

Thursday 18th November: 13.00-15.30: Virtual and Hybrid Communities (Moderator: Elisabeth)

Ånund Brottveit (confirmed) (KIFO): Digital Easter, drive-in Id al-fitr, and Christmas on a distance.

The pandemic caused severe effects on the activities of faith and worldview communities in Norway. KIFO followed two majority church congregations and one mosque in Oslo during the pandemic. KIFO performed a survey in fall 2021 among faith and worldview communities asking about the effects of the pandemic. The first lock-down in spring 2020 had immediate consequences for Christian Easter festivities and Muslim Ramadan and Id al-fitr celebration. We found both similarities and differences when we compared the central religious celebrations within the two religions. Both utilized digitalization and use of video recordings and expanded their presence on social media like Facebook. Both framed the restrictions positively as an opportunity for serenity, reflection and enforcing family relations. But how central religious rituals and feasts were celebrated had certain differences, due to structural, cultural, political, and theological factors. Access to public space is differentiated, minority congregations have less resources, and they may also be stigmatized because of their ethnicity or religion. Perspectives from studies of lived religion, governance theory and field theory will be used to inform the analysis of minority faith communities' religious practice and public celebrations during the pandemic.