



Belfast Cathedral girl chorister records at St Paul's

Tania Murphy, a member of the Cathedral Girls' Choir, has recently returned to St Paul's Cathedral, London, to record a CD with St Paul's Cathedral Choir and choristers from other UK cathedrals.

The Diamond Fund for Choristers CD will be released on March 17. This Fund was launched last April at a concert in St Paul's to mark the Friends of Cathedral Music's diamond jubilee. The concert brought together choristers

representing 60 cathedrals along with the choir of St Paul's for the first time ever

Tania was selected by St Anne's Master of the Choristers David Stevens to represent the Cathedral at the concert in St Paul's on April 27 last year.

The concert was presented by Classic FM's Aled Jones and Alexander Armstrong, and held in the presence of HRH The Duchess of Gloucester.

After her visit to St Paul's, Tania said she had formed new friendships with choristers from different parts of the country who shared the same interests, and described it as 'definitely an experience which I will never forget!'

Tania has sung with the St Anne's Choir for almost four years. "I love being a chorister of St Anne's Cathedral as I have always been intrigued by the concept of choral music and the resonating sound of the music in such a big cathedral as St Anne's," she said.

"Being a chorister has given me so many opportunities such as singing in Puccini's opera *Turandot*, singing with the St Anne's choir on a tour of Paris, and of course this wonderful opportunity of being able to sing in St Paul's Cathedral, London."



Social Action Award for Armagh Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade

Members of St Saviour's, Dobbin, and St Aidan's, Grange, Companies, both from Armagh Diocese, were at Buckingham Palace recently to receive a Social Action Award from the Prince of Wales.

Three leaders and six members from each Company made the journey to London

accompanied by the Brigade's Development Officer, Victoria Jackson, and Commanding Officer, Melvyn Lockhart.

The Social action awards were organised by Youth United, an umbrella organisation that received a grant to create new places in uniformed youth organisations.

The Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade's Ulster Regiment increased its membership by more than 300 places in the last two years.

The inaugural Youth United Social Action Awards, hosted by Prince Charles, celebrates the achievements of thousands of young people who have sought to bring about positive change to their local community.

Members of the Dobbin and Grange CLCGB were recognised for their efforts in promoting awareness of the needs of the Leprosy Mission NI and raising money for this worthwhile organisation.

The CLCGB has had close links with the Leprosy Mission NI for many years and has just agreed to raise enough money to provide a well for a very needy community.

Rev Paul McAdam, Chaplain to the Grange Company, commented, 'We had a fantastic trip to London. What an honour it was to meet Prince Charles at the Youth United Social Action Awards Ceremony.'

For more photos - https://www.facebook.com/LoughgallandGrange/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1726570320987505

County Antrim Parish left more than half a million pounds in will

A Catholic parish in Co Antrim has been left more than half a million pounds in a will.

The remarkable act of generosity by Ballinderry man Peter McAreavey is thought to be one of the largest donations ever received within the Diocese of Down and Connor.

Mr McAreavey was a life-long member of the parish of Glenavy and Killead and died peacefully in hospital in July 2015.

A farmer, who also did some engineering work, he lived a modest lifestyle according to those who knew him.

At Masses across the parish last weekend, a statement by Fr Colm McBride outlined the "extraordinary gift".

"In the will Mr McAreavey instructed his executors that the residue of his estate was to be gifted to the parish of Glenavy and Killead to help pay off the parish building loan. With the condition that it was used solely for that purpose," it said.

"On the second week of January this year the parish received a cheque for the sum of £554,000. It is an extraordinary and wonderful gift to our parish. This gift of over half a million pounds means that almost a third of our debt has been wiped out.

"So as we begin a new financial year I'm happy to say that our debt now stands not at £1.68 million, but is now reduced to £1,135,000. The only way we can express our gratitude to Peter is to pray for his soul."

A parishioner who knew Mr McAreavey well described him as "quiet, generous man".

"He was just a genuinely generous man and was very kind to his family and friends and left the huge sum of money to the parish," he said.

"He doted on his nieces and nephews and anyone who took time out of their day to visit him he remembered them in his will."

In addition to the donation to his local parish, Mr McAreavey bequeathed £70,000 to the neighbouring St Clare's Community Centre in Glenavy.

The centre, which was formerly the church hall, was given to the community around two years ago, with money raised locally through loans going towards improvements works.

