



First new church build in New Zealand in 40 years. Architect's impression shows how All Souls' tower chapel glows as dusk approaches. Reepport below.

Singing monk Friar Alessandro guest at Belfast carol service

November 28, 2018

An Italian Franciscan Friar who is a world renowned recording artist will be among the guests at next month's Christmas carol service hosted by the Pro Bono Choir at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast.

Friar Alessandro, a tenor singer, has produced two albums which feature a unique collection of religious music celebrating the festive season.

The Pro Bono choir is composed of solicitors and barristers, as well as some friends who are also involved in the justice system, and each year stage Christmas event for various charities.

It was formed in 2010 and last year raised more than £5,000 in aid of charities chosen by the Bar of Northern Ireland and the Law Society of Northern Ireland.

The charities benefiting from the Christmas celebration, 'Oh Holy Night', in St Anne's on Wednesday, December 5, will be Aware, which works with sufferers of depression, and the Welcome Organisation, which helps the homeless.

Friar Alessandro, also an accomplished pianist and organist, will be joined by Fr Liam Lawton, the director of sacred music in the Catholic Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin, South Dublin, and Karl McGuckin, a barrister, and one of Ireland's finest baritones.

Belfast solicitor Joe Rice, co-chair of the choir, said next month's concert promised to be a special occasion.

He said: "We are privileged to have such remarkable special guests, especially Friar Alessandro, also known as the 'Voice of Assisi', who is famous the world over and who uses

November 28, 2018

his music to promote his Christian message.”Report courtesy the Belfast Telegraph

Money raised by Dublin priest increases hopes for breakthrough in treatment for motor neuron disease

Money raised for motor neuron disease by Fr Tony Coote, the Dublin priest who was diagnosed with the incurable neurological condition earlier this year, through his 550km fundraiser, has increased hopes for a breakthrough in the medical treatment of the condition, Sara MacDonald writes in the Irish Independent.

Consultant neurologist, Professor Orla Hardiman of Trinity College Dublin told the Irish Independent she believes research into the disease, which progressively robs sufferers of their physical faculties, is on the cusp of a breakthrough in the next two to five years.

Fr Coote raised over €550,000 through his ‘Walk While You Can’ pilgrimage from Letterkenny to Ballydehob. Half of this money has been earmarked to fund healthcare services for the 400 sufferers of motor neuron disease (MND) in Ireland. There are currently only three dedicated nurses looking after them, and they are funded entirely by charitable donations.

The other half of the money will go towards a research project headed up by Professor Hardiman which will focus on testing brain wave and imaging patterns to better understand how the disease progresses and identify which drugs it responds best to.

November 28, 2018



November 28, 2018

“This money is vital. We are going to use the €250,000 to leverage further money to build a programme to understand brain activity and brain wave changes,” she explained. These clinical trials need to raise €8 million in Ireland and this will be part of a wider €40 million project across Europe.

“Motor Neuron disease is not an untreatable disease – it is an underfunded disease,” Professor Hardiman said and explained that there have been no significant advances in its treatment for 24 years due to a lack of research funding.

In Ireland about 150 new cases of MND are diagnosed every year. According to Professor Hardiman, this is not much lower than the number of people diagnosed with MS but MS sufferers “have good treatments now” and so can hope to live a much longer life than MND sufferers.

“There are about 350 and 400 people living with motor neuron disease in Ireland at the moment whereas there are 7,000 people living with MS in Ireland. So that shows the difference and the tragedy of motor neuron disease – it is a life shortening disease.”

She spoke to the Irish Independent following an advance screening of a new documentary 'Walking the Walk' on Fr Tony Coote's epic walk which will air on RTE One on December 6 at 10.15pm.

The documentary follows Fr Tony Coote's dogged and inspirational journey through Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Limerick and Cork. Along the way, people join the walk, with communities the length of the country turning out to welcome and support him.

