages 18–46 of this document. In our view, the Review and Financial Summary have been prepared in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act and in all material respects provide a true and fair view of the financial position of the Faith Community as at 31 December 2019, and of its financial results and cash flow for the year in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act. The Report of the Board is consistent with the other parts of the Review and Financial Summary. We therefore recommend that the General Synod adopt the income statement and balance sheet for the Faith Community.

BASIS FOR OPINIONS

We have carried out the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. The responsibilities of the auditors in accordance with this practice are described in more detail in the sections “Responsibilities of the authorised public accountant” and “Responsibilities of the unauthorised public accountants”. We are independent in relation to the Faith Community in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. As an authorised public accountant, I have fulfilled my professional ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate as a basis for our statements.

OTHER INFORMATION

The audit of the Review and Financial Summary for the 2018 financial year was carried out by another authorised public accountant who submitted an audit report dated 9 April 2019 with unqualified opinions in the Report on the Review and Financial Summary.

INFORMATION OTHER THAN THE REVIEW AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is responsible for the other information. The other information consists of pages 1–17 (but does not include the Review and Finan-

cial Summary and our audit report on the same).

Our opinion regarding the Review and Financial Summary does not include this information, and we make no statement supporting this other information. In connection with our audit of the Review and Financial Summary, our responsibility is to read the information identified above and to consider whether the information is materially inconsistent with the Review and Financial Summary. In this review, we also take into account the knowledge we have otherwise acquired during the audit and assess whether the information otherwise appears to contain any material misstatement.

If, based on the work performed regarding this information, we conclude that the other information contains a material error, we are obliged to report this. We have nothing to report in that regard.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is responsible for the preparation of the Review and Financial Summary and for it providing a true and fair view in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act. The Central Board is also responsible for the internal control that it deems necessary for the preparation of a Review and Financial Summary that does not contain any material misstatement, whether due to irregularities or mistakes. In preparing the Review and Financial Summary, the Central Board is responsible for assessing the ability of the Faith Community to continue as a going concern. They disclose, where applicable, conditions that may affect the ability to continue as a going concern and to use the going concern basis of accounting. However, the going concern basis of accounting does not apply if the Central Board intends to liquidate the Faith Community or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AUTHORISED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

I am obliged to carry out the audit according to International Standards on Auditing (ISA) and generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. My aim is to obtain a reasonable degree of certainty as to whether the Review and Financial Summary as a whole do not contain any material misstatement, whether due to irregularities or mistakes. Reasonable assurance is a high degree of certainty, but is no guarantee that an audit carried out in accordance with ISA and generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden will always detect a material error if one exists. Errors may arise as a result of irregularities or

mistakes and are considered to be material if they can reasonably be expected to influence the financial decisions taken by users on the basis of the Review and Financial Summary, individually or collectively. As part of an audit in accordance with ISA, I use professional judgement and maintain a professionally sceptical attitude throughout the audit. Also:

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement in the Review and Financial Summary, whether due to irregularities or mistakes, design and carry out audit measures, inter alia on the basis of these risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to form the basis for my statements. The risk of not detecting a material error as a result of irregularities is higher than for a material error due to mistakes, as irregularities may include collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, incorrect information or disregard for internal control.
- I gain an understanding of the part of the Faith Community's internal control that is relevant to my audit in order to design audit measures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not to comment on the effectiveness of internal control.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's estimates in the Review and Financial Summary and related disclosures.
- I draw a conclusion about the appropriateness of the Central Board using the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the Review and Financial Summary. I also draw a conclusion, based on the audit evidence gathered, as to whether there is any material uncertainty factor relating to events or circumstances that could lead to significant doubts about the ability of the Faith Community to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that there is a material uncertainty factor, I must draw attention in the audit report to the information contained in the Review and Financial Summary on the material uncertainty factor or, if such disclosures are insufficient, to modify the opinion on the Review and Financial Summary. My conclusions are based on the auditing evidence obtained up to the date of the audit report. However, future events or circumstances may mean that a faith community can no longer continue to operate.
- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the Review and Financial Summary, including the information, and whether the Review and Financial Summary reproduces the underlying transactions

and events in a manner that provides a true and fair view. I must inform the Central Board of the Church of Sweden about, among other things, the planned scope and direction of the audit and the timing of it. I must also provide information on significant observations during the audit, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I have identified.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

We are to carry out an audit in accordance with the Church Ordinance and the Swedish Auditing Act, and thus in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. Our objective is to obtain a reasonable degree of assurance as to whether the Review and Financial Summary has been prepared in accordance with the Swedish Annual Accounts Act, and whether the Review and Financial Summary provides a true and fair view of the performance and position of the Faith Community.

Report on other requirements under laws and other statutes

OPINION

In addition to our audit of the Review and Financial Summary, we have carried out an audit of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden's management for the Church of Sweden Faith Community for 2019.

We recommend that the General Synod discharge the members of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden from liability for the financial year.

BASIS FOR OPINION

We have carried out the audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. Our responsibilities in this regard are described in more detail in the section "Responsibilities of the auditors". We are independent in relation to the Faith Community in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden. As an authorised public accountant, I have otherwise fulfilled my professional ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate as a basis for our statement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE CHURCH OF SWEDEN

The Central Board of the Church of Sweden is responsible for the organisation of the Faith Community and the management of its affairs in accordance with the Church Ordinance. This includes, inter alia, continuously assessing the financial situation of the Faith Community and ensuring that the organisation of the Faith Community is

designed so that the accounts, management of funds and financial affairs of the Faith Community are otherwise controlled in a satisfactory manner.

AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Our objective with regard to the audit of the management, and thus our statement on discharge from liability, is to obtain audit evidence in order to assess with a reasonable degree of certainty whether any member of the Central Board of the Church of Sweden has taken any material action or committed any omission that may give rise to liability for damages to the Faith Community. Reasonable assurance is a high degree of certainty, but is no guarantee that an audit carried out in accordance with good auditing practice in Sweden will always detect actions or omissions that may give rise to the Faith Community being liable for damages.

As part of an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing practice in Sweden, the authorised public accountant uses professional judgement and maintains a professionally sceptical attitude throughout the audit.

The audit of management is mainly based on the audit of the accounts. The additional audit measures carried out are based on the professional assessment of the authorised public accountant and the assessment of the other selected auditors on the basis of risk and materiality. This means that we focus our audit on measures, areas and circumstances that are essential to the organisation and where deviations and violations would have a particular bearing on the situation of the Faith Community. We review and examine decisions made, documents on which decisions are based, measures taken and other circumstances relevant to our opinion on discharge from liability.

Uppsala den 31 mars 2020

Gunvor Hagelberg
Audit Chair

Olle Burell

Staffan Holmgren

Ola Isacson

Lennart Sacrédeus

Conny Tyrberg

Erik Albenius
Authorised public accountant, PwC

If you want to find out more

CONTACT, ENGAGEMENT 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 explore your faith in more detail. 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.

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COVER PHOTO: Confirmation camp at the diocesan centre in Undersvik, summer 2019

PHOTO: Alex Giacomini/Ikon

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