These loans were paid back through Mr McAreavey's donation.

An undisclosed sum was also received by St Joseph's, Glenavy GAC, where Mr Areavey was a former player and member.

Dublin C of I parish to close end of March

The closure of the Parish of St George and St Thomas, Dublin has been announced by Dublin & Glendalough Glebes and Finance Committee on behalf the of Diocesan Councils.

The Parish will cease to exist in April 2017 but the church on Cathal Bruagh Street, Dublin 1, will remain within the Church of Ireland.

A statement issued by the diocese reads -

In March 2015, the Glebes and Finance committee in response to a growing concern regarding the parish's financial position, evidenced through their annual accounts (and confirmed by their accountant), met with the Rev. Obinna Ulogwara and the parish officers. Those present were given suggested ways in which they could raise additional regular funding to maintain ministry in the parish.

In August 2016, the parish accountant informed the Archbishop that the parish would become insolvent by Spring of 2017 as no additional funding had been achieved. The Archdeacon of Dublin in consultation with the Parochial Organisation and Development Committee examined different options in an attempt to preserve this historic parish from insolvency or even bankruptcy. Unfortunately, no alternative was found, however it remained a concern of this committee that the church should not be sold off but remain a Church of Ireland presence in the heart of the city of Dublin.

At a meeting of the Diocesan Councils in December 2016, it was unanimously agreed that the parish could no longer provide the necessary finance for ministry nor function on its own and that steps should be taken to amalgamate St George and St Thomas with another parish. It was also agreed not to sell the property and that the church building remain within the Church of Ireland.

At a meeting with the Rev. Obinna, the Select Vestry, parishioners and other users of the church in mid-January and following much discussion, the Select Vestry put forward a formal proposal requesting the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough to take over administration of the parish with immediate effect and that the parish be amalgamated with another parish following the closing service on 23rd April 2017 at which the Archbishop will be the celebrant and preacher.

Parishioners will be free to worship anywhere they choose, but it is hoped that when an amalgamation occurs, they will worship in their new church (receiving parish) which will be asked to include the title of St George and St Thomas.

Throughout this entire process, the spiritual, pastoral and liturgical needs of the parishioners and the Rev. Obinna and his family, have been a major concern. The Archbishop and the Archdeacon have been in constant contact with the Rev. Obinna regarding his future ministry. Pastoral support for the Rev. Obinna is on-going.

Major restoration works will be required on the roof of the Church so that it may be used in some new and innovative way in the future.

C of I and Church Army's Centre of Mission launched on Belfast's Shankill Road

Connect Base, the Diocese of Connor and Church Army's North Belfast Centre of Mission in Shankill Road, was officially launched on Wednesday last.

Mr Des Scott, Deputy Chief Executive of the Church Army, travelled from Sheffield for the opening. He said the Church Army was delighted to be part of the vision the diocese has for the area.



Lead Pioneer Evangelist Karen Webb welcomes guests to the launch of the Connor Diocese / Church Army Connect Base Centre of Mission.

The opening was attended by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, clergy from the Mid Belfast Rural Deanery, diocesan staff, and other representatives of the Church Army.

Connect Base moved into two units in the Spectrum Centre last September, and is the working base for Church Army Evangelists Karen Webb and Stephen Whitten, along with Connor Children's Officer Jill Hamilton.

The premises have a comfortable sitting area, a multi-purpose space with a large table which can be used for meetings, homework clubs and round-table chats, a kitchen, office space, and a relaxing prayer room. There is a pool table and games consuls which are proving popular with young people who have been taking advantage of the drop-in nature of Connect Base.

Guests were welcomed to the launch by Lead Pioneer Evangelist Karen Webb who thanked clergy for attending open evenings held at Connect Base, and related stories demonstrating how the new centre is already impacting on lives of people living in the area.

She explained how, in response to an identified need and working on referrals from health professions, Children's Officer Jill was now providing 'Baby Basics' for young mothers. Essential items for mum and new baby, donated by parishes in the rural deanery, are collected in a Moses basket and given to a young mother to help her and the baby.

"We have been encouraged by our churches and our clergy who are so supportive and wanting to get on board with this project," Karen said.

She introduced Mr Scott who described Karen and Stephen as 'a breath of fresh air.'



Church Army Deputy Chief Executive Des Scott, who used to work in the Shankill Road area, attended the official launch of Connect Base.

