



CNI

Major Anglican pressure group to meet in Belfast

GAFCON - the self styled 'Global Anglican Future Conference' is to hold a one day conference in Belfast next month. Gafcon is led by people who would claim to be evangelicals and who are against those churches in the communion which have adopted a more inclusive policy in respect of LGBT partnerships and marriage.

The Belfast meeting is to be hosted by the *Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (UK & Ireland)* on June 19. It will be on the theme, "GAFCON: A moment and a movement - a discussion on the future of global Anglicanism".

Taking part in the discussion will be Rt Rev Dr Peter Jensen – General Secretary, GAFCON; retired Archbishop of Sydney, Rev Canon Andy Lines – General Secretary, Anglican Mission in England (AMiE) and Mr Philip Robinson –

Operations Director, GAFCON and the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans.

In the blurb on the conference it is stated - "In January 2008, several of the most senior leaders within global Anglicanism met in a Kenyan hotel room to discuss the future of the Anglican Communion. They were compelled to meet because of decades of drift from the apostolic gospel apparent across the Communion, expressed, not least, in the widespread acceptance of same-sex relationships. Their meeting resulted in a plan to organise a gathering of Anglican Christians in Jerusalem, later that year (the geographical roots of the faith). Over 1000, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, clergy and laity from around the world gathered to renew their commitment to the faith 'once delivered' and the mission of proclaiming this faith to the ends of the earth, until the end of time at the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON). More than 1,300 gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, five years later, to consolidate and focus this new work of God. These conferences, moments in the history of Christ's church, have initiated a global movement of faithful, Anglican Christians, steadfast and determined in the cause of Christ and his gospel. Join us as we

hear leaders, within this new movement, discuss the future of faithful, gospel-centred, global Anglicanism.”

Several clergy including bishops and lay people from the C of I attended the Nairobi conference.

Gafcon is regarded by some Anglicans as a communion in waiting which encourages and supports a narrow interpretation of scripture and church teaching whilst being willing to encourage a “governance in waiting” in member churches of the communion such as AMiE in England. Some practices in the diocese of Sydney were the cause of concern not only to clergy and laity within it but elsewhere in the communion. Amongst these was lay presidency at the eucharist.

C of I House of Bishops is divided - Church Times

The international Anglican newspaper the Church Times yesterday reported on the recent vote on marriage in the Republic of Ireland and the statement issued afterwards by the C of I Bishops (See CNI yesterday).

The Reverend Greg Ryan the CT's Irish correspondent writes -

Despite this statement, the C of I House of Bishops is known to be divided. Two bishops, both from the Republic, have come out strongly in favour of same-sex marriage: the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, and the Bishop of Cashel, the Rt Revd Michael Burrows. All of the Northern bishops are either opposed to the measure or have not made their views known.

Dr Richard O'Leary, of Faith in Marriage Equality and Changing Attitude Ireland, the pro-gay Anglican lobby group, said: "As people of faith, we are delighted that so many other people of faith have voted yes to embrace their gay and lesbian fellow citizens. We would like to thank those prominent lay people of faith, the individual priests and nuns, and the two Church of Ireland bishops who declared publicly for yes, and so encouraged others to do likewise.

"Faith in Marriage Equality would also like to again reassure those people of faith who voted no that this vote for yes will not impact negatively on their lives and we hope that they too will eventually be reconciled to this positive social change."

Dr Richard O'Leary went on: "We hope that the Catholic Bishops and Protestant Church leaders in Northern Ireland will notice how many ordinary people of faith in the Republic of Ireland have voted yes, and that they, too, might be encouraged to support the extension of civil marriage equality to same sex couples in Northern Ireland."

The Northern Ireland Assembly dominated by the Democratic Unionist Party has so far blocked attempts by Nationalist Sinn Féin to introduce similar legislation in the Province on four occasions. DUP MLA Paul Givan is seeking to bring forward a so-called conscience clause that would allow businesses to refuse to provide services they believed could compromise their religious beliefs.

The Irish government must now tackle the implications of the new amendment to the constitution, not least a form of wording to deal with civil solemnisers, and the matter of surrogacy, currently unregulated, which may come before the courts should a same-sex couple assert such a right.

The government is also looking at the judgment given in the Ashers' Bakery case in the North ([News, 22 May](#)). It is understood that a printing

company, Beulah, in Drogheda, may face a civil action for alleged discrimination in the Republic's courts for declining to print wedding invitations for a gay couple.

