



The winning entry for the Methodist Newsletter Easter Art Competition is 'Above all, leave love' painted by Victor McMullen. Report this issue.

Presbyterian Church young adults' initiative begins tonight

Young adults from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) are getting ready to take part in 'Transform', a brand new two-day discipleship

initiative that is taking place in Belfast's Titanic and Cathedral Quarters and kicks off tonight (Friday April 1).

Around 120 twenty-somethings from as many as 50 congregations across Ireland are booked in for Transform. Explaining the thinking behind the new initiative, Rick Hill, PCI's Discipleship Development Officer, said that for many young people transitioning into adulthood can be a challenging time on so many different levels.

"As a Church we recognise both the challenges and opportunities that lie within the transitional times of young adulthood, which is why we have created this fresh event. With all that is going on in their lives, it is a critical stage for many twenty-somethings who often wonder whether to stick around in church, or make a break for it," Rick said.

Transform has been designed to better connect young adults together, equip them for their every day lives and inspire them about the part they have to play in the church going forward.

"We have some amazing young adults in our congregations who we need to nurture, equip and support as they continue on their spiritual journey at a time when life begins to change

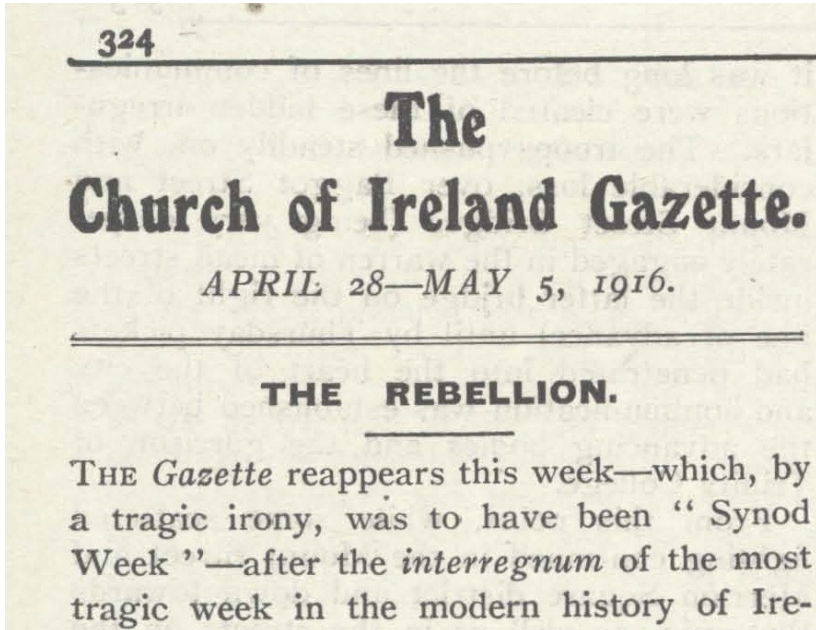
radically. We need to rediscover and share with the young adult generation what a disciple of Jesus might look like in different everyday situations.

“We should be helping a young Christ-follower think what that means for them in their workplace, or university for example. We need to connect, equip and inspire a generation of young adults and this is what we hope Transform will do,” Rick continued.

With main sessions in The Mac, Transform will be packed full of trigger talks, seminars, and live music, as well as time for discussion, chill out activities and space to connect with others. There are a whole host of local contributors who will be part of Transform 2016, such as Michael Wylie from Carnmoney Presbyterian and Peter Lynas, Head of Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland.

Reporting the Rising: Special Edition of the *Church of Ireland Gazette*

2016 marks the 160th anniversary of the *Church of Ireland Gazette* which was first published in



March 1856. Initially known as the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* (up to 1900) for the first three years of its existence the paper appeared on a monthly basis as a ‘monthly repertory of miscellaneous church news’. However, from October 1859 it began to appear weekly, and has appeared virtually every week since then with publication falling on a Friday.

One exception to the weekly pattern occurred 100 years ago this month for the edition scheduled for Friday 28th April 1916. Although ‘all editorial arrangements were made for publication in Easter Week’, an editorial note

explained how ‘... we were compelled ... to suspend publication for that week’, the paper being ‘unavoidably postponed pending the restoration of the electrical current’ supplying its printed machinery. Indeed, the paper’s premises, located (until the 1960s) at number 61 Middle Abbey Street, had a remarkable escape from the fire which devastated the Sackville Street area, and was the last building on that side of the street to be saved – the fire ‘stopping immediately short of this office’. A week later a special combined edition for 28th April-5th May 1916 appeared which provides graphic detail of unfolding events.

