

Armagh's Praise Him on a big bass drum outreach to marching bands



The Zacchaeus Outreach Project (based within the Church of Ireland Diocese of Armagh) is celebrating its fifth anniversary and to celebrate, the project team have decided to have an exhibition.

It will be similar to a flower festival but it will be based around marching bands. The exhibition is called "Praise Him on the big bass drum" which references Psalm 150 in "The Message" Bible translation. The exhibits will cover different

aspects of the band scene and there will be some interactive exhibits.

The event will take place in Tullanisken Parish Halls, Newmills, Co Tyrone, on Friday and Saturday 29th and 30th September. The opening ceremony will take place at 11am on Friday.

Also as part of the celebration there will also be a book launch. The book is called “Praise Him on the big bass drum – Our Stories”. These are personal stories of band members in their own words.

The exhibition will take place in the main hall and there will be tea and coffee and you will also be able to view stalls from invited exhibitors.

There will be no admission charge for this event but any donations received will be split between the Zacchaeus Outreach Project, SAMS for Brazil and the Northern Ireland Air Ambulance.

For further information please Contact Valerie Thom on 028 8774 9920 or 07736 644051.

Victims challenge cleric on ‘day of acknowledgement’

A victims' group has challenged the former president of the Methodist Church to seek out public acknowledgements that murder for political ends was never justified in Northern Ireland, the News Letter reports.

Kenny Donaldson of Innocent Victims United was speaking after Rev Harold Good proposed a communal day of remembrance for reflection on the Troubles.

Rev Good told BBC's Sunday Sequence: "Together across our community we might come together each of us and all of us, from all sectors including the churches and acknowledge our part in the hurt, the grief and the pain of the past 48 plus years."

In Tuesday's News Letter Sammy Heenan, who was orphaned at the age of 12 by the IRA, said Rev Good's comments "made my stomach tie up in knots when I heard them".

Mr Donaldson told the News Letter that Mr Heenan's comments "captured the feelings of very many innocent victims".



Kenny Donaldson said clerics had a crusade which was having the impact of decriminalising terrorism

He added: “There can never be an equation drawn between the actions of those who chose to use violence and those who refused to debase humanity and who showed restraint.

“If Rev Good believes he has sins to repent for in what he did or what he failed to do then that’s a matter for him, but he and other clerics need to cease binding others to their crusade which is having the impact of decriminalising terrorism and introducing a phony communal victimhood narrative.”

He challenged Rev Good to insist that the first acknowledgements come from “the UK and Republic of Ireland states plus the terrorist organisations and their political party annexes” – to recognise that there had been no justification for murder for political ends.

Rev Harold Good acknowledged the comments of Mr Heenan and Mr Donaldson. “I fully understand and am very sensitive to the feelings of both the correspondents but regret that they do not seem to have understood what I was saying or the spirit in which I sought to say it,” he told the News Letter. “I would welcome an opportunity, if they so desire, to have conversations with them.

Swift Education Series at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin

In addition to serving as Dean of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, Jonathan Swift was known for being engaged in social justice and mental health initiatives, earning the Freedom of the City of Dublin and leaving money in his will to found Saint Patrick’s Mental Hospital, which is still open today.

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In honouring Swift's legacy around his 350th birthday, St Patrick's are offering a series of education programmes on Tuesday evenings at the Cathedral. A registration fee of €24.50 applies for all courses.

Artistic Exploration of Jonathan Swift's Life and Memorabilia

5th, 12th, and 26th September at 7pm

An experienced Artist Facilitator will lead this workshop exploring the themes of Jonathan Swift's living legacy through engagement with the Cathedral store of memorabilia. People with

all levels of artistic ability are welcome to participate.

First Aid Training

5th, 12th, and 26th September at 7pm

Learn Emergency First Aid on this course and earn a certificate.

Introduction to Sign Language

5th, 12th, and 26th September at 7pm

Learn to communicate with people who are hearing impaired through Irish Sign Language.

To register, please visit

www.stpatrickscathedral.ie

A Handful of Light retreat on ministry

A Handful of Light is a retreat for clergy and lay people organised by the C of I Commission on Ministry.

The retreat will take place at the Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Newry, County Down, between Thursday 16th November and Saturday 18th November.

The speaker will be Canon Michael Mitton, who works as a freelance speaker, writer and spiritual director and is also the part-time Fresh Expressions Officer for the Diocese of Derby. He is the self-supporting Priest-in-Charge of St Paul's, Derby, and an honorary canon of Derby Cathedral. He has written a number of books including *A Handful of Light*, *Dreaming of Home* and *Travellers of the Heart*. His latest book *Seasoned by Seasons* is to be published by Bible Reading Fellowship in October.

Cost: £115/€130 per person to include retreat fee and all meals from 5pm on Thursday 16th November to 2pm on Saturday 18th November.

