



CNI



Inclusive Church Conference on cresting welcoming spaces

Inclusive Church, a conference for those seeking to create welcoming spaces in churches for people of all cultures and backgrounds, will take place in Belfast on April 24 and 25.

The conference, which is a free event run by the Irish Churches Peace Project in conjunction with Embrace, will be held in the Wellington Park Hotel, 21 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6RU, opening on April 24 at 5.30pm and finishing at 3.30pm the following day.

Places must be booked in advance. To book a place contact Aneta: aneta@embraceni.org or 0773 1378 037. Places are limited, so please respond by April 16.

Please state if you wish to attend the whole conference or just Saturday 25th. Workshops offered -

- From Welcome to Participation — Scott Boldt. This workshop will explore ways in which churches can help migrants become active participants in the life of their congregations.
- Loving our Neighbours: An introduction to the Roma people in NI — Denise Wright. Denise will share her experience of working with Romanian Roma people in Northern Ireland and issues around integration.
- A Beginner's Guide to Northern Ireland — Peter McDowell. This workshop will explore some of the cultural barriers to integration that migrants face in Northern Ireland and how churches can help the integration process

For further details see www.embraceni.org

EMBRACE is an inter-church organisation, which began as a support group for refugees and people seeking asylum. We now see our main role as one of encouraging church communities to make this a more welcoming place for all people from other countries and minority-ethnic backgrounds.

It began informally in 2001 as individuals from different denominations became increasingly concerned about the difficulties facing refugees and people seeking asylum in this country.

Charles Wood Young Performers' Concert tomorrow

The next Young Performers' Concert will be held on Friday 17th April at 8pm in St. Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh. Admission is £10; Concessions £7

The concert will feature six young musicians - [Charlotte Devlin](#) (Violin), [Kevin Donaldson](#) (Baritone), Jake & Ross Houston (Flute), [Nathan Howe](#) (Clarinet), and Connor Mathers (Trumpet), as well as the Chamber Choir 'Bella Voce' conducted by David Thompson.

Accompanists for the evening will be Rodney Spence and Theo Saunders.

Public Lecture on Economic Ethics at Mater Dei Institute

A joint public lecture on Economic Ethics will take place at Mater Dei Institute of Education on Wednesday April 22 2015, at 7.30 pm

The lecture is part of the Spring lecture series sponsored by the School of Theology. The joint session, with Q & A, will be especially apt for those interested in ethics, theology, economics and even topics related to the contemporary fiscal situation of the European union.

This Spring's Theology lecture will be given by Professor Oliver O'Donovan, who will discuss "Self-Interest and Greed," and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, who considers "The Franciscan Contribution to Economic Ethics." Both are internationally recognized scholars and speakers. The event proves to be stimulating and relevant.

For further information and to confirm attendance please email: joseph.rivera@dcu.ie



Women's Conference

GP Pastor speaker at Methodist Church Ladies' Conference

The speaker at the event will be Dr Stephen Rodgers - a GP and a pastor with a particular interest in mental health issues. The subject of his talk will be coping with stress from a medical and pastoral perspective. It promises to be helpful for those battling these issues and also for those helping people deal with them. Admission costs £5 (includes lunch).

Saturday, 25 April, 2015 - 10:00 to 14:30
Venue:

Glengormley Methodist Church, Newtownabbey
Church or Organisation:

MWI North East District

Email:

contact@glengormleymethodist.org

Website with Further Details:

<http://glengormleymethodist.org/news-events/464-mwi-north-east-district-ladies-conference>

Leading and ministering in multi-parish benefices

CPAS leadership specialist Pam Macnaughton is visiting Ireland to deliver training on leading and ministering in multi-parish benefices.

She will deliver the course on two days in two separate venues. The first takes place in Ballyclare Parish Hall, Connor Diocese, on April 29, and Pam visits Ballynanny in Co Tyrone the following day.

Multi-parish benefices are becoming increasingly widespread, particularly in rural areas where congregation numbers are smaller. The unique challenges and opportunities this presents can leave many leaders feeling overwhelmed and overstretched.



Pam Macnaughton from CPAS will deliver the training.

Pam's work with CPAS developing training for multi-parish benefice leaders, alongside her role as an ordained pioneer minister in her local multi-parish benefice, gives her invaluable insights into the realities of being a leader of more than one church.