Archive of the Month for the combined months of April and May 2016 focuses on this particular issue of the *Gazette*, almost half of which was devoted to several aspects of the Rising and its consequences for the Church of Ireland community, with several fascinating human-interest stories, for the city of Dublin and indeed for national politics. Whilst the editorial in this special edition took a predictable condemnatory position in the immediate aftermath of the Rising – summing up events as: ‘the most tragic week in the modern history of Ireland’ – it was also tempered by reality and a sense that Ireland had been utterly changed by the events of Easter Week.

Writing on the day that 'ought to have seen the opening of the General Synod' – postponed for the first time since its inception in 1870 on account of martial law – and the fact that 'Sackville Street' and its environs were a 'heap of ruins', it bemoaned: 'The pity of the citizens murdered, the young English soldiers shot down on Irish soil, the callow lads led into treason: the shame of this stab in the back of our brave soldiers in Flanders and Salonika; and the horror of Dublin, fired by the hands of her own sons, and of Irish blood shed by Irish hands.'

From 1st April 2016, followers of Archive of the Month will be able to explore the content of the special issue online, where this and all issues of the paper during the commemorative period 1911-1923 are digitized and freely searchable through this link:

www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive

At the end of the month, readers of the *Gazette* will also be able to read the special edition 28th April-5th May 1916 as it was printed in 1916, when a commemorative copy will be reprinted and circulated – a project supported by the Irish Government's Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Methodist Newsletter Easter Art Competition

The winning entry for the *Methodist Newsletter* Easter Art Competition is 'Above all, leave love' painted by Victor McMullen.

In setting his image of resurrection into the shape of an autumn leaf, Victor shows something frail and fallen yet filled with the power of forgiveness, freedom, worship, praise and the light of the risen Christ.

As with all art, we may interpret and respond to it in different ways. However, the title of the piece reminds us that in a world where the children of darkness leave trails of destruction, we are to be children of light and 'above all, leave love'.

Mercy Sisters leave Limerick village after 150 years

Tributes have been paid to the Sisters of Mercy who will leave a Co Limerick village this summer after 151 years. The order will leave their convent in Doon in East Limerick with the Sisters moving to a number of nearby convents.



Mercy Convent Doon

The Mercy Sisters arrived in Doon at a difficult time in the parish's history.

The Famine and its aftermath mark one of the darkest chapters in the history of Doon parish.

In one six-month period alone over 300 people died and from 1847 to 1853 the number of houses in the parish decreased from 982 to 375.

The arrival of the Sisters of Mercy on 7 February 1865 from Kinsale, Co Cork helped to transform the parish and surrounding area.

Fr Patrick Hickey, parish priest of Doon 1824-1864, was responsible for their coming, having left them his house and farm; his niece Mother M. Augustine Hickey was the leader of the group.

A few weeks later the first postulant entered. She was Jane Greene of Glengar, from the hills above Doon.

Religious instruction and visitation of the sick were the main works at first. There was no school so Sunday classes were conducted in a small part of the garden called 'The Bower.'

Building began and schools and additions to the convent were completed. The first school was ready in 1868 and around 1878 a small boarding school was started for children who were too far away to attend daily; some of the students had lost parents and came from various parts of the country.

The Sisters' popularity continued to grow. The schools flourished, primary, technical classes and secondary and were renowned for success in choral and plain chant competitions and for the number of girls who went on to become Sisters in Ireland and on the missions.

One of the first documentaries on Irish television was the Radharc programme 'The parish with the most vocations in Ireland – Doon, County Limerick.'

For the centenary celebration of the convent in 1965, it was revealed that 296 girls from the schools had become Sisters throughout the century.

Branch houses founded from Doon were the Hospital of the Assumption, Thurles, 1877, Cappamore, 1896, Newport, 1901, St. Patrick's College, 1950, St. Mel's, Fair Oaks, California, 1959 and St Dunstan's. Millbrae, California, 1972.

Speaking to the Limerick Leader newspaper, Doon Parish Priest Fr Tony Ryan said the news that "the nuns were leaving us in Doon was learned with great sadness and disbelief but also with a great sense of appreciation and gratitude".

He said the contribution of the Sisters of Mercy in the field of education is "immeasurable".

"They have prepared so many people for exams but more importantly for life with their high standards. Not only that but their participation in the parish life of Doon in pastoral and social

areas has been immense. They have touched the lives of all our people and they are loved and respected by young and old. The good they have done is known to God alone,” said Fr Ryan.

