

Illustrated history of The Church Of Ireland launched

‘The Church of Ireland – An Illustrated History’ published by Booklink was launched by The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland in St Anne’s Cathedral on Tuesday 3rd December 2013.

The guest speaker at the event was Professor Brian Walker (QUB) who was a consultant editor of the new book.



the past such as Swift and Berkeley to more recent times such as C.S. Lewis and



(Pictured above: Archbishop Richard Clarke, Prof Brian Walker, Dr Claude Costecalde, publisher, at the launch in St Anne’s Cathedral)

Archbishop Clarke commended and congratulated all who had contributed to the beautiful and comprehensive multi-authored new publication, while Professor Walker described some of the very many fascinating Church of Ireland figures from

Ballintoy Parish Church which features on the front cover of the new history

Bishop MacNeice. He also paid tribute to the publisher Dr Claude Costecalde and the designer, Wendy Dunbar who have created ‘a superbly produced, colourful and comprehensive’ volume.

The new 400–page book is produced in hardback and full–colour. The Archbishop

of Armagh and Archbishop of Dublin state in their foreword to it: 'This volume comprises the work of over sixty historians, editors and photographers from all over Ireland with a diverse range of interests and approaches. Each tells the story of the Church in his or her own way and the variety of this material reflects the diversity within the Church of Ireland itself ... This book achieves the remarkable task of covering every parish or union/group of parishes, with illustrations of over two thirds of all the churches.'

Dr Claude Costecalde, says: 'Informed and inspired by the past, the Church of Ireland looks forward with confidence and eager expectation to the future. This illustrated book presents its rich heritage and history in an attractive contemporary style that will appeal to every generation. It reveals at the same time the modern presence of the Church in every diocese. The Church of Ireland – An Illustrated History is a record of the past with an invitation to reflect on the life of the Church in the twenty-first century.'

The Church in the Public Square?

The Church in the Public Square? is a conference organised under the auspices of Union Theological College, and in conjunction with the Church and Society Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and will be held in Assembly Buildings, Fisherwick Place Belfast, on Thursday 30 January 2014 from 10.30am to 3.30pm.

It seeks to bring together a number of leading thinkers in the UK and from our local community to consider the role which Christians and the Church can play as we seek to move forward as a community.

Those who have lived through the second half of the twentieth century will be aware of the seismic shift that has taken place in



Mosaic at Union Theological College

terms of morality and ethical standards. Whereas it was once the case that a majority of people in our society accepted and ordered their lives according to foundational Christian standards of morality, that is no longer the case. The changing scene has meant that those who hold to a traditional Christian position feel decidedly uncomfortable and marginalized as our society, and increasingly its major institutions, reflect a secular point of view which conflicts with their Christian principles. Not only has the Christian voice become incomprehensible in many ears, but it is often even hated and actively opposed.

What should Christians do, and how should they respond to these changes? In particular, what role does the Christian Church have to play in the debates that are taking place on a whole range of issues from education to euthanasia? Our three speakers will help us answer these

and other related questions.

Professor Donald McLeod is Professor of Systematic Theology at Free Church College in Edinburgh, and a regular commentator on current affairs in Scotland and the UK from a Christian point of view. He is well known as a previous editor of *The Monthly Record of the Free Church* and as a columnist in the *West Highland Free Press* and *The Observer* newspaper. His comments have frequently been controversial. Professor McLeod will reflect on how and where the Church ought to position itself in current debates. Should the church retreat from the public square and only be concerned with spiritual matters? Or is there a biblical mandate for involvement in the discussion of key issues?