November 28, 2018

His inspirational campaign has increased awareness of MND according to Professor Hardiman who commented to the Irish Independent, “I am not religious – I lost my faith a long time ago, but this man is like a latter-day saint.”

Roger Childs, head of Religious Broadcasting at RTE told the Irish Independent that though the documentary is about a priest going on a walk, “it is actually about what it means to be a human being”.

He added, “What we have in Tony is a fantastically charismatic person who can articulate faith in really difficult circumstances.”

Methodist Modern Art Collection in Dublin at the RHA

The Methodist Church in Britain has built up a fine collection of Modern Art on Christian themes over the last sixty years and 30 of the pictures are on display in the RHA until 22 December.

The organisers for this first Dublin exhibition of the collection have devised a variety of resources for visitors – [a school resource pack; commentaries by experts](#), brief descriptions of each picture, biographies of the artists, and other information – available on this website. <http://methodistartdublin.ie/>

Anglicans worldwide join 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence

Anglicans around the world are joining together in the 16 Days of Activism movement against gender-based violence.



The global initiative got underway on Sunday, which marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and will run until Human Rights Day on December 10.

16 Days is an initiative of The Center for Women's Global Leadership and has been held each year since 1991 with the aim of unifying people around the world in ending gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence can take on many forms, including forced marriages, sexual abuse, domestic abuse, sex-selective abortion and female genital mutilation.

The Anglican Communion is one of over 6,000 organisations in 187 countries taking part in 16 Days and during the campaign period, Anglican churches will be reflecting on the

November 28, 2018

issue of gender-based violence and what action they can take to stamp it out.

The Anglican Communion's Director for Women in Church & Society, the Rev Canon Terrie Robinson,

said: 'The 16 Days of Activism give a focus for civil society, governments, churches and all people of faith to take seriously the transformative work needed to eliminate violence and support victims and survivors.'

'They give us a space where we can reflect on the metanoia [change of heart] we are all called to as we put on Christ and turn away from harmful attitudes and behaviours that get in the way of the light.'

Rachel Tavernor, of faith-based gender justice movement Side by Side, said that people of faith have a 'potentially transformative role' to play in achieving gender justice.

Tavernor, who took part in a gender justice service at Glasgow Cathedral on Sunday, said it was vital that people

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November 28, 2018

work to end gender-based violence in their own communities.

'Lasting change happens when it is created and sustained by people, such as faith leaders, who are embedded within communities,' she said.

She added: 'Around the world, people of faith are becoming change-makers within their communities. They continue to march for gender justice and I am honoured to be marching alongside them, even though we know that the road to gender justice is long.'

The Mothers' Union is also taking part in 16 Days and has created [resources](#) to help churches participate in the campaign. More information can also be found at the [16 Days website](#)

Archbishop hopes Lambeth Conference will be “confident proclamation of good news of Jesus”

The Archbishop of Canterbury has set out his vision for the next once-in-a-decade meeting of the bishops of the Anglican Communion, saying that “the world . . . needs the good news of Jesus Christ.” He said that the world “needs to see it in our actions, envy it in our love together, and hear it in our confident proclamation of the good news of Jesus.” He made his comments in a video for the brand new [Lambeth Conference website](#) as the dates for the meeting were confirmed as Thursday 23 July until Sunday 2 August 2020.

November 28, 2018

Most of the meeting will take place at the University of Kent in Canterbury. There will also be a programme day in London and two Lambeth Conference Eucharists at Canterbury Cathedral – the mother church of the Anglican Communion.

“This conference is about listening to God, through scripture and in prayer and through each other, so we go out with our hearts on fire”, Archbishop Justin said in the video.

He also acknowledged the on-going disagreements in the Anglican Communion, most notably over sexuality and the interpretation of Scripture. “The differences we have are differences within the family”, he said. “They are about how we live as a holy people; how we live in a way that shows we are God’s people.

