



Churches enable young people to 'Streetreach' in Kilcooley

Cut the grass, clear the garden and paint the fence! It might sound like a summer Saturday afternoon, but if you add in a Community Mural, a Seniors Afternoon Tea, a Holiday Bible Club, a Youth Club Drop-in and a Family Fun Day then you have a list of the activities that took place in Kilcooley, Bangor, at the beginning of April.

This was all part of Streetreach Kilcooley, an initiative of St Columba's Church of Ireland and facilitated by churches from many different traditions from all over Bangor. It was an opportunity for young (and some not so young) people to serve the people of Kilcooley and show God's love for them.

That service took the form of offering to do 'odd jobs' and during the first three days 70 young people cleared gardens, cut grass and painted fences for local people. At the same time, 24 children came to the Holiday Bible Club in the church to hear about Jesus, play games and enjoy crafts. The final day of Streetreach saw over a hundred people from Kilcooley estate come to St Columba's to enjoy face painting, an inflatable obstacle course, a bouncy castle, tea room, pop corn machine, Dinky Doughnuts and BBQ!

The Revd Andrew Campbell, curate at Bangor Abbey and St Columba's, oversaw the project and said, "This is a wonderful opportunity to show the people of Kilcooley that St Columba's as a church is here for them and that we have a real heart for the people of the area."

The rector of the parish, Revd Canon Ronnie Nesbitt, commented: "The energy of the team

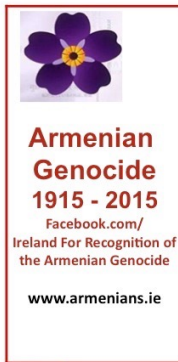
and their commitment to the scheme was impressive and there were lots of happy faces which was great to see! I hope this is a foretaste of things to come.”

St Columba’s hopes to follow up the success of Streetreach with a Holiday Bible Club during the Summer.

Armenian Church in Ireland to commemorate 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

This coming weekend, April 24 to 26, the Armenian Church in Ireland will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian community here gathers in Taney Parish (Dundrum) and a Remembrance Service will take place there on Sunday afternoon.

The weekend of commemoration will begin on Friday April 24 with a photographic exhibition in Christ Church, Dun Laoghaire, from 12.30 pm until 6.30 pm. At 7.30 pm there will be a silent vigil at Dun Laoghaire Pier which will include the release of 100 Chinese lanterns representing 100 years of the unrecognised genocide.



The Armenians in Ireland invite you to
Commemorate the Centennial
of the 1915 Armenian Genocide

Friday, 24th April 2015

Photographic Exhibition: 12:30 pm-18:30 pm

@ Christ Church, Dun Laoghaire

Silent Vigil: 19:30pm to release 100 Chinese lanterns

@ Dun Laoghaire Pier

Sunday, 26th April 2015

Remembrance Service - 3:00 pm

@ Taney Parish Church, Dundrum

Refreshments will be served



Each year the Armenian Church and nation has a special day of prayer to remember the 1.5 million Armenians who were killed by the Ottoman Turks between 1915 and 1923.

It is a National Remembrance day for all Armenians worldwide. The 100th anniversary Remembrance Service will take place in Taney Parish on Sunday April 26 at 3.00 pm. It will be attended by Church leaders. In November a Genocide Memorial will be erected in Christ Church Cathedral.

The history of the Armenian Church is almost as old as Christianity itself as according to tradition, two apostles of Jesus, St Thaddeus and St Bartholomew brought the Gospel to Armenia during the second half of the first century.

The Mother See of the Armenian Orthodox Church is based at Etchmiadzin in Armenia. In Ireland there is only one parish. It is based in Dublin and was set up in March 2011.

The Dublin Parish is tied to the Armenian Apostolic Church in UK under the supervision of the Primate of the Armenian Church based in London. The Dublin Parish meets and holds parish community activities in Taney Parish (Church of Ireland) in Dundrum.