“Thirty years ago I was working in this area. People were trapped in their homes as it was a no go area. Tennent Street and Shankill Road are very different today with all the shops and new houses,” he said.

“But there is still a sense of hopelessness, people are trapped by circumstances and sometimes they feel they want to give up. Hopelessness creeps into our churches, and

often we look at the things we can't do rather than the things we can.

“Karen and Stephen can be a catalyst, they can help you to build up your people.”

He added: “Church Army sees the vision the diocese has for this area, and we are delighted to be part of it.

“Please pray and support Karen and Stephen to reach the hurting, the broken and the hopeless, the people who have got nothing but want something we have. Through a shop window like this we show we are here to help. I am really glad the Bishop has chosen this place as a Centre of Mission.”

Bishop Alan told guests that this Centre of Mission was about partnership. “We are stronger together than we are alone,” he said. “I am grateful to the clergy for buying into this and to the Church Army. It is a great joy for me to say Connor is one of these first partnerships.”

The Bishop thanks Diocesan Council, the Connor team and particularly Diocesan Development Officer Trevor Douglas for sourcing funding for this new venture.

“This is a journey. I am not sure where it is going to lead but I have a profound sense that God is in this and that is all that matters, and God will bring His blessing,” Bishop Alan said.

After prayers led by the Bishop, guests had an opportunity to see the items collected for the Baby Basics project, and to take a good look around the Connect Base.

See report on opening of the base last September at -

<http://connor.anglican.org/2016/09/15/connect-base-open-business-shankill-road/>

Call for State to streamline school vetting

The Irish Government has been urged to streamline the process for vetting people to work in schools amidst a huge backlog in the safeguarding system, Greg Daly reports in The Irish Catholic.

Changes in the vetting process, to ensure that people are safe to work with children, led to a “very large upsurge” in applications for such clearance, according



Seamus Mulconry General Secretary of the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association (CPSMA)

to Seamus Mulconry General Secretary of the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association (CPSMA).

He said that the backlog has been caused by the need for people to be vetted multiple times. For example, a special needs assistant who works in three different schools has needed to be vetted three separate times.

Since the vetting legislation came into force in September, Mr Mulconry said there has been an enormous increase.

Upsurge

“In most dioceses it has increased by factor of three, and in some dioceses it has increased by a factor of four, so there’s been a massive upsurge,” he said.

It ought to be possible to streamline this arrangement, he said, so multiple vetting is no longer necessary and the system made more fit for purpose. “The legislation refers to an agreement which can exist between a school and an external body such as the GAA, and we have been waiting since last September for legal clarity from the Attorney General’s office as to how that letter would operate” he said. This would mean that vetting provided for one setting could be valid for other settings.

“This has also led to an outlay of resources on behalf of diocesan offices as they’ve struggled to cope,” he said.

Colette O’Doherty, Director of Safeguarding for the Diocese of Ferns, echoed this. “Pressure is being placed on dioceses, because we’re the conduits,” she said, adding that dioceses do not have the resources to meet the duplication required.

“In Ferns we don’t have the capacity to double-vet,” she said, calling for pressure to be “focused upwards” so the mechanism of the shared agreement can be put into practice.

Irish born Primus of Scottish Episcopal Church announces his retirement

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church has announced he will retire at the end of July. Bishop David was consecrated as Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld



& Dunblane in 2005 and was elected Primus four years later.

In his leadership roles in Scotland, Bishop David has consistently encouraged the church to become more missional. He encouraged the establishment of the “Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy” – which for the past six years has challenged the Scottish Episcopal Church to reshape its life in the cause of mission and growth. Bishop David believes that mission is rooted in faith commitment and in a deep understanding of history and context. He has also worked to sustain the unity of the church as it addressed human sexuality issues.

Bishop David has also been deeply involved in the life of the worldwide Anglican Communion, serving as a member of the standing committee of the Anglican Consultative Council. He has exercised leadership in Continuing Indaba, a movement which attempts to establish 'honest conversation across difference in the cause of mission' across the Anglican Communion. He also serves as the Anglican Co-Chair of the International Dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. His work in the Anglican Communion was recognised by the award of an Honorary Degree from the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee.