As the new reality in Ireland dawns, another referendum has been flagged by Dr James Reilly, a former health Minister and now Minister for Children, who is calling for a change in the country's highly restrictive abortion law to allow for the procedure in the case of foetal abnormalities and possibly in cases of rape or incest.

More at -

<http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2015/29-may/news/world/overwhelming-yes-vote-brings-same-sex-marriage-to-ireland>

Moderator finds Church in 'Good heart' prior to General Assembly

“It has been a good year and Esther and I have thoroughly enjoyed it as we’ve thrown ourselves into it completely. We’ve been from Coleraine to Cork, we were over in Sligo and Ballina, County Mayo, down the east coast and Dublin, even places I hadn’t heard of before, but most of our

time was spent in Northern Ireland where the bulk of our congregations are,” he said.

His extensive travels also included an overseas visit to Kenya to see the work of Presbyterian missionaries and engagements in England, Wales and Scotland. They also included three one-week Presbytery Tours in Carrickfergus, Monaghan and Dromore, all of which gave him a unique insight into the work of the Church, an opportunity that he describes as ‘a rare privilege and valuable opportunity to see round the Church and the country, something that not many people get to do’.

“I found the Church to be in good heart overall. Going around congregations and Presbyteries I have been really impressed by the sheer number of people, of all ages, who are involved in all kinds of activities.

“Our Church is at work and doing good work in both the social aspect, the social witness end of things, but also in evangelism and outreach and we have lost none of that. The vast majority of our people are in good heart and wanting to do well for the Kingdom of God through our Church.”

This year's General Assembly will run from Monday, 1st June until Thursday, 4th June and will involve 1,000 delegates from Presbyterian congregations across Ireland taking part in four days of worship, prayer, Bible study, celebration and decision making.

The opening session, 'to which all are welcome' says Dr. Barry, starts at 7pm on 1st June in Assembly Buildings, Belfast. Members of Assembly and invited guests will join together in worship to officially open the 2015 General Assembly and witness the installation of Rev. Dr. Ian McNie, Minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Ballymoney as Moderator.

As he approaches his final week as Moderator, does Dr. Barry have any advice for his successor? "I would encourage Dr. McNie to enjoy the year, as he will never have an opportunity like this again. Making the most of each opportunity and enjoying them, but making time for relaxation, as it will be a busy year and this for me was important."

For more information on the 2015 General Assembly [click here](#)

You will also be able to follow Assembly business each day via a live stream from this website, in this news section and on Twitter, just follow #PCIGA2015.

<https://www.presbyterianireland.org/Training-Events/Events/General-Assembly-2015?eventType=2>

Methodist Church President comments on marriage vote

The Reverend Peter Murray issued the following statement - “As President of the Methodist Church in Ireland I want to comment on the result of the Irish referendum on equal marriage which has opened civil marriage to same-sex couples.

“The Methodist Church encouraged everyone to listen to each other respectfully in the church and in wider society, and in doing so, to seek the will of God and the good of society as they took part in the referendum. I recognise that our members will have voted both Yes and No and I affirm the prayerfully and carefully considered views of all who voted.

“I ask now that grace be extended mutually between those who disagree on this issue. It is clear that prejudice, largely born out of



ignorance and fear, exists against members of the LGBT community, but this does not mean that those who voted No in the referendum want to endorse inequality, restrict freedom or maintain intolerance. I strongly urge Methodist families, small groups and larger fellowships to be safe places where LGBT people feel accepted and loved, able to share their stories freely and be involved in the life of the church.

“At the same time the referendum result is not compatible with what the Methodist Church in Ireland recognises as the basis of Christian marriage. Our understanding is that marriage is between a man and a woman and so in the context of weddings within Methodist churches

our practice remains that no minister has the authority to conduct the marriage of same-sex partners.

“As the government of the Republic of Ireland seeks to frame legislation in response to the result of the referendum I call on it to ensure that church and other faith bodies will not be compelled by law to act contrary to their definition of marriage and I expect the government to engage with the Methodist Church and other churches and faith communities to this end.”

Former C of I worker facing 75 abuse charges

A former Church of Ireland worker has appeared in court charged with indecently assaulting young boys at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

Dublin 98FM - Patrick O'Brien of Knocklyon Road, Templeogue is also accused of abusing boys in Galway, Kildare and Westmeath over a 13 year period.

The first offence allegedly happened in 1977 and the remaining 74 allegations relate to the years leading up to 1990.

Patrick O'Brien, who's 76 and used to work with the Church of Ireland, is accused of abusing 10 boys during that time at various locations, including St. Patrick's Cathedral.