Dr Jonathan Chaplin is Director of the Kirby Laing Centre for Christian Ethics in Cambridge. He is a specialist in Christian political thought, and has authored or edited eight books and reports and many articles in this field. He is currently working on a book provisionally entitled *Faith in Democracy? Towards a Post-secularist Settlement*. He has served on the board or advisory councils of several organisations working on the relationship between Christian faith and public life, including the Movement for Christian Democracy, Citizens for Public Justice (Canada), the Social Action Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, the theology committee of the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Committee, and the Civitas Program of the Center for Public Justice (USA). He was a member of the UK Evangelical Alliance's Theology and Public Policy Advisory Council from 2007–2011. Dr Chaplin will deal with the Churchnewsireland@gmail.com

challenge that arises when a diversity of religious communities no longer accept the privatized role allotted to them by liberal secularism but demand public recognition and public influence. Many want public policy to reflect their distinctive religious identity. Can this be done? Should we expect, or work for, some degree of practical agreement?

John Larkin QC is the Attorney-General for Northern Ireland. He is the first holder of the office not to be a politician sitting in either the Parliament of Northern Ireland at Stormont, or the Westminster Parliament. He was born in Belfast and was educated



The Chapel of Union Theological College

at St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Belfast and Queen's University where he read law. He was subsequently called to the Bar of Northern Ireland and practiced as a barrister. In 1989, at the age of 25, Mr Larkin was appointed as Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penal Law at Trinity College, Dublin. He returned to Northern Ireland in the 1990s to work at the Northern Ireland Bar, specialising in administrative law, civil liberties and human rights, competition and constitutional law, defamation and

judicial review. Mr Larkin will explore the nature of rights, the use and abuse of 'rights talk' and the importance for contemporary Northern Ireland of a healthy rights culture.

This day conference should prove to be stimulating and thought-provoking. We believe that there will be much interest in the topics to be discussed, and early registration is recommended. The conference fee (including lunch) is £20 (£12 for full time students) and that a special early registration fee of £15 is available to those who book by 1st December.

To register please send the appropriate booking fee to Union Theological College, 108 Botanic Avenue, BT7 1JT

(Cheques made payable to Union Theological College)

For enquiries email Union College or telephone +44 (0)28 90205080

1,100-year-old Downpatrick High Cross being moved

Work is to begin later to remove a 1,100-year-old cross from outside Down Cathedral in Downpatrick.

BBC News - Downpatrick High Cross is to be hoisted from its current position and moved to nearby Down County Museum.

There, it will become the centrepiece of a new extension due to be built soon.

The intricately patterned Mourne granite cross, carved around AD 900 as a "prayer in stone", is of historical, cultural and religious significance.



The cross was carved some time around AD 900

Its first location is believed to have been the early medieval monastery on the Hill of Down.

Following the Reformation, the High Cross was taken down and was used as Downpatrick's market cross. It was damaged in a busy town centre location before being dismantled and its parts dispersed around the town.

In the 1890s, the parts were gathered together by Francis Joseph Bigger and reconstructed outside Down Cathedral, with the help of subscriptions from donors.

Once safely positioned in Down County Museum, the High Cross will be cleaned, drawn and photographed by a team of experts.

It will be replaced, next year, by an exact replica which will be made by a Kilkeel stonemason using granite to be blasted from a local quarry at Thomas Mountain.

New photographs and scans of the cross done in preparation for the move already show details of the carvings which have not been apparent in recent years, leading to revised interpretations of the biblical scenes from the Old and New Testaments depicted on its front and rear faces.

Stolen cathedral silver recovered

The historic silver plate that was stolen from the Library at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast some weeks ago has been discovered.

The 16th century silver has been slightly damaged. The PSNI and a dealer helped in its recovery.

The Dean of Belfast, The Very Revd John Mann said: "Needless to say that I am delighted and relieved to hear that the stolen cathedral silver plate has been found, and that St Anne's will have it back soon. These communion vessels are important to us, not for their monetary worth, which is comparatively small, but for their historic and sacramental connection with the cathedral worshipping community, and to the old St Anne's church which stood on the site before the cathedral was built. I would like to thank all who have been responsible for the recovery of these vessels, which we will have back in use, with much joy, as soon as possible!"

Gay marriage 'a flawed social experiment'

David Smyth of Evangelical Alliance told last Saturday's TUV conference that gay marriage was an "oxymoron" and a social experiment which was untested.