The nuns have participated actively in the life of the church as Eucharistic ministers, readers, parish choir, sacristans, pastoral council, pioneers, Legion of Mary, board of management, and also after retirement been actively involved in learning support and home school liaison.

The book of Ruth is focus for ACC Bible studies

When members of the [Anglican Consultative Council](#) meet in Lusaka next month for its 16th meeting ([ACC-16](#)), they will discuss – in the context of intentional discipleship – issues ranging from gender justice, refugees and migration, the environment and reconciliation; and they will do so against a backdrop of prayer, Bible study and worship.

And members of the Anglican Communion throughout the world are being invited to join with them as they explore the Book of Ruth in a series of daily Bible studies.

The Bible studies have been prepared by a group of biblical scholars that met 16 times via Skype in 2014 and 2015, specifically written with ACC-16 in mind. They are also part of the [Bible in the Life of the Church](#) initiative which aims to encourage the Anglican Communion to read the Bible together across the different contexts in which Anglicans are called to witness and minister.

“ACC-16 will be engaging with Bible studies on Ruth that have come from the Communion’s Bible in the Life of the Church project,” Stephen Lyon, the initiative’s coordinator, said. “The aim is to encourage a deeper engagement with Scripture.

“Written by an international group of biblical scholars, who met over 16 times via Skype and undertook the studies themselves over these meetings, they invite a deep encounter with such rich characters as Ruth, Naomi and Boaz.

“Their story can help us in our Christian journey as Anglicans from all over the Communion.” In the introduction to the Bible study, the authors say: “We have made the Bible studies as accessible as possible, using a series of questions in each case as the basic format of the Bible study. . .

“Through the questions we invite you to engage with the biblical text and your context. Each question is designed to take you deeper into the biblical text or deeper into the engagement between the biblical text and your context.”

The Bible studies were prepared by Ellen Davis, Duke University Divinity School, North Carolina, USA; Femi Adeleya, director of church partnerships, World Vision International, Ghana; Cath Duce, St. Stephen, Westminster, UK; John Goldingay, School of Theology of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, USA; Esther Mombo, Faculty of Theology, St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya; Gerald West, School of Theology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa; Chris Wright, Langham Partnership, London, U.K.; and Stephen Lyon.

The Bible study books include a dramatized reading of the book of Ruth by Ellen Davis and a series of woodcuts illustrating the story by Margaret Adams Parker. Both were first used in the book *“Who Are You My Daughter? – Reading Ruth Through Image and Text”*.

Anglicans around the world are invited to study the book of Ruth either at the same time as the ACC or at another time. The ACC Bible study

books can be downloaded (pdf) from the [ACC-16 webpage](#) in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). The daily Bible studies will be published on ACNS from April 8 to 19.

More information about the meeting, including a prayer for the gathering, is available at: <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion/acc/acc-16.aspx>

Lambeth's young monastic community hailed a major success

Forming a monastic community of young adults at Lambeth Palace to embrace a yearlong commitment to prayer, study and service may have been an audacious experiment, but members of its first class say the initiative has been a major triumph and an extraordinary life-changing experience.

“It’s been grounding, deeply rewarding,” says the Revd Shannon Preston, one of two Episcopalians who joined the Community of St Anselm for its first “year in God’s time” last September. “Because we have the opportunity to wake up every day and pray – that’s our priority – there’s no excuses of why Christ is not

at the centre of my life or the lives of the people around me.”

Preston, 27, an Episcopal priest and graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, said there’s a constant reminder that the community members have chosen to love and to live with one another. “Living with people from around the world who are excited and exploring, who recognize that there is an endless mystery to learn from and grow into and serve, is so valuable,” said Preston, who also is assisting at St Luke’s Church in Peckham, London.

Lay Episcopalian Peter Angelica said that he’s “learned a lot about how to listen – not so much listening to people but listening with people to see . . . what God is saying through them. It has been a really fruitful journey.”

A former investment banker from New York, Angelica, 24, didn’t realize how much the experience was going to transform him. Six months in, he already has recognized changes in his personality and “the ways I’m thinking, new habits I am forming and old habits I’m letting go of. It’s been incredible.”

Central to the community’s ethos and pattern of life “is to pursue likeness of Christ and welcome

his transforming touch above and beyond any thought, attitude, doctrine or value that we might hold dear,” the Revd Anders Litzell, an Anglican priest from Sweden who is prior of the community, told Episcopal News Service following a recent service of Holy Eucharist at Lambeth Palace. “It’s a radical, sacrificial commitment to the likeness of Christ.”

