



Archbishop Richard Clarke with members of the key Task Group on Anglican relationships which met in London last week

Archbishop Clarke chairs key Task Group on future of Anglican Communion

Archbishop Richard Clarke of Armagh spent most of last week chairing a key Task Group on
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the future of relationships throughout the global Anglican Communion. The group was established in January 2016 by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the request of the Primates.

The Task Group set up by last year's Primates' gathering met in London last week with the emphasis on understanding diversity within the Anglican Communion – and recognising the many areas of unity.

The Archbishop of Armagh, Richard Clarke said it has been a positive and fruitful discussion.

“We have been developing a greater understanding between us of the diversity within the Communion,” he said. “But, significantly, we have been seeing the many, many areas of commonality.

“It has not been a theological discussion. Instead, we have been examining what differences mean at a practical level. In particular, we looked at marriage practices and relationships in different parts of the Communion. But we also looked at the spiritual dimensions of the idea of walking together.”

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon – who serves the group as secretary - added that it had

been considering how the authority of primates and bishops was practised in different parts of the Communion.

The group was given the task of restoring relationships, rebuilding mutual trust and responsibility, healing the legacy of hurt and exploring deeper relationships. The group met for the first time last September. Seven of the nine-member group met last week. Canon Elizabeth Paver – the former vice chair of the ACC -- and Bishop Paul Sarker from Bangladesh were unable to attend on this occasion.

Archbishop Philip Freier – the Primate of Australia - said it was significant that the meeting had been taking place immediately after Easter. He said that was a moment when the Church reflected on the paradox of Jesus' powerlessness on the cross and his glorious victory.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Michael Curry, continued the reference:

“After that Easter, the disciples walked together on the road to Emmaus. They didn't recognise Jesus walking with them – yet they kept walking together. And, of course, in time, they realised exactly who he was.

“We have committed to walking together with each other – talking, listening and seeking to understand each other. I believe we will see the risen Christ walking with us as we deepen our relations with each other.”

Canon Rosemary Mbogo from the Anglican Church of Kenya said: “I feel that this week has built on what we did when we met last autumn. On that occasion, we began to establish working relationships. Now we are developing those relationships and exploring each other’s perspectives.”

The group will provide an interim report for the Primates’ meeting at Canterbury in October. It hopes to meet again in the spring of 2018.

Put evangelism at heart of ministry, urges Senior Welsh Bishop

Every church needs to put evangelism at the heart of ministry, says the Senior Bishop of the Church in Wales.

In his Presidential Address to members of the Church’s Governing Body, the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, John Davies, called on churches to reach out to people in creative and engaging ways.



The Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, John Davies

Bishop John was speaking on behalf of all the Church's bishops at the start of the Governing Body meeting which took place at Cardiff City Hall last weekend (April 22-23).

Referring to concern expressed about falling church attendance figures, he urged members to be stand up to the challenges and seize the opportunities they presented.

Bishop John said, "We must want and prepare our church to reach our centenary having really got to grips with re-imagining and refreshing our faith, our own knowledge of scripture, our understanding of our own discipleship and our potential to evangelise others. We need to become, afresh, a Jesus movement.



Pupils at St Teilo's Church in Wales school, Cardiff

But – and this is a big ‘but’ – we have to begin with ourselves, we have to re-evangelise our life – because unless we really know what we are about, unless we really are fit for purpose, there is little point in trying to reach out to others and to invite them in.”

One very important part of evangelism was engaging young people in church life, said Bishop John, noting that the agenda included a presentation from 18 young people from churches across Wales.

He said, “We have to recognise that, while many young people apparently find both Jesus of

Nazareth and the Gospel message of love, justice and inclusivity immensely attractive and inspirational, they often don't find the church to be a place where these are readily and engagingly encountered. So, we are challenged to listen to what the members of the Youth Forum have to say to us, and then not just to nod affably to it, but to ask how to take seriously our evangelism of the young."

Bishop John reminded members that despite the challenges facing the Church it was still very strong. It was one of the largest voluntary organisations in Wales and, though its church schools was in contact with more than 25,000 young people every day. It was also financially secure enough to support new ministries. He highlighted, too, the Church's 2020 Vision strategy for growth ahead of its centenary year (2020) which had already resulted in significant changes.