The majority of those Armenians living in Ireland carry a family history of the Armenian Genocide. Further information is available at www.armenians.ie.

Major Presbyterian conference on Discipleshaping Church

Organised by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Council for Congregational Life and Witness, which is responsible for supporting the on-going life, mission and witness of congregations in their work, Council Secretary, Rev. David Thompson said that it was the start of an important conversation for the Church. In

shaping that conversation delegates heard from Neil Hudson, author of *'Imagine Church'* and Director of the Imagine Project at the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity.

“The conference was designed to enable the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to pause and take stock of how we are doing at equipping our members to be followers of Jesus in today’s world,” David Thompson said.

“While this is the primary task of the Church, as Jesus defines it, somehow we often get distracted from it by the challenges of doing all that it takes to just keep our congregations standing still against a background of falling numbers and a changing society.”

In preparing individuals for the task, Neil Hudson said,

“Equipping the people of God and releasing them into the places they are in, brings both mission and discipleship together. Two tenets of Christian life that are often seen as two very different things, but are intrinsically linked.”

“As society becomes increasingly secular and where more and more people are saying ‘religion isn’t for me’ this creates distinct challenges, but at the same time real opportunities to bring the

Good News of Jesus to them. To do that we need to disciple our people better, taking a fresh look at what it actually means to serve God in the 21st Century so that we can live fruitful lives and be fruitful for God's purposes as agents of His Kingdom.”

Professor Stafford Carson, Principal of Union Theological College who set the scene for the conference, looked at where the Church is now and what may need to change.

“We need to become less transactional, in terms of just focussing on keeping the wheels turning in all aspects of congregational life, and look at how we can become transformational in our outlook and leadership.

“It is important that we look to see how things can be changed and one of our biggest challenges may not be learning new skills and developing new approaches, but unlearning what we know to be tried and tested,” Professor Carson said.

Reflecting on the conference, Rev. David Thompson said, “This has been a first word on the subject, and not the last, as this is very much the start of a conversation. The new Ireland in which we find ourselves today demands that we

re-imagine what is required to rise to the contemporary challenges faced in living and sharing the life that Jesus has to give. We look forward to responding to the message of today's conference and the feedback from local congregations in response to it."

Priest's four day cross-border run to highlight human trafficking

Earlier this year, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh, proposed that a resolution for 2015 might be to raise awareness in order to tackle the global scandal of human trafficking. Archbishop Martin proposed that we might ask ourselves and our public representatives:

- where is trafficking happening in our community?
- what are we doing to actively make Ireland the land of one thousand welcomes and a cold place for human traffickers?

In an effort to create awareness of modern day trafficking Father Gerry Campbell, Parish Priest of Kilkerry, Dundalk, will undertake a diocesan run – starting from the Bann and going to the Boyne and he will undertake it over the four days of 26, 27, 28 and 29 April. Father Campbell is a

native of Magherafelt in County Derry and is no stranger to running the length of the Archdiocese of Armagh. His first diocesan walk/run was in 2013 when a team of runners and walkers joined him at various parts of the archdiocese to raise funds for Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Last year he ran the same route in support of the Trócaire's 2014 Lenten Campaign which highlighted the global water crisis.



Archbishop Eamon Martin and Sr Geraldine McCarthy of APT join Fr Gerry Campbell to launch Fr Gerry's four day run in aid of APT

In welcoming Father Campbell's initiative Archbishop Martin said, "In recent days the large scale loss of life in the Mediterranean Sea has

once again highlighted human trafficking as a real and present problem which needs be addressed locally, nationally and internationally. As a start we need a personal awareness of what trafficking is, and how it can be prevented. I warmly welcome Father Gerry's initiative which seeks to raise public awareness about this form of human exploitation and aggressive family displacement. I ask the faithful to remember in their prayers all people who have experienced trafficking, and I invite anyone who can to come out and support Father Gerry on his route."