The community was formed in September 2015 when Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby opened up Lambeth Palace to 16 adults aged 20-35 to spend a year together as a radical new Christian community.

The 16 residential members from around the world are joined by 20 non-residential members who live and work in London. They all go on the same formational journey of prayer, study and service to the poor, but the non-residential members live it out in their home, work and social environments.

“In many ways, what [the non-residential members] are experiencing now, the residents will experience when this year ends,” says Litzell. “So the cross-pollination between these two very different ways of doing the same thing, I think, is going to be richly rewarding within this

community and hopefully across the wider church as well.”

In addition to prayer and community, service is also a key element of the Community of St Anselm, with all members spending about a third of their time with local charities and agencies serving the disadvantaged, the marginalized and the poor throughout London.

The community follows “the Franciscan insight that becoming more like Jesus is inseparable from serving others, especially the poorest in society,” according to its website.

Ministries include volunteering with local food banks, hospitals, refugee shelters, schools and homeless ministries.

Through their commitment to study, the community welcomes a range of speakers from a variety of contexts who bring their knowledge and expertise on topics related to theology and ethics.

“What is central to the community is that the spirit is in it, the spirit is giving birth to a new way of doing something old, a new way of engaging with Christ through prayer, through going deeper into the Scriptures, through serving the poor and

most vulnerable in society, and doing this not as a solitary endeavour, but in a deeper intimacy of relationship between people,” said Litzell.

Ordained in the Church of England in 2012, Litzell’s path to the priesthood began some years earlier during his undergraduate studies at Wheaton College, outside Chicago, where he discovered “high church” Anglicanism through St Barnabas Episcopal Church in nearby Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Litzell also has served parishes in the Diocese of Natal in South Africa and in the Diocese of London.

Preston said that there are so many pressures in the world “that we constantly have to be busy . . . so for me, stepping away into a more monastic lifestyle has made me look differently at what it is to live in the world, but that there’s a rhythm underlying all of that. . . Community makes me a better person; it makes me consider other people and suddenly my own views are not the final word.

“Having a schedule that’s built around prayer and having that be the first and most important part of my life continually brings me back to God as the centre of what we’re doing. . . It’s been clear in this year that the Holy Spirit is doing something extraordinary.”

To find out more, visit: stanselm.org.uk.
[Click here](#) for a video profile of Community of St Anselm member Shannon Preston.

In the global response to the refugee crisis, European leaders are lagging behind

As organisations working with or for Syrian refugees, we consider today's Geneva meeting a missed opportunity to commit to resettling Syrian refugees, by failing to pledge to meet the minimal target of providing places for 10% of Syrian refugees.

The UN Secretary General is right to say that the \$11 billion generously pledged at the International Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region in February must now be honoured. The reality is that nearly 5 million Syrian refugees have fled violence in the last 5 years and Europe, in particular, is failing to deal with the crisis on its doorstep. With crackdowns on irregular routes to Europe, including land and sea borders, it is imperative that safe and organized routes are put in place as a matter of urgency, or desperate people will take even greater risks to find safety.



Jane Waterman, Executive Director of the International Rescue Committee in the UK and Senior Vice President Europe said: “We should be under no illusion that the EU-Turkey deal will bring an end to the refugee crisis. The meetings today were an opportunity for European leaders to commit to sharing responsibility for a global crisis by committing to resettlement programmes and expanding alternative pathways to safety. Instead, they remain committed to an illogical and unethical agreement in which places for resettlement hinge on the return of asylum seekers”.

Sophie Powell, Christian Aid's Senior Policy and Advocacy Advisor said: "Brazil, Canada and Germany are welcoming many tens of thousands of refugees through resettlement and other organised pathways, demonstrating the principled political leadership that is possible.

"Today we have been deeply disappointed that our call to commit to resettle at least 10% of the most vulnerable refugees living in only 5 host countries, has not been met. The UK's decision to welcome 20,000 refugees over 5 years is far too low given the overwhelming need. The UK government should come to the UN meeting in September with a much greater level of ambition."

Resettlement and other pathways for admission – including broadening family reunion criteria and issuing humanitarian visas as well as labour and study opportunities - are a critical element of the response to the Syria crisis, ensuring predictable, manageable and safe passage for the most vulnerable refugees in dire need of protection. But resettlement of Syrian refugees has been insufficient so far. Only 178,195 pledges for resettlement and other forms of admission have been made in the past two years, and only a fraction of that number have

translated into actual departures for third countries. This is simply not enough.