Mr Smyth, one of several guest speakers from outside the party, told members that the change introduced by the coalition government in

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Westminster would have "profound implications" for society.

And, although the Assembly has blocked the legislation extending to Northern Ireland, the former solicitor said that the Equality Commission had "chosen to publicly back" same-sex marriage, raising the prospect of a legal challenge.

Mr Smyth, who received a large ovation from the crowd, said the term 'equal marriage' was misleading and offensive, suggesting that marriage had historically been unequal and discriminatory, adding: "Equality is supposed to go hand in hand with diversity and is not best served by uniformity."

But Mr Smyth said that there was a need to "hold convictions and compassion in tension".

Minister 'banned from preaching the gospel'

A Presbyterian minister who has been removed from his congregation claims he has been forbidden from preaching by his own denomination.

News Letter - The Rev Stephen Dickinson was speaking this week after confirming he had received a letter from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) on the matter.

The Rev Stephen Dickinson



In April he was stood down by the judicial commission of the church from the Cairnalbana and Glenarm congregations.

In a highly unusual development, 12 church elders at Cairnalbana were also removed following a long-running quarrel between some members of the congregation and the minister in what has been described as a clash of personalities.

The Rev Dickinson said yesterday: "Now they are seeking to ban me from preaching the gospel; that is what I am, I am a preacher of the gospel.

"But now I have been banned from preaching outside the Presbyterian church. What about civil and religious liberties? What about the great commission?"

He confirmed that the letter had been written to him after he began preaching at New Dawn Evangelical Fellowship in Broughshane.

The fellowship had **been created** by supporters who left his previous church, he said.

He confirmed that PCI had provided him with a salary and that he was allowed to stay in the manse for a maximum of 18 months after his removal from his ministry. In that time he was required to find another church in PCI to pastor, or an alternative ministry or take a secular job.

"I don't see how I have broken any of those conditions," he said.

A PCI spokesman said that following his removal in April from the congregational ministry in Glenarm and Cairnalbana, an arrangement regarding salary and accommodation was put in place.

This ensured he would be paid an appropriate salary until he was called to another congregation within the Church,

began an alternative ministry or took up **employment** when the arrangement would cease, up to a maximum of 18 months, he said.

"The Church considers any discussion concerning the terms of this arrangement a private matter with Mr Dickinson. Mr Dickinson remains a minister in good standing with the Presbyterian Church and eligible to be called to a congregation."

A colorful poster for the 'Overflow Young Leaders Training Weekend'. The word 'OVERFLOW' is written vertically in large, stylized letters on the left. The background is a collage of photos of young people. Text on the poster includes: 'IMYC Irish Methodist Youth and Children's Department', 'YOUNG LEADERS TRAINING WEEKEND', 'When 7th - 9th February 2014', 'Where Newtownabbey Methodist Mission', 'Speaker Clare Woodward Director of Youth Ministries, First Presbyterian Church Ballynahinch', 'Book Visit www.imycd.info', and social media links for Twitter (@imycstaff) and Facebook (facebook.com/imycd).

Overflow young leaders training

Overflow is a training weekend for young leaders organised by the Methodist Church.

The organisers state - Our desire for "Overflow" is that the young people will

learn to lead out of a deeply rooted relationship with God and recognise that their skills, abilities and passions all come from Him. We plan to inspire young people and give them confidence to serve in their local churches through a weekend of training focused on leadership, using Biblical models and experienced trainers.

The organisers are asking Churches to support their young people by donating £25 to cover the costs of food, trainers, halls etc. The desire would be that the Church would send and support their young people as an investment into the life of the Church. We would also ask the young person to pay £10 towards the weekend. This is seen as their acknowledgement that they want to be part of the weekend.