In his message on New Year's Day – the World Day of Peace – Pope Francis placed before us the cruel facts of modern day slavery: that millions of children, women and men throughout the world are deprived of their freedom and forced to live in conditions akin to slavery. The Holy Father spoke with bluntness about the greed and corruption which preys upon the dignity of our fellow human beings who are "trafficked" from place to place and mistreated as objects for exploitation and prostitution. Many of them, because of extreme poverty and helplessness get caught up into a vicious circle, accepting roles and situations that are beneath their human dignity. And, sadly, because of selfishness and global indifference, the wider

global community can easily remain blind and ignorant of the plight of trafficked people.

See also - Cross-border campaign to oppose sex trade and trafficking

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/cross-border-campaign-to-oppose-sex-trade-and-trafficking-1-6703021>

Mayor and bishop share concerns



Mayor Elisha McCallion visits Bishop Ken Good at the See House

The new Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council, Elisha McCallion, paid her first visit to the See House in Londonderry on Tuesday to meet the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Ken Good.

Their meeting followed an invitation from Bishop Good and took place less than a month after the Sinn Féin councillor became First Citizen. The See House – Bishop Good’s home – is in the Ballyarnett ward, which the Mayor represents on the new council.

During a discussion lasting over an hour, the Mayor outlined her priorities for her term of office, including action to address unemployment locally. The Derry and Strabane district has the highest rate of unemployment in Northern Ireland and one of the highest in the UK. The pair also discussed the local economy, and problems facing young people and the elderly in the North West.

Bishop Good outlined to the Mayor the Diocese’s plans for 2016’s ‘Year of Opportunity’. Parishes throughout Derry and Raphoe will seek to achieve growth in the church and in the community, in line with the Diocese’s ‘Transforming Community, Radiating Christ’ initiative.

Down and Connor Vocations Sunday

A Eucharistic Prayer Vigil for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life will take place in Church of Mary, Mother of the Church, Saintfield, Co. Down on Thursday 30th April 2015 from 7.30pm – 10pm. The Vigil will conclude with Mass at 9pm.

“Behind and before every vocation to the priesthood or to the consecrated life there is always the strong and intense prayer of someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a mother, a father, a community.... This is why Jesus said: “Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest,” that is, God the Father, “to send out labourers into his harvest” (Mt 9:38). May these words of Pope Francis encourage us to come together to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life remembering that vocations are born in prayer and from prayer; and only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit.

Parish split deepens as details emerge of service with members of controversial American church

A group of concerned parishioners at loggerheads with their rector have urged the

Church of Ireland to distance itself from clerics who associate with a controversial American church.

Belfast Telegraph - The call comes after it emerged that a Co Armagh church hosted a service with missionaries from the revivalist Bethel Church, some of whose followers reportedly try to raise the dead and experience manifestations of gold dust.

Some congregation members at St Matthias' Church in Knocknamuckley, outside Lurgan, are opposed to the style of ministry adopted by their rector, the Rev Alan Kilpatrick, who is associated with the Bethel Church of Supernatural Ministries.

Around 100 parishioners jointly issued a statement saying that they oppose "any further development of ministry connected to the Church of Bethel in Knocknamuckley" following a meeting on Tuesday night.

Last night, the Scots-born cleric confirmed that a service involving some members of the Bethel Church had taken place last month at Knocknamuckley. However, he stressed his allegiance was to the Church of Ireland. He said in a statement: "I am a Church of Ireland

clergyman and I preach about the Kingdom of God."

Referring to the service involving members of the Bethel Church, he added: "There was no mention of raising the dead or manifestations of gold dust."

It is not the first time that the Californian-based independent church has raised eyebrows amongst fellow Christians. Some of the more controversial beliefs discussed by Bethel followers are attempts to raise the dead through their religious belief and the phenomenon of gold dust appearing on believers' hands and faces when the 'glory of God' is released in the room.