“We do have very important differences, but we must show that we respect each other as sisters and brothers in Christ, and that we learn to disagree in a way that demonstrates that we love and value each other. . . But whatever views we come with, we come to be under the authority of Scripture, and inspired by the Spirit.”

Last week, a group of leading New Testament scholars from around the world gathered at Lambeth Palace for the St Augustine Seminar – the start of a programme of preparing Bible study and biblical reflection for the Conference.

The main Bible Study text will be on the book of 1 Peter. In his video message, Archbishop Justin said that it would “lead us into all kinds of key themes. It leads us especially into the theme of being God’s people, in God’s world, for God’s world. ‘Once you were no people, now you are a people’. God has created us, made us, changed us,

November 28, 2018

transformed us, and we are to be key in his transformation of the world around us.”

The Archbishop is currently sending invitations to every active bishop in the Anglican Communion and their spouse. The Church of England, the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Ireland are working on a “hospitality initiative” to enable bishops travelling from overseas to spend time in dioceses and parishes in the UK and Ireland in the days leading up to the Lambeth Conference.

The ticket price has been set at £4,950. A bursary scheme has been established to ensure every bishop is able to attend. More details are available on the [Lambeth Conference website](#).

A number of Christian leaders from other denominations and church families will also be invited. The list of ecumenical guests is still being finalised.

The programme is being prepared by the Lambeth Conference Design Group, chaired by the Archbishop of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba. It is being shaped by reflections from Primates of the Anglican Communion’s 40 Provinces, who are meeting in regional groups this year and next to have their say on the Lambeth Conference agenda.

Regional Primates’ Meetings have already been held in Oceania and Africa. The Americas regional Primates’ Meeting is taking place this week in Toronto, Canada. Primates from Europe, the Middle East and Asia will gather in three separate regional meetings next year.

November 28, 2018

Christchurch celebrates the diocese's first "church from scratch" in 40 years

The first parish "church from scratch" to be built in the New Zealand Diocese of Christchurch in 40 years will be consecrated early next year.

The congregation at the All Souls' Anglican Church complex began using their new building with services around the feast of All Souls in early November. Earlier this month they held a weekend of "festival worship and community-facing family fun". It is the second Anglican Church to be built from scratch following the 2011 earthquakes – the first being the Transitional Cathedral which opened in 2013. It is the first Parish Church new-build.

The Bishop-elect of Christchurch, Dr Peter Carrell, dedicated the church on Saturday 3 November. He will return to the church early in 2019 with Archbishop Philip Richardson, who will consecrate the building.

Dr Carrell said that the parish had been worshipping in halls, other churches, school buildings and marquees as they waited for their own worship home. "Looking forward to this new building has kept the parish highly motivated, and the final result is impressive," he said, as he praised the parish for having already begun using their new buildings to reach out and meet the needs of the communities they serve.

The Merivale St Albans parish was formed after two Anglican communities – St Matthew's in St Albans and St Mary's

November 28, 2018

Merivale – joined forces in 2014. After the 2011 earthquakes, St Matthew's Church faced extensive damage and a huge repair bill, while St Mary's Church community in Merivale came to realise their 1926 stone church was unsalvageable and would have to be demolished. Rather than face those challenges alone, the former Bishop of Christchurch, Victoria Matthews, invited the two communities to re-imagine a future together.

The Vicar of St Albans, Megan Herles-Mooar, hailed the beginning of worship in the new buildings as a milestone which signalled hope and renewal for the whole community. "Some who were heartbroken at the earthquake losses – including of their beloved church buildings – have already found healing coming into this new space." she said.

The new complex houses treasures saved from the two former church buildings which are incorporated into the new design, such as the stained glass windows that now hold pride of place in a conical glass tower that forms the entrance chapel at All Souls.

The name All Souls recalls all those who have died in the earthquakes, but Herles-Mooar said that it also expressed hope for who this church will be for others. "We wanted this to be a place where 'all souls' will feel welcome to come to the table, no matter who they are, or where they come from," She said.

