



WELCOME TO

The North Möckleby church

# CHURCHES ON ÖLAND

If you live on an island, you must be able to sail. Living by the Southern Baltic Sea has brought extensive contacts with the nations to the South.

Already in the Viking Age, the change of religion became obvious on Öland, not least because Christian graves began to appear on the village burial sites. The first churches were built during the 11th century, using wood and stave technique. A few scattered stave church planks still remain. Monuments engraved with runes have withstood the ravages of time and are preserved in six churches.

During the 12th century, 34 stone churches were built here. Soon after that, seven chapels were added at fishing villages and trading places. The earliest churches had windows and porches facing both the North and the South. A few even had a tower at the West end, and if so there would also be a porch there. Around each church, a burial place was provided for the dead and a stone wall surrounded the holy place. These churchyards are still in use.

In the 13th century and the Middle Ages many churches were provided with secular top floors and to almost half of them, a tower was added at the East End as well. The church buildings served as places for worship as well as storage space and for overnight accommodation.

The role of the church during the Middle Ages shows how the church and the world went hand in hand.

The following centuries saw only interior changes to most of Öland's churches. They were provided with arches and sometimes with new quires or porticos. Following the Reformation, new demands were made on church buildings. Preferably, the congregation should be seated, but the small medieval churches were short of space. Additions widened many churches, but towards the end of the 18th century, the thought of new buildings gained ground.

The churches on Öland have very few medieval artefacts. Numerous wars and the ravages by the Danes in 1677 left little behind. Today only one medieval church on Southern Öland is preserved intact. In another three, medieval rooms have survived. Seven churches have medieval towers.

Today's churches preserve ideals of style and function from the 18th and 19th century hall churches. The seated congregation listens to the service and sings together. Large windows make it easy to read from the Hymnal and the sermon spreads the Word throughout the entire building. Modern churches are gradually adapted to modern forms. Flexibility, participation and even technology make demands. On Southern Öland, one church has been adapted to modernity while preserving its medieval structure – the Church of Ventlinge.

## SOMETHING ABOUT THE NORTH MÖCKLEBY CHURCH

The first church at North Möckleby was a stone church, built in the 12th century with a tower at the West end, a nave, a quire and a semi-circular apse. It was a church at the crossroads, situated next to the ancient Eastern road and the roads towards the West and the Sound. The quire had its own porch, an indication of a harbour guild and trade. The West End tower had a late Roman porch, decorated with a trefoil. A tower at the East End and a floor for secular use completed the medieval church. Pillars and arches made it feel cramped indoors. A gallery was built, and the church was filled with pews. During the period of Bishop Stagneli, everything except the West tower was pulled down in order to provide space for a new modern church. The current neo-classicist church was completed in 1832, including the addition of a lantern at the top of the old West End tower. In the 1950s the church interior was renovated, and a new stone floor was laid. The foundations of the medieval church with its graves and brick-works remains. The church at the roadside still has the rings for tethering horses outside the cemetery wall. Two gravestones from the 17th century church floor stand in the current porch.



Binding rings for horses



A gravestone

## A WALK IN THE CHURCHYARD

A walk around the churchyard is a peaceful experience. Besides individual flower-decorated graves, there is also a memorial grove, a belfry, some old gravestones and a sundial.

### The memorial grove

The memorial grove, which began to be used in June 1996 is a resting-place for many departed people. The stone has been reworked. It was previously situated in a different location in the churchyard.



### The belfry

The belfry was erected in the 1960s in order to house the old major bell, bought in 1643 for money given by Peder Michelsson Hammarskiöld. Since it was cracked it was replaced in 1947. The change of bells took place through the window on the South side of the tower.



### The gravestones and the sundial.

The two gravestones and the sundial on the South side of the church mark the resting places since the mid-19th century for the MP and District Judge Per Johnsson and his wife. On a sunny day you can read the time on the clock face on the sundial. Remember that it only shows normal time (not summer time).

## Welcome inside

As you enter the church, you face the reredos by Bengt Nordenberg from 1888, which pictures the transfiguration of Christ, and below that a tablet with the text: It is good for us to be here. For each one of us, in all the circumstances of life. The antependium was a gift from the North Möckleby Church Mission Sewing Club, produced by Lena "Form" Danielsson, and the lace was made by Inga Rudestig, North Möckleby. The carpet in the quire was woven by Anna Maria Hoke, a textile artist working at Kalmar in 1956-96. It was ordered by the then Church Youth Group, who donated it to the church in 1957.



## Baptism

The baptismal font, made of red Öland limestone with a bowl from 1650, stands next to the baptismal altar, which is decorated by an antependium woven by Suzanne Jansson, a textile artist at North Möckleby. The crucifix, the angel and the lamb above the main altar come from the old church and were restored in the 1980s.

At baptism, every child is given a brass angel. The baptism tree, also made of brass by the craftsman Björn Jäderås, Tingsryd, stands on the windowsill. It was a gift from the North Möckleby Church Mission Sewing Club in connection with the Baptism Day in 2016.

## Bridal Bench and Crown

The bridal bench standing under the pulpit is a so-called turn-around bench. In the past, the bridal couple should be seated facing the altar and then the congregation. The bench was painted in 1795 by J. H. Wadsten. The bridal crown in gilded silver can be borrowed by anyone contemplating marriage. The crown and the copper box, in which it is kept, stems from the 17th century.



## The Candle Bearer

The candle bearer, which provides for anyone to light a candle in memory of a loved one, was designed by Anne Wilks, Gårdby and the wrought iron work was carried out by the blacksmith Jan-Erik Östergren, North Möckleby. It symbolises the closeness of our church to wind and water. A boat rests on a tool used to adjust windmills. It was dedicated on Advent Sunday 1993.



## The Organ

The organ was built in 1966 by I. Johansson, Långaryd. It has ten stops, two manuals and pedals. The beautiful face is the same as on the old organ had, decorated by the inscription SOLI DEO GRATIA, Thanksgiving is due to God alone.



## The Sacristy

There is a small altar in the sacristy. Above it is a glass cupboard with a head of Christ from a triumphal crucifix, found at the major restoration in 1954. At that time the piscina from the quire of the medieval church was inserted into the wall next to the altar. The piscina is used for emptying out consecrated wine and the water of baptism.



## Eucharistic Vestments

The vestments in the five liturgical colours red, green, purple, black and white are also kept in the sacristy. The oldest, from the 17th century, is made of red velvet and one of the newest is the white one, picturing the Sower. That was donated by the Church Youth Group at their 40th anniversary in 1961.



## Welcome to the Church

You are always welcome to participate in the various services and meetings during the church's year or just to sit down for some rest, reflection and relaxation.



This church is one of 18 churches in the Joint Parish of Southern Öland. It is situated in the Parish of Norra Möckleby – Sandby – Gårdby

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SÖDRA ÖLAND