A residential address and a boat are also listed on the 75 charge sheets as locations where alleged abuse took place.

Mr. O'Brien was arrested this morning by officers from the newly formed Sexual Crime Management Unit.

He was charged and brought to court this afternoon where he was granted bail and told to return at the end of July when the book of evidence is due to be handed to him.

The man is due to appear in court again on the morning of 28 July.

<http://www.98fm.com/Former-Church-Worker-Facing-74-Abuse-Charges>

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/elderly-man-arrested-over-child-sex-abuse-allegations-103447311.html#ua3rN98>

<http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/patrick-obrien-trial-76-year-old-former-5766816>

St Anne's, Shandon, hosts annual service to mark IDAHOT

On Sunday, 17 May, the annual Service to mark IDAHOT – International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia – was held in St Anne's Church, Shandon. The service was led by the Revd Sarah Marry, Priest-in-Charge of St. Anne's, who commented in her welcoming remarks that:

"The real time for celebration will come when there is no need to hold this type of service at all. For now it is important that we gather 'Celebrating Inclusion' and prayerfully supporting victims of homophobia or transphobia, particularly those in places where holding an IDAHOT service would not be possible."

With the permission of the Bishop, Dr Paul Colton, the address was given by a Roman Catholic Layman, Mr Ken Curtin, who explored the theme of inclusion as reflected in Scripture and how humanity, in all its rich diversity, reflects the image of God whose nature is love.



Cork's Inclusive LGBT Choir Choral Con Fusion added to the atmosphere of fellowship and celebration singing a number of pieces, including churchnewsireland@gmail.com

the recently recorded and released 'We Love the Same' written by choir member Karl Fradgley.

Over 50s' volunteering taster at Belfast Cathedral

Belfast Cathedral is organising an Over 50s' Taster Day for older people interested in volunteering in St Anne's.

This will take place on Tuesday 9 June, and will begin with a welcome from the Revd Janice Elsdon, volunteer co-ordinator, at 10.30am, followed by a guided tour of the Cathedral. After a presentation on volunteering, participants will have a light lunch.

Janice said: 'Volunteering in the Cathedral is an opportunity to meet new people, to learn more about the heritage of St Anne's and to play a role in sharing the beauty of this place with others.'

Anyone interested in joining in the Taster Day is asked to contact Janice at Janice@belfastcathedral.org before 2 June.

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Scottish Episcopal General Synod 2015

Scottish Episcopal General Synod 2015 will take place at St Paul's & St George's Church, Edinburgh from 11-13 June. The Agenda and Papers have been posted on the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) [website](#).

Throughout the meeting of General Synod, non-Synod members are welcome to sit in the public gallery, and regular updates of Synod proceedings and voting will be posted on the SEC website and through social media, and a [live audio stream](#) will be available during the meeting. Further information on this and other

matters relating to General Synod will be highlighted in this newsletter and on the SEC website over the coming weeks.

See more at: <http://www.scotland.anglican.org/general-synod-2015-advance-notice/#sthash.ADCIQUID.dpuf>

A Service to launch the Scottish Episcopal Institute will take place in St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth on Sunday 4th October at 3pm. The preacher will be the Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Monks bring Trappist art of beer-making to the United States

A Trappist brewery has opened for the first time in the United States.

The new brew, Spencer Trappist Ale, is made at St Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts, by Cistercian, or Trappist, monks who wear the distinctive black and white habit.

Brother Jonah Pociadlo told Catholic News Service: "It's got a wonderful smell to it. I



Trappist Brother Jonah Pociadlo prepares to pour Spencer ale

hesitate to describe it, because it's something I think is pretty subjective. But I can almost taste it without it even touching my lips.”

The association requires all beer with the Trappist name to be brewed at a Cistercian monastery, either by monks or lay people supervised by monks.

Trappist breweries must be monitored to assure the quality of the beer is impeccable and the brewers are required to observe business practices that keep the monastic way of life at the forefront, meaning no profits are to be made.

Trappist Fr Isaac Keeley, director of the Spencer Brewery, told CNS: “They’re very protective of the Trappist beer brand and they always want to ensure that a brew with that label meets the high standards they’ve set for it.”

The income earned is intended to support living expenses for the monks and maintain the buildings and property at the monastery. All money left after those expenses are met must be donated to charity.

Once the association approved the Spencer monks’ business plan, architectural designs and beer model, they were able to send two members of their community to one of the brew-house monasteries in Belgium for six months of technical training and immersion in monastic beer-making culture.