Ordained in 1976, Bishop David spent the next 29 years in the ministry of the Church of Ireland within Northern Ireland. Much of that time was spent in places which were deeply affected by the Northern Ireland conflict. Throughout that period, particularly as Rector of Seagoe Parish Church in Portadown, he attempted to develop ways in which churches could challenge the sectarianism which powerfully influenced communities and churches in Northern Ireland. During that time, he also served successively as Dean and Archdeacon of Dromore.

Throughout his ministry, Bishop David has given a high priority to communication. He is a regular broadcaster and for over ten years has written a blog at www.bishopdavid.net.

Announcing his retirement, Bishop David said: “it has been an immense privilege for me to exercise the interwoven ministries of bishop and Primus. The Scottish Episcopal Church has with increasing confidence been developing its mission and taking its place in the evolving story of Scotland. As the process for the election of my successor begins - and as God's unfolding future for our church is revealed - I shall continue to hold this church and its leadership in my prayers.”

New co-ordinator for the International Anglican Family Network

The International Anglican Family Network (IAFN), has appointed a new Co-ordinator, Deacon Angela Morrison, who will be taking over from Dr Sally Thompson, recently retired from the role after a quarter of a century.



Revd Angela Morrison and Dr Sally Thompson

The role of the UK based Co-ordinator involves facilitating the exchange of news, information and resources among those within the worldwide Anglican Communion who have a passion for promoting the well-being of families and their communities.

Angela Morrison has worked as a primary school teacher for children with special educational needs and in family and community social services. Deacon Angela, originally a native of South Africa, has lived in Canada for a number

of years but recently moved back to the UK: “I’m excited about this new role. There’s clearly a lot for me to learn. I am excited to be part of something in support of the structure of family well-being,” she said. “I enjoy connecting people to resources that are necessary to help support people in different situations on a global scale. Families need support so that children can grow up solid in their identity.”

The network sends out a newsletter two or three times a year and is also growing its social media profile, via Facebook. Dr Sally Thompson says over 25 years she has worked with a wide range of issues that have an impact on families, including human trafficking, homelessness, slavery and refugees as well as faith and the family. So what have been the more significant achievements? “Sowing the seed of importance about birth registration and being able to raise the profile of this issue. Also making progress to tackle gender violence, by empowering women. It’s been an amazing experience to see IAFN develop over the years.”

Deacon Angela says one priority will be to grow the social media aspect of the network, although the traditional printed newsletter still has its place, not least in parts of Africa where people request it: “It’s about sharing stories and making

connections globally and learning from each other. For instance, as hard as it is to believe, birth registration is an issue in the USA in some communities – so we can take lessons from other places where progress has been made, like Uganda, and share the information in a constructive way. Raising awareness is vital.”

Working with those involved in the development and delivery of family ministries, IAFN engages across the Anglican Communion to celebrate the God-given potential of the family as a source of thriving relationships, identity, belonging, discipleship and reconciliation. The network also operates as an advocate for the family in the face of behaviours which diminish this potential, sharing stories of hope, promoting family care and sustaining the family as the cradle for human dignity.

Archbishop of Canterbury calls on Christians to join global wave of prayer

The Archbishop of Canterbury is encouraging Christians of all denominations to join in with a ten day global prayer initiative “Thy Kingdom Come” from Ascension Day to Pentecost. What began last year as an invitation from the

Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer. Last year more than 100,000 people joined in and in 2017 it's expected to be on a bigger scale. Launching the initiative, which runs from 25 May to 4 June,

Archbishop Justin said: "When the wind of the spirit is blowing, hoist the sails and go with the wind. It's not a Church of England thing, it's not an Anglican thing, it's a Christian thing."

In a video to promote the ten days of prayer, Archbishop Justin talks about his faith, why he's a Christian and why he is asking Christians around the world to join him in praying for more people to know Jesus Christ. He encourages Christians to #Pledge2Pray, and unite with thousands of others in praying for people to come to faith: "Jesus prayed at the Last Supper that we, those who follow him, might 'be one that the world might believe'. We are invited to make a lasting difference in our nations and in our world, by responding to his call to find a deep unity of purpose in prayer."

He said prayer happens when we have before us a challenge that we can't meet by our own resources and he recalled a visit to a refugee



camp in the Democratic Republic of Congo; he was asked to say something and, amid the appalling conditions, whilst trying to think of some “practical” advice, found himself saying: “Jesus Christ is the same today, tomorrow and yesterday.” He was surprised when the crowd responded by singing: “It was a lesson to methe Spirit opens ears and warms hearts, it’s not us, it’s about Jesus.”

