



Service for young leaders in US Ulster project

St Dorothea's, Gilnahirk recently hosted the going away service for the participants in this year's Ulster Project.

60 young people, their friends and families filled the church to capacity for worship led by the

rector, the Revd Nigel Kirkpatrick and the parish praise band. Also participating was Chairman of the Ulster Project, Fr John Forsythe.

Each year the Ulster Project sends Protestant and Catholic young people from all over Northern Ireland to the United States for a month to participate in a reconciliation and leadership programme. Parishes are asked to recommend 15 years old boys and girls for participation and this year St Dorothea's has sent 3 of their young people who are currently in the US.

Since January the 60 young people have been meeting in their cross-community groups to get to know each other and participate in some fundraising.

The project began in 1975 and since then over 6,000 teens from Northern Ireland have participated in the various programs. The Ulster Project's Mission is to help young, christian-based potential leaders from Northern Ireland and the United States become peacemakers by providing a safe environment to learn by practicing the skills needed to unite people when differences divide them.

New Presbyterian digital devotional prayer resource coming soon

Just over three months ago, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland launched 'Tides', a digital prayer resource that kick-started a brand new rhythm of devotions across the Church. Next month a new series goes live.

Spearheaded by the Church's Council for Congregational Life and Witness, Tides has sought to help individuals discover afresh what regular engagement with God and His Word can mean for their lives. "We are thrilled that nearly 2,000 people are receiving daily inputs, helping to fuel a life of devotion," said Rick Hill, PCI's Discipleship Development Officer.

"As each person receives Tides into their inbox each morning, they are part of a wider community of people from right across the Church and even further afield. This is a community of people who are hungry to read God's Word, reflect on what He is saying and respond in their daily lives."

Feedback has been very positive. Rick Hill explained that the way in which people were engaging with the devotional has also been impressive. “There have been families reading together in the morning, teenagers on the way to school, patients recovering in hospital, friends in coffee shops and ministers in session meetings. And over the past 13 weeks, these daily devotions have explored what it means to be a disciple of Jesus today,” he said.

Compiled by a team of 12 writers - a combination of ministers and lay people from a mix of ages from within the PCI family – Tides explored the life and times of Joshua, Caleb, Nehemiah, Daniel and Paul and how true disciples reveal characteristics such as vision, passion, prayer and mission in their lives.

The series has been part of PCI’s vision to better resource congregations, to help God’s people discover afresh regular engagement with Him and His Word. Rick Hill explained that this week sees the climax of the first series; followed by brief respite to provide an opportunity to pause and reflect, before a new series begins on 1st August.

“In our new 12-week devotional, we will explore a brand new series, this time focusing on the Life of Christ and how that challenges us as His disciples who are desperate to walk in His footsteps every day.

“In the meantime, thank you for joining us on this journey of devotion. Perhaps if the rhythms have been less regular, this new series presents a fresh opportunity to jump in once again, and join the growing tide. His mercies really are new every morning, so let’s continue to read daily, reflect on God’s Word and respond by walking as disciples of Christ. Together,” he said.

You can still **sign up for Tides** join the conversation on twitter by following @tidesdaily or #tidesdaily.

<http://www.presbyterianireland.org/tides>

New national leader of New Wine appointed

A new national leader of New Wine, a charismatic evangelical network of churches in the UK, has been appointed following the resignation of its previous head over an extra-marital affair.



Paul Harcourt, previously New Wine's regional director for London and East and vicar of All Saints Woodford Wells, has been appointed, and will take up the position on October 1.

"I am humbled and privileged to be taking on this role. New Wine has played a key role in my faith and in the life and growth of my church. I believe God is still using the network in powerful ways, and that there are greater things of the Kingdom to come in this nation," Harcourt said in a statement.

"My prayer is that we will continue to push into his Spirit and follow his calling, to see churches across England be changed so that they can transform and bring renewal to community and culture. By continuing my role at All Saints, I intend to remain rooted in ministry within a local church that is part of a family of churches seeking to change nations."

Chair of trustees, John Coles, said the board was "delighted" that Harcourt had accepted the position.

"He brings with him a vast amount of experience leading a local church into renewal, and he is not afraid to trust the voice of God and take risks to advance the Kingdom," Coles said.