The cost above would be our ideal. However, if financially this is a struggle then our request is that the Church and the young person work out covering the minimum payment of £25 for the weekend together. Venue: Newtownabbey Methodist Mission Date: Friday, 7 February, 2014 - 19:00 to Sunday, 9 February, 2014 - 14:00

Attachments:



[overflow-2014.pdf](#)



[consentform.pdf](#)

<http://www.irishmethodist.org/imycd/overflow-booking-form>

C of E boosts digital presence with new app

The Church of England has released a new app to help more people to follow Sunday services using their mobile devices.

Sunday Worship (a new app Churchnewsireland@gmail.com

for iPad/iPhone) presents the full Bible readings for the main Sunday service, together with the Collect & post Communion prayers for the week in a simple and elegant way, using the award-winning Common Worship design.

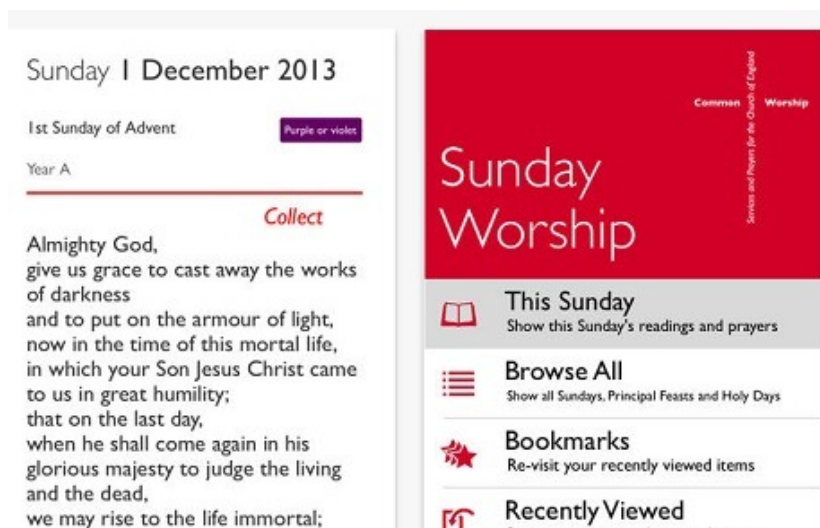
This follows two other apps published to support congregations in their devotional lives:

For those seeking a daily pattern of Bible reading, prayer and inspiration, Reflections for Daily Prayer was also launched on Friday 28th November and is available on the Google Play Store for Android devices, after seeing over 50,000 downloads since its launch for iPad/iPhone.

The Lectionary - a key tool for clergy and worship leaders, providing them with the Bible readings for every service and full details of feast days and other information - is also available this year for the first time as an iPad/iPhone app, Kindle ebook or as a printed booklet.

The apps have been developed by Church House Publishing (Official Publisher of the Church of England) with Aimer Media, a Brighton-based developer that has developed acclaimed apps for a number of other religious publishers among many others.

Thomas Allain-Chapman, Publishing Manager for Church House Publishing



comments: "The new digital resources we are offering this year will, I hope, make this new Church year just a little bit easier for clergy and parishes. Sunday Worship is designed to make it simple for anyone to find out what's coming up in church this Sunday, to prepare well for taking part in worship and perhaps also revisit the Bible readings and prayers during the rest of the week, too."

Adrian Driscoll, Commercial Director of Aimer Media, adds: "We've had great feedback from ministers about how our apps make Bible reading and service planning that bit easier – and we're excited to open up these benefits to even more people through the Android version."

All three Church House Publishing/Aimer Media iPad/iPhone apps - Sunday Worship, The Common Worship Lectionary and Reflections for Daily Prayer - are all available now on iTunes and details can be found at: <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/features/our-apps>

Reflections for Daily Prayer is also available from Google Play Store for Android devices.

Some of Glasgow's Catholic parishes 'may close'

Roman Catholic parishes in Glasgow could face closure or amalgamation as part of plans to reorganise resources.

BBC - The Archdiocese of Glasgow is launching a consultation with parishioners amid changes in congregation numbers.

The move is being driven by the city's falling population and a shift in whereabouts Catholics live in Glasgow.