Canada has confirmed at least 30,000 resettlement places for Syrian refugees. Other countries, particularly the members of the European Union, the US and the Gulf States, can and must show leadership and do more.

Financial pledges have been made, and resettlement places committed to, but now is the time to take the initiative and turn these pledges into reality for the sake of thousands of the most vulnerable people.

Resettlement is a necessary complement to increased humanitarian aid and redoubled diplomatic efforts to secure a lasting peace in Syria. But until the conflict ends it is the responsibility of global leaders to ensure that its victims can live in safety.

International Rescue Committee UK, Christian Aid, British Refugee Council, ActionAid UK

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Priest victim says Incumbent upon Church to make reparation to abuse victims

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/opinion/letterstotheeditor/2016/03/30/news/incumbent-upon-church-to-make-reparation-to-abuse-victims-467626/>

363 children became homeless in the first two months of this year

Journal.ie

The figures come as Minister Alan Kelly convenes his third homelessness forum.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/homeless-children-2690158-Mar2016/>

Nearly 3,500 used homeless accommodation at end of 2015

Irish Times

Almost 3,500 homeless adults used emergency accommodation in Dublin at the end of last year, the highest number in any three-month period since the figures were first compiled nine years ago.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/nearly-3-500-used-homeless-accommodation-at-end-of-2015-1.2592868#.Vvy-zVGCbng.twitter>

More than one person raped every day in Ireland, figures show

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/more-than-one-person-raped-every-day-in-ireland-figures-show-34584646.html>

Number of Protestants working full-time to be eclipsed by Catholics in labour market first in Northern Ireland

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/number-of-protestants-working-fulltime-to-be-eclipsed-by-catholics-in-labour-market-first-in-northern-ireland-34586274.html>

Teachers won't assess their own students in junior cycle

Irish Examiner

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/teachers-wont-assess-their-own-students-in-junior-cycle-390224.html>

Queen's University grade drive to get 'better quality students'

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/03/31/news/queen-s-university-wants-better-quality-students-469151/>

1916 Rising leaders were 'egotists', Arlene Foster says

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/1916-rising-leaders-were-egotists-arlene-foster-says-1.2592912>

1916 celebration crowds were second only to Pope John Paul II's visit

Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/festivals/1916-celebration-crowds-were-second-only-to-pope-john-paul-iis-visit-34586766.html>

Jewish News

Report that the Archbishop of Canterbury has joined other faith leaders in welcoming £1.5million in funding for an "innovative, collaborative and inspiring" initiative to build stronger faith-community relations. The *Near Neighbours* programme runs initiatives to tackle social problems such as unemployment, homelessness and hatred, whilst building trust between people of different faith and cultural groups. Archbishop Justin is quoted. <http://www.jewishnews.co.uk/archbishop-welcomes-1-5m-for-inspiring-interfaith-social-action/>

Premier/Christian Today

Further coverage of an article written by the Archbishop of York on the introduction of the new Living Wage (see above). Dr Sentamu, who chaired the Living Wage Commission, says Chancellor George Osborne has packaged up what is essentially an increase on the national minimum wage for over-25s and rebranded it the national living wage. <http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Archbishop-of-York-criticises-new-living-wage>

Mail/Christian Today

Reports that more than 400 UK churches are planning to switch to renewable energy providers in a move which will see more than £1 million shifted to clean power. Launched at the beginning of Lent by charities Christian Aid and Tearfund, the *Big Church Switch* invited churches and individuals in the UK to switch energy churchnewsireland@gmail.com

companies, to demonstrate the need for a transition from fossil fuels. The Bishop of Manchester is quoted in the *Mail's* agency copy.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-3515760/Hundreds-UK-churches-set-green-switch-renewable-energy-charities.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

Christian Today

Reports the result of a YouGov survey which shows only 41% of British Christians say they believe in a Creator while 18% say they do not. The same poll, which spoke to 12,000 self identified British Christians and a control group of 39,000 people representative of the whole population, also indicated that self-identified Christians are more likely to believe in aliens than the devil, and more likely to believe in fate than in heaven.

Comment

Guardian: Following the Lahore bombing which killed 72 people, Mohammed Hanif asks "Can Pakistan win its war against the Taliban?"

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/30/can-pakistan-win-its-war-against-the-taliban-mohammed-hanif>

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