One of its leaders, Kris Vallotton, wrote an online article in 2012 addressing what he believed was miscommunication about the church by its detractors. In the article he said that while he had personally tried to raise people from the dead twice, he was not successful. He added that some of the church's students had formed DRTs (Dead Raising Teams) and that he had personally witnessed the manifestation of gold dust on followers' faces and hands "hundreds of times".

The Bethel delegation visit to Knocknamuckley has caused tension between the Rev Kilpatrick - churchnewsireland@gmail.com

noted for wearing earrings and preaching in jeans during his 18-month ministry - and a sizable proportion of his congregation.

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/parish-split-deepens-as-details-emerge-of-service-with-members-of-controversial-american-church-31164474.html>

News Letter - Church pledge to address parish concerns on minister

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/church-pledge-to-address-parish-concerns-on-minister-1-6704201>

Archbishop Welby praises “crucial” work of Fresh Expressions

Archbishop Justin Welby has praised the “crucial” work of Fresh Expressions as the church in England seeks to engage with an increasingly complex culture.

Speaking at a Fresh Expressions ‘From Margins to Mainstream’ event held at Lambeth Palace on Wednesday, the Archbishop spoke of the “huge complexity” of engaging with the modern world.

But he said the Church was well placed to meet this challenge because of its great diversity and vibrancy. From Fresh Expressions and pioneer ministry, to cathedrals and training institutions, he said the Church is “more of a jazz band than a symphony orchestra”.

He added: “It’s an improvisation... it’s the process of bringing together so many different aspects of what it is to be the church and enabling those to work in harmony.”

Within this he said that Fresh Expressions plays a vital role in bringing people to faith in Christ.

Looking forward, the Archbishop said the Church must lift its gaze from internal conflicts and focus on “the work of the Spirit to move through this land, renewing it and strengthening it and bringing people face to face with Jesus Christ”.

During his talk Archbishop Justin reflected on the harmony between a lot of Fresh Expressions work and his own ministry priorities of prayer, reconciliation, and evangelism and witness.

Prayer features heavily in many fresh expressions, he said, because they draw people to faith and to relationship with Christ. “And the

most natural thing to do, especially for new Christians, is not strategic plans but passionate prayer,” he said.

Fresh Expressions is also “crucial” in helping reconciliation between diverse groups within the church, he continued.

“Reconciliation is about the business of living diversely in a diverse world in a way that draws people face to face with Jesus Christ. And reconciliation happens in the church not when we look inward at each other but when we look outward, and begin to work together for the good of the Kingdom of God. Fresh Expressions is crucial to that.”

The initiative has also been “a gift” to evangelism and witness across the country, he said – but stressed that this work could not be done by any one group alone.

The work of bringing more and more people to faith in Jesus was “in the hand of God,” he said.

But it needs “fresh expressions to be utterly normal within the life of the Church of England, within its training, within its sector ministry, within its mission action planning. It requires each to see that they need the other. It requires

the orchestration and the inspiration of the Spirit of God.”

Archbishop Justin welcomed the appointment of Revd Canon David Male to the new role of National Adviser for Pioneer Ministry.

C of E appoints National Adviser for Pioneer Ministry

The Revd Canon David Male has been appointed to the new role of National Adviser for Pioneer Ministry. David is presently the Director of the Centre for Pioneer Learning in Cambridge which aims to equip, resource and send out lay and ordained pioneers, both nationally and internationally.

He is also Tutor in Pioneer Mission Training at Westcott House and Ridley Hall, Cambridge and Pioneer Consultant for Ely Diocese.

Previously David spent seven years as the Vicar of the Net Church in Huddersfield which was one of the first fresh expressions in the UK. He has written a number of books around pioneering issues. He is a member of the Archbishops College of Evangelists.