"A strategic thinker who understands the vision and values of our network, Paul will bring a fresh leadership perspective to New Wine and is the right person to lead into the next season."

New Wine said Harcourt would draw together a new team which would reflect "the diversity of New Wine, in terms of age, gender, and geographical context."

Harcourt's predecessor, Mark Bailey, stepped down from his role at New Wine and his position

as team rector of Trinity Cheltenham earlier this year.

He was later suspended from church ministry for two years by Bishop of Gloucester Rachel Treweek.

Biblical images unearthed in ancient Galilee synagogue

Images depicting Noah's Ark and Moses' parting of the Red Sea have been uncovered at an ancient synagogue in Galilee.

The mosaic images are the latest find in a long-term excavation taking place at the 5th-Century Huqoq synagogue.

The site is already famous among archaeologists for the wealth of its mosaics, with images of beasts and warriors known to exist in a handful of other synagogues of that era.

According to the University of North Carolina (UNC), which is working on the excavation in partnership with the Israel Antiquities Authority: "The panel with Noah's Ark depicts an ark and pairs of animals, including elephants, leopards,



Prof. Jodi Magness

donkeys, snakes, bears, lions, ostriches, camels, sheep and goats. The scene of the parting of the Red Sea shows Pharaoh's soldiers being swallowed by large fish, surrounded by overturned chariots with horses and chariot drivers."

"This is by far the most extensive series of biblical stories ever found decorating the mosaic floor of an ancient synagogue," said Prof. Jodi Magness of the UNC team . "The arrangement of the mosaics in panels on the floor brings to mind the synagogue at Dura Europos in Syria, where

an array of biblical stories is painted in panels on the walls.”

Rowan Williams calls for urgent action in South Sudan conflict

The Chair of Christian Aid, the Rt Rev Dr Rowan Williams, has spoken out against the recent fighting in South Sudan, where armed clashes in the capital, Juba, claimed nearly 300 lives and forced thousands of people to abandon their homes.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, who visited South Sudan with Christian Aid in 2014, has highlighted the devastating cost of conflict in the country. He has also echoed a call for peace made by fellow senior Christian leaders at the South Sudan Council of Churches, a Christian Aid partner, in response to the Juba clashes.

Dr Williams said: “The recent escalation of violent conflict in Juba since July 7 has caused yet more appalling suffering for the people of South Sudan who have over the past two and a half years endured the terrible consequences of a return to war and the bitter disappointment of hopes denied or deferred.

“It is – as so often – the poorest and most vulnerable who bear the brunt of the violence, who have lost lives, loved ones and homes. Thousands of people have been displaced by the recent violence. Many have sought refuge in church compounds across Juba, seeking safety and protection. These people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

“For too long, women, children, and men in this nation have struggled to continue with their daily lives against the threat of food shortages, widespread displacement, economic crisis, and the trauma of murderous conflict.

“The recent hostilities have demonstrated the fragility of the peace agreement. They have underscored the need for the international community to call the leaders of South Sudan to account in implementing the promise of peace. They have shown just how much is at stake in this for future generations in South Sudan: if the next generation is to inherit anything more than devastation, resentment and failed hopes, urgent action is imperative in ending this conflict.

“As they did through decades of civil war, the churches once again stand as one of the few signs of hope, giving voice to the needs of the

people of South Sudan... Their commitment to working for peace and reconciliation is as strong as ever.

“As the South Sudan Council of Churches says in its [statement](#), ‘*The time for carrying and using weapons has ended; now is the time to build a peaceful nation.*’ I affirm and echo their cry for peace. I stand with them in praying that parties, communities and leaders do everything in their power to ‘*create an atmosphere where violence is not an option*’.”

News briefs

+++ Same-sex marriage divisions in

Anglicans Canada - The Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada has acknowledged the “deep divisions” in the church about same-sex marriage.

+++ United Methodist Church US elects

lesbian bishop -The first openly lesbian bishop has been consecrated in the United Methodist Church (UMC), despite the denomination technically forbidding the ordination of "self-avowed practising gay people".