One recent visitor to the church expressed his surprise at the beauty of the modern building's interior, which was designed by architects Warren and Mahoney in consultation with the parish.

November 28, 2018

“What I found when I came into the building was radically unexpected,” he wrote in an email to the vicar. “The space is strongly successful and joyously holy. I wonder what prayer or spiritual yearning has occurred to create such an atmosphere?”

- *This article is drawn from [an in-depth article](#) by Julianne Clarke-Morris for Anglican Taonga.*

News briefs

Cork readers and Warden commissioned



Pictured following the licensing of two new Readers were (left to right) the Dean of Cork, the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne, Maia Paulus, the Bishop, Andrew Coleman, and the Reverend Paul Arbuthnot (Chaplain to the Guild of Lay Ministers).

On Sunday, 25th November, during Evensong in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, licensed two new Readers to serve in the diocese. Maia

November 28, 2018

Paulus and Andrew Coleman were licensed, having completed one of the courses approved by the House of Bishops, namely the Certificate in Christian Studies validated by the Pontifical University at Maynooth.

There are three others from the diocese currently working towards completion of the course and licensing as Readers. The Certificate in Christian Studies is now also being delivered in Cork with 22 participants. Details of the certificate may be found [here](#).

Also at the Service, the Bishop commissioned the Reverend Paul Arbuthnot to serve as Chaplain to the Guild of Lay Ministers in the diocese. The guild includes all the Readers, as well as Local Lay Ministers of which there are five liturgical assistants and seven pastoral assistants.

Bishops' Appeal releasing funds for Yemen relief

The C of I Bishops' Appeal will be releasing funds to support the emergency relief efforts in Yemen and to support longer term food security projects there. If you were planning to donate to Yemen, consider adding to this fund so the Church of Ireland can make a significant impact. Thank you

Irish views at international Christian education conference

Dr Peter Hamill, Secretary to the Board of Education (NI), and Dr Ken Fennelly, Secretary to the Board of Education (RI), recently visited Tallinn in Estonia to take part in the annual conference of the International Association for

November 28, 2018

Christian Education. The theme of the conference was citizenship in a Christian context.

Dr Fennelly spoke on the rights of young people to express their views in school and Dr Hamill spoke on the need for schools to have a clear identity and moral framework for supporting students. There were delegates from all parts of Europe and there was much debate on how Christian schools are growing across the continent and developing a clear ethos in which to provide high quality education.

C of I Standing Committee Appointments

Following a call for expressions of interest, the Consultative Group on Disability was established, with a remit to enhance the Church's welcome to all those with disabilities and to develop accessibility, communication, and best practice policies and practices.

The General Synod Standing Committee appointed the following members to the group: Ms Jennifer Bullock, Ms Emily Casey, Ms Stephanie Casey, Mr Jasper Chisnall, the Revd Alistair Donaldson, Dr Timothy Jackson, Ms Rachel Mackarel, Ms Ruth McCartney, and Mr Jonny Watson.

Standing Committee ratified the appointment of the following members of the Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue: Canon Patrick Comerford, Ms Georgina Copt, the Revd Suzanne Cousins, Canon Dr Ian M Ellis, the Revd Cathy Hallissey, Dr Kenneth Milne, Canon Dr Daniel Nuzum, the Revd Ken Rue, the Very Revd Niall Sloane, Ms Cate Turner, and the Revd David White.

November 28, 2018

Canon Dr Ian W Ellis, the Revd Christopher St John, Canon Isaac Delamere and the Ven Ruth Elmes were appointed to the Safeguarding Trust Board. Ms Anna Williams was co-opted as a member of the Central Communications Board and the Revd Ricky Rountree was appointed as a member of the Literature Committee. The Revd Ian Linton was co-opted to the Marriage Council.

The appointments were made at last week's meeting of the General Synod Standing Committee.

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