Dr Tim Ling, Head of Ministry Development, said: "After more than a decade of work on pioneer ministry and Fresh Expressions (following the *Mission shaped Church* report), the Church of England has reached a critically important stage in moving from envisioning to strategic embedding.

This new fixed term post funded by the Church Commissioners and based in Ministry Division has been designed through an innovative partnership with Fresh Expressions to help this process of embedding.

David's appointment helps to build the Ministry Division's capacity to offer support to colleagues in the National Church Institutions, dioceses, Theological Education Institutions, and mission agencies, in this important area of ministry at this particular time."

The primary purpose of the role is to facilitate the development of a comprehensive and integrated vision, strategy and practice for pioneer ministry in the Church of England. David will work as an official champion for all licensed and authorised forms of pioneer ministry. He commented, 'I am very excited by this new role and the opportunities it offers to further develop

the scope and reach of pioneering across the whole of England.'

David takes up his new role in August 2015.

Munro challenge: reach a summit, raise money for Christian Aid

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has called on the Church to get behind a major fundraising drive for Christian Aid by signing up to his Munro challenge.

On Saturday 2 May, Rt Rev John Chalmers and Rachel Hutcheson, National Youth Assembly Moderator, will be leading by example by climbing Ben Lomond.

Mr Chalmers said: "This day out is much more than a fundraiser – it is an opportunity to join me and Rachel on a pilgrimage during which we will contemplate some of the mountains that Christian Aid and others are still trying to climb on their way to creating a world that is just and fair and which gives the poor a chance to climb out of poverty."

As they prepare for their trek, the two Moderators are calling on congregations across

Scotland to reach the summit of 69 other Munros to mark the 70th anniversary of Christian Aid.

Ms Hutcheson added: "It would be great to cover the mountain with walkers dedicating their day to the work of Christian Aid, but do remember to dress for the mountains – the weather can change very quickly when you are on the Scottish hills."

WCC mourns the killing of Ethiopian Christians by the Islamic State

In a solidarity letter to Abune Mathias, patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, a member church of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, the WCC general secretary expressed deep shock over the recent killing of more than 20 Ethiopian Christians in Libya by the Islamic State (IS).

"I speak on behalf of the ecumenical family when I say that we are shocked and appalled by the heinous and inhuman violence inflicted on these innocent faithful Ethiopians and that we strongly denounce and condemn any ideology that

condones and celebrates murder and torture,” said Tveit in the letter issued on 21 April.

“It is in such troubled and challenging times,” he continued, “that the gospel imperative of solidarity and ecumenical togetherness with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is more relevant than ever.”

“We stand in solidarity with your church during this painful period when you are mourning your faithful children,” said Tveit.

The WCC general secretary offered prayers for the victims. He said, “We also pray for healing and strength of their families and loved ones. We also pray for all migrants who take great risks in the hope for a better and more dignified life. May the Almighty protect them in their perilous journey.”

[Read full text of the WCC general secretary's letter -](#)

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/messages-and-letters/killings-of-ethiopian-christians/>

Media digest

Belfast Telegraph

Churches could show path to peace on key marching talks - Liam Clarke

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/liam-clarke/churches-could-show-path-to-peace-on-key-marching-talks-31163880.html>

First Pagan church for Northern Ireland: Stormont officially recognises The Order of The Golden River as a religion

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/first-pagan-church-for-northern-ireland-stormont-officially-recognises-the-order-of-the-golden-river-as-a-religion-31165768.html>

News Letter

Church pledge to address parish concerns on minister

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/church-pledge-to-address-parish-concerns-on-minister-1-6704201>

DUP is right to allow its members free vote on abortion policy

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/dup-is-right-to-allow-its-members-free-vote-on-abortion-policy-1-6702666>

Pro-life campaigner 'shocked' by DUP free vote on abortion

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/pro-life-campaigner-shocked-by-dup-free-vote-on-abortion-1-6703604>

UTV

Red tape led to Hebdo conference cancellation

Queen's University has blamed red tape for the cancellation of a conference set to discuss the French Charlie Hebdo massacre and its aftermath.