+++ Golden Jubilee of Ordinations

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart -priests who celebrated the Golden Jubilee of their Ordinations at the Sacred Heart Church, Western Road, Cork were: Fr Patrick Galvin, Castlecove, Kerry; Fr Tom Mulcahy, Herbertstown, Limerick; Fr Pat Courtney, Kilcummin, Kerry; Fr Teddy O'Brien, Cork City and Fr Michael Curran, Waterville, Kerry.

+++ Muslims become Anglicans - An eclectic mix of Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Bangladeshis and Eritreans seeking asylum in the UK have become members of an Anglican Church in Stoke-on-Trent.

+++ Southern Africa decade of discipleship - The Anglican Church of Southern Africa will launch a Decade of Intentional Discipleship at its biennial renewal conference, *Anglicans Ablaze*, later this year.

+++ Steep decline in Catholic attendance in Germany - Almost 200,000 Catholics left the Church in Germany last year, according to figures which show an ongoing, steady decline in church attendance in that country

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Fr Seán Fagan a 'brilliant thinker' who was 'broken' by Rome

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/fr-se%C3%A1n-fagan-a-brilliant-thinker-who-was-broken-by-rome-1.2725085>

'I'd really wanted to become religion teacher, but that all changed at Queen's as I came to terms with being gay'

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/id-really-wanted-to-become-religion-teacher-but-that-all-changed-at-queens-as-i-came-to-terms-with-being-gay-34890810.html>

Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, Robert Innes shares how the church in Nice is responding to Friday's terror attack in a range of BBC interviews. <http://europe.anglican.org/news/news/post/1119-sharing-our-experience-after-terror-attacks>

Times - Report that lawyers are calling for Lord Carey to be investigated following the release of files by police under Freedom of Information, which include detailed CofE internal reviews of the Ball case. The files

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show that he was allowed to return to ministry in various forms after being cautioned in 1993 for gross indecency despite the Church knowing about other survivors who had come forward. A spokesman for Lord Carey declined to comment but said the former archbishop was co-operating fully with an independent review of the Ball case ordered by the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/archbishop-failed-to-pass-on-evidence-of-sex-abuse-tb8sz6pzw>

York Post - Reports that pupils at a York primary school have raised more than a thousand pounds in memory of a former classmate. The Year 6 pupils at Heworth C of E Primary School have taken part in a series of fundraising events in recent months under the Archbishop of York Youth Trust's Young Leaders Award, to raise money for the British Heart Foundation and the Cleft Lip and Palate Association.

Times - Reports on the sermon preached by the Revd Peter Jackson at the Holy Trinity Anglican church in Nice yesterday. Father Jackson who had been watching the seafront fireworks display until minutes before last week's attack, had also been based in Washington on September 11, 2001, and in London when the July 7 bombers struck in 2005. He acknowledged that it would be tough to "love our enemies and pray for them".

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/veteran-of-july-7-and-9-11-terror-preaches-forgiveness-x8qp9drhk>

Mail - Reports that Prime Minister Theresa May found time to attend a church service in her Maidenhead constituency in Berkshire yesterday. Explaining the importance of religion to her life, Mrs May has said her Christian faith 'is part of me, it is part of who I am and therefore how I approach things'.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3694295/Theresa-takes-break-whirlwind-start-PM-attend-Sunday-church-husband-Philip-side.html>

The Voice - Reports on an inner-city Birmingham movement, led by Canon Eve Pitts who is preparing for a trilogy of unique church services which she hopes will bring the black community together. Her service called *Sons Arise* is planned for Sunday 31st July. "It's time now for men to be given the space to begin to reflect on how their lives have been affected by how their ancestors were forced to live in the most inhumane way," said Canon Eve, who was the first black woman to be ordained within the C of E in 1992.

<http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/calling-all-sons-rise>

Mail - Reports that Sunday's edition of the BBC *Songs of Praise* featured the story of an illegal immigrant who smuggled himself into the UK via the Channel Tunnel. Ethiopian national 'Biniyam' had been in the Calais 'Jungle' camp in France but was trying to get to Britain for 'a better life'. The show reveals he is now living in the UK with ambitions to train as a nurse.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3694279/Songs-Praise-feature-illegal-immigrant-smuggled-UK-Channel-Tunnel-Calais-Jungle.html>

Comment

The Economist: May, Merkel and Islam. Being Christian needn't make a leader hostile in her view of Islam

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/erasmus/2016/07/may-merkel-and-islam>

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July 19