Title: Leading and ministering in multi-parish benefices

Dates and venues: 29 April, Ballyclare (County Antrim) or 30 April, Ballynanny (County Tyrone)

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Please note, the second event is a repeat of the first, so please choose just one to attend

Cost: £10 per person

Time: 10.30am (coffee from 10am) – 3.30pm

Refreshments: Lunch and refreshments will be provided

Full details on the [CPAS website](http://www.cpas.org.uk/events-and-programmes/details/2551#.VS6rCRfTMdV).

<http://www.cpas.org.uk/events-and-programmes/details/2551#.VS6rCRfTMdV>

‘Vote for the common good’ urges Archbishop of Wales

The Archbishop of Wales is urging people to vote at next month’s General Election and to vote for policies to benefit poor and oppressed people.

In a key note address to members of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales (April 15), Dr Barry Morgan defended the Church’s right to speak out on political issues and encouraged parishes to tackle voter apathy.

Poverty, hunger, refugees, unemployment and crime were as much God’s concern as saying prayers, reading the Bible and going to church,

he said, adding the Bible clearly showed God on the side of the poor and oppressed.

The Archbishop blamed voter apathy on a general cynicism about politics and politicians and also the loss of a sense of community. He said it was sad that people didn't vote after the right to do so had been won relatively recently, and ironic that they chose not to exercise a right that other people in the world still desperately wanted.

He contrasted voter apathy with the widespread protests for freedom of expression following the Charlie Hebdo murders in France in January. Dr Morgan said both freedom of expression and the freedom to vote should be used responsibly and with respect for others

The Archbishop's address came at the start of the two-day meeting of the Governing Body at the Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells.

He said, "We have the freedom to act purely in our own interests and vote for policies that will benefit us personally the most, but we also have the freedom to vote for policies that will be of most benefit to the common good, even though they might not be of benefit to us personally."

He added, "Politics with a small 'p' is the way we organise ourselves in society, and if bishops and Christians have nothing to say at all about how we organise ourselves in society and the issues which confront us every day, then we have emptied the Christian faith of a great deal of its content, which urges us to love God and our neighbours as ourselves. Running through the whole of the Bible is the belief that God is on the side of the poor, the disadvantaged, the fatherless, widows, orphans, and strangers.....If the church of God does not speak out against structures that enslave and oppress people, then it is merely paying lip service to the teaching of Jesus about good news for the poor....

Anonymous donor gives £1.5 million to restoration of Bath Abbey

An anonymous donor has given £1.5 million in an "ordinary-looking envelope" to Bath Abbey to help with its £18 million restoration scheme.

The donation is the largest the Abbey has ever received from a private individual.

The donor explained that the main reason behind the gift was that he was: "much impressed by the care and the consultation



Bath Abbey

which has been put in by the Abbey, which is such a vital part of Bath's future."

He continues by saying that: "This generation has a solemn duty to ensure the Abbey is fit and able to carry out its service to the city and the community for the next hundred years."

The money will go to the Abbey's £19.3 million Footprint project, aimed at stabilising the building's collapsing floor and introducing an under-floor heating system using Bath's famous hot springs as an energy source. It will also improve the Abbey's visitor facilities.

Laura Brown, Footprint Appeal Director, said:
"We are very grateful for this amazingly generous gift from one remarkable individual. It came in an ordinary-looking envelope, without pomp or fanfare, but the contents were just astounding. It clearly demonstrates the strength of feeling that the Abbey and its ministry inspires in people."

The abbey needs to raise £7.1 million in order to receive the full match funding amount of £10 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. So far, including the mystery donation, it has raised £2.6 million.

Bath is a World Heritage Site and the Abbey, at the heart of the city, is visited by around half a million people every year.

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Evangelization isn't a synonym for advertising, Pope says



Giving witness to Jesus Christ is more than mere advertising, Pope Francis said: it's the act of courage in proclaiming the Gospel “with frankness” even to the point of martyrdom.

Christians do not simply “advertise Jesus Christ” with the aim of increasing our numbers, the pontiff noted during his daily Mass homily on Monday. “This is not necessary.”

“What the Christian does is to announce with courage, and the proclamation of Jesus Christ

causes, through the Holy Spirit, that astonishment that keeps us going,” he said, according to Vatican Radio's translation.

Pope Francis centered part of his reflection on the day's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, recounting the threats made against the apostles Peter and John during their imprisonment for speaking the name of Jesus.

Through the Holy Spirit, the pontiff said, Peter and John – although “simple” and “uneducated” – are given the “strength to proclaim Jesus Christ up until the final witness: martyrdom.”

Despite being threatened by their captors, the apostles continued to proclaim God's word “with frankness” and encouraged others to do the same.