For further details and a booking form please contact Sandra Massey:
sandra.massey@rcbdub.org

Canons appointed to Downpatrick cathedral

Revd Bryan Follis (rector of Hillsborough) and Revd Chris Matchett (rector of Newtownards), have both accepted Bishop Harold Miller's invitation to become canons in Down Cathedral.

Bryan said: “I was very surprised by the Bishop’s appointment and certainly wasn’t expecting it. This will be quite different to what I have done before but I look forward to serving in Down Cathedral.”

Speaking of his appointment, Chris said: “I consider it a privilege to have been asked to join the Chapter and I look forward to taking part in the life of Down Cathedral and its special role in the Diocese. The appointment is all the more exciting, coming as it does in St Mark’s 200th anniversary year.”

The Dean of Down, The Very Revd Henry Hull, also welcomed the latest appointments to the cathedral chapter.

Bryan Follis became rector of Hillsborough in 2014, prior to which he spent 13 years as rector of All Saints’ Church, near Queen’s University Belfast. He has also written two academic books along with a number of booklets aimed at the ‘person in the pew’.

A civil servant before his ordination in 1998, Bryan is married to Eleanor, who works part-time as a community midwife in Belfast, and they have two daughters.

Chris Matchett is a native of Londonderry, and worked as an accountant before training for ordination. He met his wife, Ali, whilst at Theological College and they have three children.

Chris was also ordained in 1998 and served two curacies in Down and Dromore before returning to the Diocese as rector of Newtownards in 2011. This followed more than 7 years as rector of Magheracross in Clogher Diocese.

York Minster gets new bell-ringers after last group's controversial disbandment

A new group of bell-ringers has been recruited for York Minster nearly a year after the controversial disbanding of the in-house team.

The bells fell silent in October last year when the Minster's Chapter disbanded its 30-strong ringing group due to safeguarding concerns.

The new band - which includes some former volunteers - will take over the ringing in September. The Minster's 12 bells were silent on Christmas Day for the first time in more than 600 years after the break-up of the bell-ringing team.



One group of campanologists from Leeds reportedly refused to help out, in solidarity with their sacked York colleagues.

The Chapter said it disbanded the team after the ringers refused to accept its decision not to reinstate one of its members, who had been suspended following a police investigation into allegations of sex offending against children, which did not lead to a prosecution.

This member has not been named by the Chapter but is understood to be David Potter, a leading light of the campanology world, who was given an MBE for his services to bell-ringing and has never been convicted of any offences.

Mr Potter was the subject of a police investigation in 1999 which was reviewed again in 2014 but he was never charged.

The Chapter of York Minster ordered a detailed risk assessment of Mr Potter's activities and decided he "presented an ongoing risk and that the potential severity of the risk meant they could not be reinstated".

It said the bell ringers refused to accept this decision and so had to be disbanded. In October, Mr Potter's solicitor, Colin Byrne, said: "Mr Potter has no cautions or convictions or any civil findings ever made against him.

"Issues surrounding the bell ringers and the Minster is a private and confidential matter between those two parties but the process that he has been subject to has shown a disregard for due process and equally the treatment of his fellow bell-ringers."

A Minster spokeswoman said the recruitment and induction of the new volunteer bell-ringing team had been carried out in line with Church of England safeguarding policies.

She said more than 40 applications were received from York and the wider region and the new band will be led by headteacher Angela Mitchell.



Boost for international charity that operates floating hospitals

Essential Christian, a charity that resources and inspires Christians and local churches through events, holidays, books, music and professional services, has announced a new partnership with Mercy Ships. Staffed almost entirely by volunteers, Mercy Ships' state-of-the-art "floating hospital" provides free medical care and surgery to people in some of the poorest countries in the world.

As well as completing thousands of urgent operations on board, volunteers also work

closely with host nations to improve the way healthcare is delivered across the country – by training local medical staff, and renovating hospitals and clinics.

Mercy Ships will be the official charity partner for Spring Harvest 2018 and 2019, an annual Christian teaching event and family conference in Britain.

As part of the partnership, members of the Spring Harvest leadership team will visit the ship, the Africa Mercy, in January 2018 while it is serving the people of Cameroon. Mercy Ships and the Spring Harvest team will then come together at the Easter event in 2018 to tell the stories of lives being transformed in Africa and how the church in Britain can get involved.

Group Chief Executive at Essential Christian, Peter Martin, said: “We have been greatly impressed at the way Mercy Ships is channeling the skills and talents of ordinary Christians into front-line service – and always in partnership with the local church. This fits closely with our own vision for the transformation of lives and communities.”

Lea Milligan, Executive Director at Mercy Ships UK, said: “We are delighted to announce this

partnership with Spring Harvest and Essential Christian. Their passion to serve the local church and encourage Christians to put their faith into action is hugely inspiring, and fits perfectly with our mission at Mercy Ships. Through even the smallest deed we can effect real, lasting change – be it here in the UK or in Africa, where our volunteers are currently serving.”

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