



**Mothers' Union members attending the first of five agape services in Derry and Raphoe diocese**

## **Agape Service in Clondevaddock for Mothers' Union 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

Around 60 people attended an Agape Meal with Holy Communion in Clondevaddock Parish Hall

on Sunday evening to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the Mothers' Union in Ireland.

It was the first in a series of five such services which will take place in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe in February and March. An Agape Service combines a ritual meal with hymn-singing and worship.

At the Service in Clondevaddock, women and men from various M.U. branches gathered to share fellowship and celebrate the Eucharist. The worship was led by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good.

Those present enjoyed a three course meal prepared and served by local parishioners. During the Service, the Rector of Tamlaghtfinlagan and Myroe, Canon Harold Given, led the congregation in a renewal of baptismal vows.

In her address, the Diocesan President for Derry and Raphoe, Mrs Mary Good, told members that their power to do any acts of faith that would make a difference came from God in them, not from themselves. His Holy Spirit in them changed their actions from ordinary ones God uses to powerful effect.

Touching upon this year's MU theme, 'Faith in action', Mrs Good recalled the words of the American writer and philosopher, Henry David Thoreau: "'One is not born into the world to do everything, but to do something.' We can all do something.

"In fact, I'm reminded that in Mothers' Union – through our members – we are already doing all this and more, and have done for the last 130 years as we have put our faith into action."

Mrs Good posed a number of questions to the Mothers' Union members gathered in Clondevaddock: "What might our faith in action look like? How are we to be Christ's body on earth? How are we to seek justice and love mercy? How can we be used to open eyes that are blind or set captives free? How can we release those who sit in darkness?"

The President said they could do it figuratively or literally. "Most of us won't be going into prisons to set captives free," Mrs Good said. "But I'm sure all of us know people who feel trapped, who feel caught in a circumstance, and maybe we can help release them. We might not know anybody that we can make their eyes from blind to seeing, but we can help people who feel that their life is dark; we can shed light. We can do so

much in our everyday lives. Christ's in us because he's our secret weapon. This is what turns ordinary actions into powerful actions."

Mrs Good suggested that in small ways they could show Christ to somebody in need. "I've a whole list here," she said. "By writing a note, making a phone call, taking a meal to a young mum or a household where there's illness, helping someone onto a bus, letting another car go into that parking space, thinking good of another person's actions instead of our natural reaction of anger, sending a text to encourage someone or to say thank you, giving money to a charity that enables people to do work of spreading the Gospel or seeking justice in our country, volunteering in the community, offering to babysit, driving someone to hospital, visiting a person who lives alone. The list goes on and on. Or perhaps God wants you to invite somebody to a church event."

The next Mothers' Union Agape Service will take place in Leckpatrick on February 27th, for members from the Strabane area. That will be followed by Services in Lislimnaghan on March 6th (for the Omagh area), Stranorlar on March 20th (Donegal area) and Maghera on March 27th (North and South Sperrin area).

## **Come & C Greystones event reflects the past and looks forward**

Reflecting on the last year of Come & C and looking to the future, a large crowd gathered for Come & C Greystones in Temple Carrig School on evening Sunday evening, February 5. The songs of praise type services have been taking place periodically throughout Dublin & Glendalough. While those services draw to a close, other strands of Come & C continue to develop and the initiative is spreading overseas to other dioceses.

Introducing Sunday's service, the Revd Alan Breen, curate in St Patrick's, Greystones and chaplain in Temple Carrig School, explained that the Come & C discipleship programme was about "how we look at ourselves, our connections to others and how we see Jesus."

Fellow members on the Come & C songs of praise organising committee shared their reflections of the services. Philip McKinley, Church of Ireland chaplain in DCU, explained that holding a Come & C service in DCU's Inter Faith Centre helped him to shape his ideas of what type of expression might work in that diverse university space. He said the vision of [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

Come & C was broad and wide and leads participants to different places and different strands.

The Revd Abigail Sines, Dean's Vicar at Christ Church Cathedral, said she enjoyed assisting in the creative prayer aspect of the services.

"The services drew different people together in different geographical locations and showed the vibrant expressions of faith coming through across the dioceses," she commented.

She added that while we could be discouraged at times but if we take time to look at our relationships and our faith then we could 'Taste and see that the Lord is good. Happy are those who take refuge in him' [Psalm 34].

The Revd Brian O'Reilly, Rector of Rathdrum and organiser, along with the Revd Leonard Ruddock, of the Camino de Glendalough which took place in November as part of Come & C, said he resisted the idea of pilgrimage initially but he drew a lot from the journey. "Pilgrimage is a meaningful walk to a sacred place. This was my guiding light. There was a walk already from Hollywood to Glendalough and we took advantage of this ancient walk and put new life into it. It was a very good and blessed occasion.

It drew people from all over the dioceses,” he said. They are now planning to develop pilgrimage in Glendalough using St John’s Church in Laragh as a focal point.

Alan Breen explained that hope was a very important factor. He asked participants to write down their hope for their own lives and their hope for the future of the Church. He said the beauty of Come & C was that there was no wrapping it up and that it would continue.

Archbishop Michael Jackson drew the service to a close by explaining the genesis of the Come & C initiative. “The missing link in today’s world is one of discipleship,” he commented adding later “My hope for Come & C was that the initiative might begin to develop in people the confidence to speak of their faith and what motivates their faith.”

