

**THE FONT** is raised up when in use, with a star-clad ladder to Heaven. This is symbolic of the “open border between Heaven and Earth. The Blessed Virgin and the Child Jesus are on top, showing the way of Gods mercy.

**THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS** in the choir are simple representations of events from the New Testament. These are Norwegian, whilst the stained-glass in the organ gallery is English, showing the apostles St. John, St. Peter and St. James.

**THE ORGAN** is built by *Marcussen & Søn*, Aabenraa, Denmark, in 1981. There are three manuals, 35 speaking stops, 2240 pipes, and tracker action. It is one of the finest instruments in the country. The decorations on the organ case are by the woodcarver *Oddvin Parr*.

**THE POSITIVE ORGAN** in the choir is built by *Paul Ott* in Germany, and has four stops.

**SERVICES are held in Borgund church every Sunday and Holy Day at 11 a.m.**

**Concerts and recitals** are also held regularly.

In the Summer months the church is open for visitors daily (Mondays excepted) from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

**Welcome to Borgund church!**

## **Borgund kyrkjelyd**

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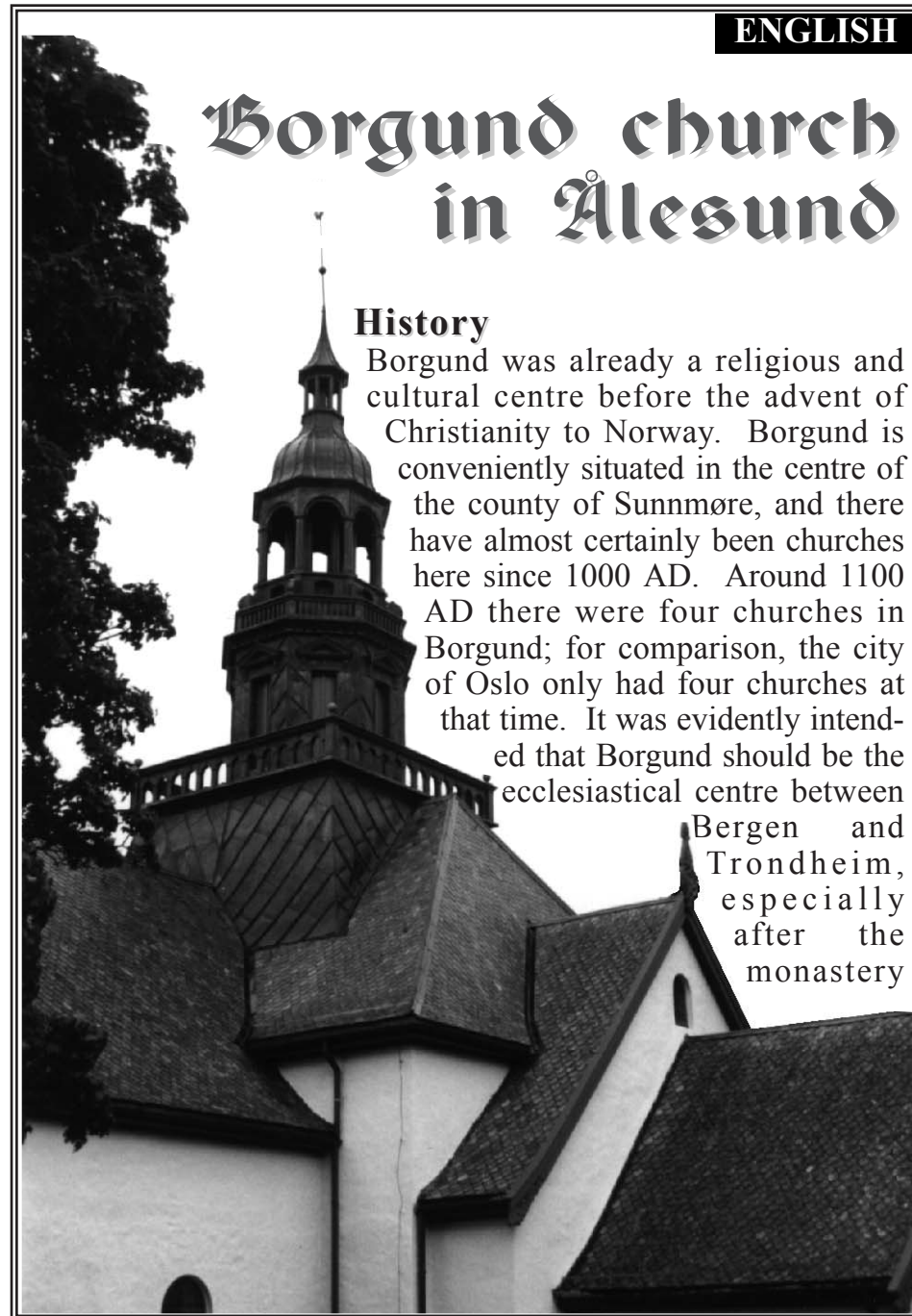
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**ENGLISH**

