

WORLD'S FIRST LESBIAN BISHOP CALLS FOR CHURCH TO REMOVE CROSSES, TO INSTALL MUSLIM PRAYER SPACE



by OLIVER JJ LANE | 5 Oct 2015 | 74,337

The Bishop of Stockholm has proposed a church in her diocese remove all signs of the cross and put down markings showing the direction to Mecca for the benefit of Muslim worshippers.

Eva Brunne, who was made the world's first openly lesbian bishop by the church of Sweden in 2009, and has a young son with her wife and fellow lesbian priest Gunilla Linden, made the suggestion to make those of other faiths more welcome.

The church targeted is the [Seamen's mission church](#) in Stockholm's eastern dockyards. The Bishop held a meeting there this year and challenged the priest to explain what he'd do if a ship's crew came into port who weren't Christian but wanted to pray.

Calling Muslim guests to the church "[angels](#)", the Bishop later took to her [official blog](#) to explain that removing Christian symbols from the church and preparing the building for Muslim prayer doesn't make a priest any less a defender of the faith. Rather, to do any less would make one "stingy towards people of other faiths".

The bishop insisted this wasn't an issue, after all airports and hospitals already had multi-faith prayer rooms, and converting the dockyard church would only bring it up to speed. Regardless, the announcement has aroused protest.

Father Patrik Pettersson, one of the priests in her diocese and active in the same parish as the Seaman's mission church has hit back in [a blog of his own](#), complaining there is no way you could equate a consecrated church with a prayer room, remarking "I should have thought a bishop would be able to tell the difference".

Calling the bishop's words "theologically unthinking", he asked what was to be done with crucifixes screwed to the walls, and heavy items such as baptismal fountains.

“Ignoring the rhetorical murmuring”, Pettersson wrote: “The only argument bishop Eva really put forward in support of her view is ‘hospitality’... How do you respond to that? Not much of a basis for discussion, as one colleague put it. The theological, ecclesiological, pastoral and working issues are left untouched”.

The actual priest at the Seaman’s mission was left nonplussed by the comments of the Bishop when [contacted by Dagen.se](#) for comment.

As an independent mission the church operates outside of the diocese, and so the bishop has no authority there, a fact reflected by the response of the church director who said the bishop’s words were her business alone.

When asked whether she would be removing the cross from her church, Kiki Wetterberg responded: “I have no problem with Muslim or Hindu sailors coming here and praying. But I believe that we are a Christian church, so we keep the symbols. If I visit a mosque I do not ask them to take down their symbols. It’s my choice to go in there”.

The upper echelons of the Church of Sweden, much like other national churches across Europe, seem to be fully invested in the diversity mission. [Back in February](#), a parish church in multicultural paradise Malmö declared it would be holding a service in solidarity with the local Muslim community as a protest against a march by anti-Islamisation movement PEGIDA in the city.

The priest responsible told media: “During the protest, the Swedish Church is going to hold a service where we express joy for our city and our Muslim friends.

“There is strong support for diverse cultures in Malmö and it is important that the church is there to support that”.

Malmö is Sweden’s gateway to Europe, and is the main point of ingress to the Nordic nations for the thousands of migrants travelling through Europe from Africa and the East who have decided to make it home.

As a major bottleneck into the region, with a single bridge and ferry route connecting the country to the rest of Europe, the arrival of these migrants has heralded an unprecedented level of criminality in the city, [as explained to Breitbart London](#) by a recently retired senior police officer last month. Describing the ‘no-go’ zones that have sprung up around the city and calling for greater border controls to get criminal migration under control, Chief Superintendent Torsten Elofsson said:

“Years ago you could go with two officers, no problem. Now you have to send four officers and two cars – if the fire brigade want to go, they have to take a police escort. They throw stones and try to stop the fireman from putting out fires.

“They sabotage the police cars. You can’t leave them unguarded – when you come back to it you find the windows smashed and the tyres deflated. It isn’t quite a no-go zone, but we have had to develop special routines to go there”.