Emma Buchan, project leader for the Archbishop’s Evangelism Taskforce, who heads up “Thy Kingdom Come” says: “The global response to the campaign this year has been overwhelming. We’ve heard from churches across the world, including different

denominations and traditions, who are all pledging to get involved from South Africa to Canada and from Brazil to Hong Kong. Each place is organising the time in their own way, for example in Hong Kong they are planning big celebrations in the cathedrals and establishing a network of 'prayer warriors'. That's the beauty of Thy Kingdom Come."

Emma explained, "We're hoping people will be inspired to take part and be catalysts for setting up prayer events in their local area. Last year "Thy Kingdom Come" gave people time and space outside their normal worshipping patterns to come closer to God and we heard many stories of the deep impact it had on people's lives. Our new website has a wide range of resources for everyone which includes ideas on prayer stations, prayer walks, finding fun and creative ways of praying together as a family. We also have Novena prayer booklets and liturgy for a range of traditions."

Archbishop Justin: "Over the years Jesus Christ has been a faithful friend. His love has healed me and following him has been the core point of my life. We have to pray "Come Holy Spirit" because the Spirit inspires every Christian. We are being called to pray for evangelism."

Here's the link to the Thy Kingdom Come **website**:

News briefs



Members of Seagoe Church Lads Brigade

+++ CLB fundraiser for Christian Aid -

Members of Seagoe Church Lads Brigade collected 20p's in Smartie Tubes and raised £400 for Christian Aid.

+++ Meath & Kildare diocesan reader

licensed - Emma Rothwell is Chaplain in Wilson's Hospital as well as being Meath & Kildare's Diocesan Youth and. Children's Officer. On the evening of Monday 6 February she was licensed as a diocesan lay-reader by Bishop Pat Storey. The Service took place in the School chapel at Wilson's Hospital. It was attended by

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

members of Emma's family, friends as well as colleagues from school and across the dioceses. Being a licensed lay-reader will enable Emma to fulfil more of her ministry in the school chapel. Bishop Pat Storey said, "Emma has brought much inspiration and encouragement to youth work in our diocese. She somehow manages to combine this with her busy role in Wilson's Hospital and the diocese".

+++ Celebration in Sport Service - The 3rd annual Celebration in Sport Service will take place on Sunday 19th February at 7.00pm in Magheracross Parish Church, Ballinamallard (Clogher diocese). The event, organised by Ballinamallard United FC through their chaplain, The Venerable Brian Harper, includes interviews with local sports people relevant to their faith. Past interviewees have included goalkeeper Feargal Murphy, players Ivan Sproule and Gareth Carrothers and Portadown FC Academy chaplain, Simon Beare. Fans and participants from local sports clubs, including cycling, soccer and GAA, have been invited to this community event. Archdeacon Brian Harper will be the preacher and the theme this year is "Fit for Purpose". Previous themes have been "You'll never walk alone" and "My chains fell off".

+++ Boden Clothes Rail' fundraiser - On Monday next 13th February Clabby & Tempo Scout Group will be hosting a 'Boden Clothes Rail' fundraiser. Opening times: Monday 13th 7.00- 9.00pm; Tuesday 14th 10.00am–12.00noon, 2.00-5.00pm and 7.00-9.00pm. You can view the clothes on their web site: www.boden.co.uk. There will be 6 rails of clothes to try on and if you make a purchase the items will be posted from Boden to your own address within 3 working days.

+++ Hillsborough Parish is seeking a Youth Pastor - Aim: To plan, organise and help deliver a youth ministry which enables young people to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and become more like Him. We are seeking an enthusiastic person who is a self-starter and is passionate about serving with young people. Terms & Conditions: A full-time post with salary of £21,268 to £24,964 (depending upon experience and qualifications) and with provision of a pension. The post will have 35 days annual leave/public holidays. For further information, telephone Andrea Forbes, the Hillsborough Parish Church Administrator, (tel.028 92688839) or e-mail sec@hillsboroughparish.org.uk Closing Date – 1st March 2017

February 11

+++ Trocaire youth invite - Join our **#Climate**
Justice Workshop for Youth Leaders: 13
February, Dublin & 15 February, Cork, 9.30am -
2.30pm. <http://buff.ly/2lof6hX>