St Andrew's Cathedral, Glasgow

The church said there was no "hit list" or target number of parishes that would close but that closures or amalgamations were a possibility.

Ronnie Convery, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Glasgow, said: "It is a consultation about rearranging our resources to match our buildings and priests to where people are.

Population move

"At the moment it's largely based on a model from the 1950s and the emergence of new housing schemes all over the city.

"These areas grew in the 50s, 60s and 70s but by the 80s they were beginning to depopulate, so we ended up with areas with churches but virtually no population, and the population has moved to another area of the city where it's bursting at the seams."

Mr Convery said the church was clarifying where its resources lay presently and where they needed to be in the future.

He said: "We want to get the whole Archdiocese thinking about how to reconfigure for the 21st century."

The population of the city of Glasgow has dropped from 1.1 million to 585,000 in the past 40 years, he said.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-25153180>

Rathfriland Festival starts today

A Christmas Tree Festival. Will be held in St John's Parish Church, Rathfriland from Thursday 5 December to Sunday 8 December

The organisers state, "We are confident that there will be a magical atmosphere



courtesy of the small forest of trees (approximately 50) so generously donated and decorated by many of the church groups, schools, organisations and businesses from Rathfriland and surrounding areas.

"The trees will emphasise the Good News of God's plan for each of us from creation to crucifixion; concentrating mainly on the Christmas story in the books of Matthew and Luke. "

The Festival will open with a Christmas tree lighting service with Bishop Harold Miller on the Thursday at 7.00 pm and the church will be open until 10.00 pm that night.

On Friday and Saturday the church will open from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm and on Sunday 2.00 pm–6.00 pm, with refreshments available in the church hall.

The Festival will conclude with a service of Carols among the Trees at 7.00 pm with Rathfriland Silver Band on the Sunday evening.

Willowfield Tree Festival switch on

Willowfield Parish Church's Christmas Tree Festival started on 3 December with a switch-on by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Reverend Richard Clarke.

The Ulster Youth Orchestra played carols and other festive songs throughout the evening as a large crowd of visitors made their way through the indoor 'forest' of trees.

Archbishop Clarke said that the event was, "absolutely wonderful".

He remarked: "The ingenuity of it is fantastic. It's lovely to see also the move from the secular idea of Christmas through to the actual Christian message of Christmas."

The event is running from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm from Wednesday to Saturday, and the same layout will be kept for this Sunday's services.



Willowfield Church has been transformed by the 60 trees, decorated in two different ways.

More than twenty artificial trees focus on common Christmas traditions such as advent calendars, snowmen and Santa.

Forty natural trees show scenes and characters from the Christmas story, as well as other illustrated Bible verses and themes of Christmas carols.

Visitors can enjoy tea, coffee and traybakes and a range of crafts, jams and chutneys are also on sale in their market.

The hope is that this Christmas festival will contribute to the transformation of another of the parish buildings for the benefit of this corner of East Belfast.

All donations raised are going towards the redevelopment of the church hall, which is extensively used for youth, community and children's work.

Originally built in the 1950s, the hall requires a major renovation to meet the future needs of the community.

This project is likely to cost £1 million and £250,000 has been raised to date.

With new facilities, the church hall would offer a sports space, good quality meeting rooms and kitchens where healthy eating can be promoted.

Good Book shop to close

The Good Book shop at C of I house, Belfast is to close in early 2014.

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held yesterday, 4 December 2013, the decision was taken unanimously by the members that, having considered all other options to retain The Good Book Shop as a viable concern, it shall close no later than 28 February next year.

In a statement the Board of Directors state, "The Good Book Shop has faithfully served the people of the Church of Ireland and beyond for many years and the members and directors acknowledge with deep gratitude the hard work, loyalty and dedication given by the staff during that time. It is appropriate that alternative mechanisms for the future distribution of materials unique to the Church of Ireland should now be examined."

Prayer for Today

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love,
and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