“We cannot keep silent (about) what we have seen and heard,” the pontiff said, recalling the apostle's prayer to speak God's word boldly, and “not flee” from the threats they receive. Pope Francis went on to speak about the “path of openness” and “Christian courage,” which he says is relevant today.

“The path of Christian courage is a grace given by the Holy Spirit,” the Pope said. Courage, he

added, is an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Without Him, “we can do many things, much work, but it is not of any use.”

Australian Anglicans appoint Aboriginal bishop as step to reconciliation

Rt Rev Christopher McCleod has been appointed as South Australia's first Aboriginal bishop.

The Anglican Church of Australia has ordained an Aboriginal bishop in a ceremony that combined elements of Aboriginal and Anglican cultures and is being hailed as a step towards reconciliation.

Bishop Christopher McLeod was consecrated as an assistant bishop at St Peter's Cathedral in North Adelaide, South Australia. He is the third Australian bishop of Aboriginal descent, and the only one currently serving, but is also the first with a ministry specially dedicated to the indigenous people of the land.

Bishop McLeod is from the Gurundji people, originally from northern Australia in the Victoria River region. He is also one of the Stolen



Generations, children who were taken from their families by church and government, in some places as recently as the 1970s. His own mother and grandmother were removed and placed in institutions.

He has already spent the last 20 years in Anglican ministry, working with Aboriginal communities.

"I think I'll be able to bring something of the pain of that story to my role as a bishop and also to help other people with that same story to find healing," he said after the ceremony.

"My background is very much part of that Stolen Generations history.

"My mother was a member of the Stolen Generations and her mother was a member of the Stolen Generations.

"My mother was removed from her mother at a very young age and placed in a number of institutions in the Northern Territory.

"The priest who brought her to Adelaide wasn't involved in that process, but he kindly set up a number of places for Aboriginal people to come to."

Bishop McLeod plans to work towards strengthening ties between the church and Aboriginal population.

"The role is to be listening to the cares and the concerns and the joys and the spiritual needs of the Aboriginal people here in Adelaide but also throughout South Australia. A lot of it too, I have to say, is dealing with some of the attitudes towards Aboriginal people from non-Aboriginal people.

"The church has a role too to educate everybody about accepting a difference within our

community and, in particular, rejoicing in our Aboriginal history and heritage, and building some bridges along that sort of line," he told ABC.

Aboriginal leader Lowitja O'Donoghue said: "It really is very exciting to have an Aboriginal bishop. He seems to be quite shy. He knows a lot of Aboriginal people in South Australia."

The Archbishop of Adelaide, Most Rev Jeffrey Driver, said the appointment was one of advocacy and was a step towards reconciliation: "I think Australia has much yet to receive from its Indigenous heritage and from its Indigenous people and the church certainly has much to receive as well by way of the gifts of spirituality and leadership. In the late '90s, it was here in Adelaide that the Anglican Church first apologised to the Aboriginal people for the sorrow of the things that have happened in the past."

Media digest

Independent - Evangelical critics of gay marriage and women bishops meet in London to plot schism

The Church of England is at risk of an unprecedented schism as conservative Anglican leaders gather to discuss forming a “parallel” church in protest against women bishops and gay marriage.

Evangelical leaders from the US and across Africa are meeting in London this week to consider a revolutionary plan to turn their backs on the Archbishop of Canterbury. The meeting will “chart the future of global Anglicanism” and could back the creation of a new evangelical church opposed to the liberal direction of the Church of England, which would cater for conservative Anglicans in Britain.

The move away from the “mother” church is being debated by the seven-man leadership of the Global Anglican Futures Conference (Gafcon), which was formed in 2008 to bring about a return to “authentic Anglicanism”.

The socially conservative body – which is against female bishops and has been accused of homophobia – calls for an end to “secularism” in the mainstream Anglican Church, and is expected to make a commitment to defend the “essential truths of the biblical faith”. This could go as far as ordaining new church leaders.

Gafcon declined to comment, but in an Easter message, Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, a member of the Kenyan clergy and chairman of the Gafcon council, made clear that the global Anglican faith needed to be restored to “biblical truth” in the face of attacks from Islamic radicalism and “an increasingly intolerant secular culture”.

His intervention came a month after Gafcon supporters courted controversy in Britain by condemning an initiative which let Muslim worshippers hold prayers in a central London church. Archbishop Wabukala said the event, which was praised by cross-faith leaders, was a sign of the “struggle” and “crisis” developing in the Church of England. Mainstream members of the Anglican Church have described the planned establishment of a rival church as an “act of piracy” that will “cause confusion among Britain’s Anglicans”...

