

## THURSDAY

We had an early start today, needing to be at the tram stop for one of the (free) ancient trams to take us up the hill behind Trondheim. Only two 'wagons' but we had an enjoyable ride realising we were getting out of the city and then up into the more wooded area.

At Lian we were greeted with our picnic breakfast – plum and ginger drink, a large bread roll, a large piece of tasty quiche, two different sorts of cheese, apricot jam and, best of all for many of us, the most delicious pot of smoked salmon.



Other trams arrived and we were treated to the story of St Olav. Most of us couldn't understand it but we had heard the story before so occasionally recognised odd words. But Olav's story wasn't just told, it was interspersed with traditional early music which enhanced it in a beautiful way.

It was damp after rain during the night. and a bit chilly so most of us were glad to set off on the pilgrims' way (just over eight km) through the forest and down the hill.



The walk through the forest was peaceful, with many wildflowers growing along the way, streams to cross, quicker people overtaking others taking time to enjoy the sense of pilgrimage and our surroundings, but all of us following the pilgrim symbol.



Vistas of the whole city of Trondheim and the fjord on which it is situated gradually opened up, the Cathedral towering above nearly every other building.

We all enjoyed walking with a number of different people along the way, learning more about them and each other, enjoying the wonder of God's creation – and the dry weather. We were certainly warmer by the time we finished than when we began!

As pilgrims gathered in the Archbishops' Courtyard, the opening ceremony began – in Norwegian, of course! But different styles of music were also showcased from groups who will be performing over the next couple of days as the festival of St Olav continues.



The afternoon provided some time for people to relax, have a coffee, go shopping, or even sleep. But some went to part two of Bishop Tor's talk about the Church of Norway as they had wanted to learn more from him.

The evening concert in the Cathedral, attended by many of our participants, was the world premiere of 'The Stranger', music by Kim André Arnesen, the acclaimed Norwegian composer, and performed by the 'Together In Hope Choir' from the Minneapolis/St Paul area of USA.

The libretto reflected many of the themes raised during our conference. It demands that people travelling through this world together listen to one another's attitudes and behaviour towards other people – the 'strangers'. It was truly pluralistic and inter-faith, with quotations from the Christian Bible, from the Qur'an, from Hindu, Baha'i, and Sikh, religious and secular writers. 'Don't neglect hospitality' was the underlying theme. 'The guest is as God.' 'Welcome and entertain them all. Be grateful for whoever comes because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.' 'Our faiths demand that we remember we are all migrants on this earth, journeying together in hope.'



Later in the evening there was another, shorter pilgrimage from two churches to the Cathedral where the St Olav Wake Service took place at 2300. A highlight was the singing of the Kyiv Chamber Choir, and when the service was over all kinds of events took place throughout the night to welcome St Olav's day. Not many of our conference participants had the stamina to remain in the cathedral too long since the morning pilgrimage from Lian had sapped their strength! In any case, tomorrow is another day!