<http://www.u.tv/News/2015/04/22/Red-tape-led-to-Hebdo-conference-cancellation-35928>

Irish News

School Starting Age Flexibility Changes May Not Go Ahead

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/school-starting-age-flexibility-changes-may-not-go-ahead-1437137>

Irish Times

Yes side to spend €700,000 on same-sex marriage campaign

[http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/yes-side-to-spend-700-000-on-same-sex-marriage-campaign-1.2185490?
utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/yes-side-to-spend-700-000-on-same-sex-marriage-campaign-1.2185490?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

Guardian

IRA informer accuses police of abandoning him to die

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/apr/22/ira-informer-police-abandon-die>

Guard

Article on the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to Brixton Prison, south London, where he will be a guest of the Prison Fellowship. It states Justin Welby will be supporting the work of the Sycamore Tree project, run by some 2,000 volunteers and in place in 40 prisons nationwide. The victim awareness programme teaches the principles of restorative justice, but it says the Ministry of Justice has just announced its funding of the Sycamore Tree has been stopped.

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/apr/22/cutting-prison-victim-awareness-tories-chris-grayling>

Mail

Article on a mother who has pledged to remove her children from school to attend an ancient Maypole festival - despite facing fines or even prosecution. Anna James said she will defy the school's ban on taking her children to the celebrations - claiming the rituals are part of her 'religion, culture and heritage.' It states Bishop Bronescombe Church of England School, in St Austell, Cornwall, which declined to comment, had blocked her request.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3051083/Mother-four-pledges-flout-school-ban-children-school-ancient-Maypole-festival-s-religion-culture-heritage.html#ixzz3Y6huwvb3>

Mail

Further report on VE Day 70th anniversary commemoration plans which states on VE Day, Friday May 8, a service of remembrance will be held at the Cenotaph, with a national two-minute silence at 3pm. On Sunday, there will be a service of thanksgiving at 11am at Westminster Abbey attended by the Queen, followed by a parade from the Abbey to Horse Guards Parade and into St James's Park.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3050678/Veterans-highlight-VE-Day-events.html#ixzz3Y6jEHeeG>

Guard/Express/Mail/Ind/Mirror

Report that the number of women in Britain choosing to become nuns has trebled over the last five years, according to the Catholic church. Figures show that the number of women taking holy vows has reached a 25-year high, with 45 women doing so last year. According to church figures, 14 of those who entered convents this year were aged 30 or under and dissatisfaction with modern society and a greater awareness of religious life are factors leading to the increase.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/23/nuns-treble-five-years>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/572162/Nuns-British-women-taking-vows-chastity-poverty>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3051530/Back-habit-Sister-act-number-nuns-hits-25-year-high-45->

women-taking-vow-year.html?
ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/dissatisfaction-with-modern-life-prompts-surge-in-number-of-women-entering-convents-10196369.html>
<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/holy-mother-catholic-church-says-5565553>

Times

Humanist marriages are on the brink of outstripping the number of weddings performed by Church of Scotland, according to a report which describes it as an epoch-making shift in social and religious values. It states the Humanist Society Scotland (HSS) predicts its celebrants will this year preside over more than 4,200 marriages - more, they claim, than will be performed by Kirk ministers or celebrants from any other denomination.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/scotland/article4419931.ece>

BBC

Report that the Reverend Dr Angus, who will take over as moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland next month, has told how he had to withdraw from taking on the role two years ago when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. It states having now returned to fitness, Dr Morrison will step into the moderator role at next month's general assembly.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-32418762>

BBC

Report that tens of thousands of Ethiopians have attended a rally in the capital, Addis Ababa, condemning the murders of Ethiopians by Islamic State militants. Ethiopia's prime minister warned the protesters about the dangers of illegal immigration and described the killings as "Satanic".

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32423688>