...The move to establish a parallel church comes six months after the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, warned church leaders that the diversity of the worldwide Anglican community “may be too much to manage”. Speaking in November, after the vote to allow women bishops, he denounced tribalism within the

Church, which he said was causing “deep divisions”...

...Anglicans believe a formal split will not occur as long as the Church of England maintains its formal opposition to gay marriage. Andrea Williams, director of Christian Concern, which campaigned against gay marriage legislation and has promoted controversial gay aversion therapy, said: “The Bible is clear about what marriage is and the church has not gone soft on that issue. But, if it were to, that might be the red line in the sand.”

Linda Woodhead, professor of sociology of religion at Lancaster University, said: “Gafcon are paper tigers, who love to roar and get a reaction but there is no substance to them. The congregation of the Church of England – in its personal morality – is increasingly liberal. And there is nothing Gafcon can do about that.

“They already have their churches at home to impose their views on homosexuality, but they don’t have the money to set up here and pay clergy.”

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/evangelical-critics-of-gay-marriage-and-women-bishops-meet-in-london-to-plot-schism-10176857.html>

Irish Times

Religious group distributes referendum pamphlets to churches across Ireland

A cross-denominational religious group campaigning for a No vote in the same-sex marriage referendum has distributed 20,000 pamphlets to over 100 churches throughout the country.

The group has also been taking advice from at least one Catholic archbishop and providing pamphlets to more bishops. It has declined to identify the individuals concerned.

An email circulated by campaigner [Paddy Monaghan](#) of the Evangelical Cross Denominational Response to the Same-Sex Marriage Referendum outlined the measures it has taken to date.

Mr Monaghan's group distributed the pamphlet after a steering group decided how it should be presented.

"If 80 per cent of the people who attended church over the weekend voted, and voted No, the referendum would be defeated," he said

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/religious-group-distributes-referendum-pamphlets-to-churches-across-ireland-1.2176019>

Religious ethos of society helps Muslims feel at home in Ireland

Rite & Reason: the story of Muslim migration here is different from elsewhere in Europe

The rise of Islamic State in [Syria](#) and [Iraq](#), and its impact on European societies, shows how interconnected our world is today. We cannot afford to be ignorant about the Middle East. What happens there has an effect on Europe's diverse societies, and the same is true for [Ireland](#).

News of a few young men joining Islamic State, or of the arrest of the son of a prominent Dublin imam following a government crackdown on the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) in [Egypt](#), show that the current turmoil in the Middle East is also relevant to Ireland.

Islam and Education in Ireland, a recent book by Ali Shehata Abdou Selim, and subsequent public debates, illustrate that Islam is something that has arrived in the midst of Irish society.

The publication of *Muslims in Ireland: Past and Present* (Edinburgh [University Press](#), 2015), by myself and four colleagues, seeks to provide an in-depth knowledge of our growing Muslim population from a balanced and well-informed academic perspective.

The book is the first complete survey of Muslims in Ireland, including both historical and up-to-date information. It shows that the Irish experience of Muslim immigration and settlement is different from that of other western European countries....

...*Muslims in Ireland: Past and Present* will be launched in the Long Room Hub at [Trinity College Dublin](#), on Monday, May 11th, at 5.30pm.

[Oliver Scharbrodt](#) is professor of Islamic studies at the University of Chester in the UK. For many years, he was based at [University College Cork](#), where he led a pioneering research project on Muslims in Ireland, funded by the [Irish Research Council](#); o.scharbrodt@chester.ac.uk

<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/religious-ethos-of-society-helps-muslims-feel-at-home-in-ireland-1.2174355>

Belfast Telegraph

East Belfast hustings: Applause for all election candidates as church goers are inspired

Liam Clarke - "You have home advantage - it's like Northern Ireland playing in Windsor Park," I joked with Gavin Robinson before he faced the voters last night.

Until recently, the DUP candidate was a worshipper at Stormont Presbyterian, but started attending Willowfield Church of Ireland - last night's hustings event venue - last year. If he was thinking politically it was a smart move.

But home advantage didn't go that far. "It's a mixed crowd," he told me, and a fair one too.

All candidates got clapped warmly, and Naomi Long got particularly strong applause when she spoke about attacks on Alliance during the flags protest. She and Ross Brown of the Greens also got applauded for opposing austerity measures.

There were no raised voices but the gap between Sinn Féin and the DUP was as wide as ever.... <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/general-election-2015/east-belfast-hustings-applause-for-all-election-candidates-as-church-goers-are-inspired-31139860.html>

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