# **Borgund church in Ålesund**

## **History**

Borgund was already a religious and cultural centre before the advent of Christianity to Norway. Borgund is conveniently situated in the centre of the county of Sunnmøre, and there have almost certainly been churches here since 1000 AD. Around 1100 AD there were four churches in Borgund; for comparison, the city of Oslo only had four churches at that time. It was evidently intended that Borgund should be the ecclesiastical centre between Bergen and Trondheim, especially after the monastery



at Selje became less influential.

### The four churches were:

**ST. PETER'S**, of which the walls still exists in the transepts of the present Borgund Church.

**ST. MARGARET'S**, on the fjord side og the medieval museum. **CHRIST CHURCH** on the site of the lodge at the entrance to the vicarage, and **ST. MATTHEW'S**, of uncertain location.

Stones from St. Margaret's were used in building the choir of the present Borgund church. There are records in English medieval documents of a Bishop Tore from Borgund.

In the late medieval period Borgund lost its importance as a commercial centre, and several of the churches fell into ruin and disuse. St. Margaret's and St. Peter's were used as the basis for a larger church, which was extended with a nave on a North/South-axis in 1868.

### Fire and rebuilding

This church, with its Baroque decoration from the 17th century, was almost completely destroyed by fire on 13th April 1904. The loss was tragic, but a new church was rapidly built within the medieval walls, and was consecrated on 7th August 1907. The country's foremost experts in wood-carving were engaged to provide the interior decoration, and the result is a church built in a mixture of Romanesque and Gothic styles, with carvings in Baroque style. (Architects *Christian and Hans Fürst*. The altarpiece - *Nicolai Meijdell*, pulpit - *Hans Johan Johannessen*, figures on the galleries - *John Johnsen*).

### Interior

**THE MAIN DOOR.** Notice the doorhandle. Snakes together with a dove and water represent evil bound by the sacrament of Baptism.

The wood-carvings on the organ gallery represents persons of differing occupations and classes, to show that all people are admitted to the Kingdom of God: God does not employ human distinctions.

**THE WEST GALLERY.** Prophets from the Old Testament (Abraham, Moses, David, etc.), and the temple pillars of Jerusalem in the centre.

**THE EAST GALLERY.** Christianity comes to Norway: Norwegian Kings, and women who stand for the proclaiming of the Gospel. The kings are Håkon The Good, Olav Tryggvason, St. Olav, Olav Kyrre.

**THE MEDIEVAL ALTAR** in the Eastern transept has a hole for relics. In the vestibule is a gravestone from medieval times.

**THE PULPIT** is born by John the Baptist, who carries the Gospel of Jesus on his back: "He shall be great, and I shall be small". The life of Jesus is portrayed from His birth in a stall til His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

**THE CANOPY** over the pulpit shows the seven deacons with St. Stephen being stoned in the middle. He sees Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father. All preaching should lead to compassion: martyrs dominate the pulpit.

**THE ALTARPIECE** shows Jesus' Victory over sin and death. Adam and Eve, The Resurrection, and Christ the King ascended into heaven, welcoming the Faithful with open arms. The angels Michael, Raphael, Uriel, Gabriel, the four evangelists and the followers at the cross of Jesus are all to be seen.