He said, "We are a Church charged by Jesus himself, with delivering his Gospel of life, hope and flourishing. At the start of this meeting, the Bishops ask you to commit to being positive in thinking and deliberately concentrated in facing up to the challenge presented to us last September and, with the resources at our

disposal, turning it in to a wonderful evangelistic opportunity.”

Milestone for last surviving Irish Presbyterian World War 2 minister

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s last surviving minister to be ordained during the Second World War has celebrated his 100th birthday.

Rev. Eric Borland, minister emeritus of Burnside Presbyterian Church in Portstewart, was licensed in his Londonderry home congregation, Great James Street in June 1940. That Sunday thousands of soldiers in the British Expeditionary Force and French army were still being evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk. In 1941 Mr. Borland was ordained in Downpatrick Presbyterian aged 24.

Looking back at those times, Mr. Borland described them as ‘very difficult’, “I spent sometime in Westbourne on the Newtownards Road during the Belfast Blitz of 1941. It was a very difficult time, with stiff restrictions and half the city evacuated each night. Hundreds of people just left the Newtownards Road and



other parts of the city, heading to the hills to avoid the bombs.

They watched the raids there, hoping their house would still be there in the morning. "I couldn't leave. I had to stay in the church, in case it caught fire. Fortunately they missed the church, but hit the hall, which was destroyed. "Many were killed at the time. One of my duties was to go around the public mortuaries to see if any

people belonging to Westbourne were there. It was a very difficult time.”

The Blitz delayed his starting in Downpatrick by about a week, where he was also chaplain to the local workhouse. He ministered in the County Down town for five years, often cycling to the city when he needed to visit Belfast.

He was called to Hamilton Road Presbyterian, Bangor in 1946, Rosemary, in north Belfast in 1955 where he stayed for 23 years, and finally Burnside Church Extension in Portstewart in 1978. He remained on the north coast until retiring in 1983.

“I always felt called to the ministry,” Mr. Borland explained. “We lived just a few doors down from the church in Great James Street and all seven of us attended as a family. Home had a big influence on me. Both my parents were good churchgoers and in those days it was expected that church became a part of your life. My father, a Donegal man, was in the choir and taught in Sunday school. He was a strong Presbyterian and was asked to be an elder.”

Mr. Borland said that T.S Mooney of the Belfast Savings Bank, who founded the Crusaders in Londonderry, had been a big influence on his

life, along with his parents, and he made his profession of faith when he was 14.

“As I have become older I think my faith has deepened. What I still love about the Church is hearing God’s Word preached. Even after all of these years I like to hear it expounded and explained and I often say to myself, ‘I never thought of it like that’.” Asked if there was any significant achievement that stood out, looking back on his long life, he said, “Seeing young people make a profession of their faith. It always made me feel very humble that I should be used in this way. But very happy about it too.” -

Father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Mr. Borland celebrated his 100th birthday on Saturday. Married to Muriel for 69 years, they live together in a retirement home in Belfast. You can read Eric Borland’s ‘Life Lessons’ in May’s edition of the Presbyterian Herald.

US bishops host major conference on gun violence

A three-day conference was held over the weekend in Chicago, facilitated by a group of more than 60 Episcopal bishops working to curtail the epidemic of gun violence in the United



States. “Unholy Trinity: the Intersection of Racism, Poverty and Gun Violence” was the theme of the event grounded in scripture, liturgy and theology.

The conference featured a “three-note” panel of African-American leaders offering perspectives on poverty, racism and gun violence and include Bible study focused on the conference themes as well as a prayerful procession to sites of gun violence on Chicago’s South Side.

Workshops at the conference were devoted to helping participants work with police, young people, legislators, the media, anti-violence advocacy groups and other constituencies to reduce gun violence.

“Our goal is to continue creating a network of Episcopalians inspired and equipped to work against gun violence and the social forces that drive it,” said Bishop Mark Beckwith of Newark, one of three co-conveners of Bishops United.

The “three-note” panelists were: the Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, Susan D. Morgan Distinguished Professor of Religion at Goucher College and canon theologian at Washington National Cathedral; the Rev. Julian DeShazier, senior minister of University Church in Chicago and a hip-hop artist who performs as J.Kwest; and Natalie Moore, a reporter for WBEZ, Chicago’s National Public Radio affiliate, and author of *The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation*. The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, president of the House of Deputies, served as moderator.

[Bishops United Against Gun Violence](#) is an ad hoc group of nearly 70 Episcopal bishops who have come together to explore means of reducing levels of gun violence in the United States and to advocate for policies and legislation that save lives. Bishops United works against gun violence by forming relationships and coalitions with interfaith colleagues, fellow advocates, and families whose lives have been touched by gun violence; giving voice to

voiceless victims through public liturgy, advocacy, and prayer; and supporting each other in efforts to end gun violence in local communities.



Churches Together new website for Election 2017

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland will be providing a website covering the response of the churches to the 2017 General Election taking place on 8 June 2017.

The website will allow visitors to register and search for hustings (public meetings where people can listen to and ask questions of the candidates). It will also have details of resources

available for churches and individual Christians, such as a guide to organising a hustings.

You may still find many of the resources from the 2015 General Election useful, which can be found at ctbielections.org.uk.



Annual Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The Annual Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes will be led by Bishop Donal McKeown. The diocesan dates are July 1st to July 6th each year.

A spokesperson said : “Travelling together as pilgrims on the journey of life to this special place of healing and hospitality where our Lady has invited us to come through St Bernadette.

“We come as able and sick, religious and lay, young and old, family and friends, parishioners and diocese to share in company together and pray for healing and strength in our lives, for our families, communities and diocese.

“Pilgrims are also welcome to assist the group as medics and carers.

“There is also a Youth Group (Year 13/14) who travel as part of the Pilgrimage and take part in assisting with the care of the sick and in the celebration of the Liturgies during the Pilgrimage.

“If you would like to come with us on this great uplifting journey please contact:

The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Office,
The Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop
St, Derry, BT48 6UJ on (028) 7136 2475”

Connor clerical appointment

The Rev John McClure, Curate Assistant of the Parish of Ballymena and Ballyclug, has been appointed as Incumbent of the Grouped Parishes of Muckamore, Killead and Gartree.

A native of Lurgan, Co Armagh, John is married to Margot and they have two grown-up daughters, Stephanie and Rachel.

John was ordained in the Non-Stipendary Ministry in 2007, and served curacies in the Parish of Skerry, Rathcavan and Newtowncrommelin (Broughshane) and the Parish of St Michael, Belfast, before switching to Stipendary Ministry and moving to Ballymena Parish three years ago.

His first job was with Michelin Tyres in Mallusk where he worked for 11 years and he later spent 15 years with the Police at Belfast International Airport.

Before ordination, John was Deputation Secretary with Irish Church Missions, and in this role focused on helping people with social issues including drugs and alcohol dependency. He supported families who had lost a loved one through suicide and set up groups in Northern Ireland to deal with suicide related issues.

John was a member of the former Connor Training Council and currently serves on Connor Diocesan Council.

His interests include walking, golf and 'watching all sports.'

A Service of Institution will take place in St Jude's Church, Muckamore, on Wednesday June 28 at 8pm.

Today in Christian History, April 24

April 24, 387: On this Day ,Augustine of Hippo writes in his autobiographical Confessions, "We were baptized and all anxiety for our past life vanished away." The 33-year-old had been a teacher of rhetoric and pagan philosophies at some of the Roman Empire's finest schools, but after great influence by his mother, Monica, and the famous bishop Ambrose, he turned to

Christianity. His baptism by Ambrose, on Easter Sunday, marked his entrance into the church

April 24, 1581: Vincent de Paul, founder of the Lazarist Fathers and the Sisters of Charity, is born in Pouy, France. The Roman Catholic Church named him patron saint of all works of charity because of his charity work during the Wars of Religion.

April 24, 1944: In "United States v. Ballard," the Supreme Court ruled that no governmental agency can determine "the truth or falsity of the beliefs or doctrines" of anyone—even if the beliefs "may seem incredible, if not preposterous to most people." But the court also reiterated its position that while freedom of belief is absolute, the freedom to act on those beliefs is not.

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