He said that Come & C was going in new directions and was being implemented in the Anglican dioceses of Spain and Lusitania, whose foundations lie in Dublin & Glendalough, as well as in the Diocese of Jerusalem, with whom this dioceses has a friendship link.

Meanwhile, Dr David Tuohy SJ, who helped develop the programme, has prepared a

Confirmation programme based on Come & C which helps engage candidates and their parents. The Come & C 5 Marks Challenge – a discipleship programme based on the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion – has also been piloted successfully and is open for applicants to take part.

The Archbishop said he is also exploring the possibility of linking the Camino de Glendalough with the Camino de Campostella in Spain.

Any individual/groups interested in taking up the 5 Marks Challenge or people who are already engaged in some form of activity and want to see it in a new light under the 5 Marks of Mission, please email [5markschallenge@dublin.anglican.org](mailto:5markschallenge@dublin.anglican.org) and a pack will be posted out.

## **4 Corners 2017 Holding Back the River**

Iain Archer does not disappoint and the 200-people packed into Fitzroy Church for the opening night of the festival, were treated to an





intimate night of wonder, writes our 4Corners correspondent.

As Archer sang himself later in the show – “I want to make you feel beautiful,” and by the end of the night we all did. The evening began with conversation as Steve Stockman walked through thoughts on song writing, a sense of place and

the inspiration behind some of his catalogue. We learned about growing up in Bangor, the wonder of Holywood Seapark and how an 8-year-old child was afraid of the Black Mountain quarry on the other side of the lough. “When it kicks in,” is a song on Archer’s Magnetic North album and he described how the first part is a memory of being caught up in a bomb explosion in the early 90’s while playing at a record store in Belfast city centre. Fast forward to 2005, now living in London and Northern Ireland had beaten England and he was walking around feeling such pride in the homeland which was suddenly shattered as news came through of some of the worst sectarian violence and rioting in years on the streets of Belfast. The yearning to move beyond that runs through the song culminating in ...”when it kicks in, you’ll know it/ a truth drug is gonna open your weeping eyes.”

The concert itself was a mixture of nostalgia and some new songs. For a brief moment, I was taken back to my post student day 20 years ago when Archer’s first album with the eponymous single “Wishing” was a regular on the soundtrack of my life. Unusually he started with a track from that album – “Drink your Fill,” written when he moved to Glasgow and wrestles with what it’s like to be “a new stranger in this part of town.”

# 4 Corners Festival

*Bringing Belfast Together*

At a time when immigrants, refugees and anyone who plays the role of the other are under attack from governments on both sides of the Atlantic it felt like a timely tune. Archer described how his children are at the stage of asking questions about everything which he now answers metaphorically, because that's easier. That was the context to his new track "The Square Root of Love," which again felt apt for a festival of reconciliation. And there was even time for a few requests including crowd favourite, "Crazy Bird."

The energy was upped as electric replaced acoustic guitars reaching the high point when Nathan Connolly from Snow Patrol joined him onstage and literally rocked the old church. Bringing it back down again there was some acoustic numbers from Tired Pony – a band made up of members of Snow Patrol, REM and Archer – he grinned describing himself as the luckiest band member in the world. After the obligatory encore the venue suddenly became a church as he led the audience into that grey area between performance and worship, walking off

stage to 200 people singing softly in the sanctuary.

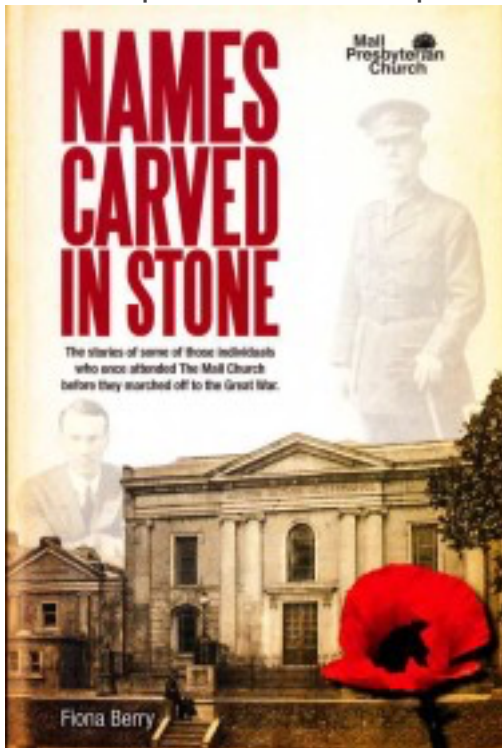
It would have been the perfect ending but the crowd wanted more and so Steve Stockman dragged him back for one more number. Mirrorball Moon from the album was the last song – a whimsical song about a disco glitterball clinging to a cold black ceiling in a lonely old dance hall. He urges the Mirrorball to find a better place “on the other side of town/ where they help each other out.” A fitting end to the opening night of 4 Corners as we head out across the city and help each other out.

## **Armagh Presbyterian Church remembers WW1 ‘Names Carved in Stone’**

‘Names carved in stone’ by Fiona Berry tells the stories of some of those individuals who once attended the Mall Presbyterian Church, Armagh, before they marched off to the Great War

This new publication is a tribute to those from the Mall Presbyterian Church in Armagh who served or died during the First World War and

who feature on their war memorials. How fitting that the person who sculpted the memorial



tablet was the father of Cecil Walker whose name appears on the Roll of Honour.

After an introduction recording church life and life in Armagh during the First World War that provides the context for the book, there follows brief biographical sketches of each of the soldiers recorded on the war memorials with photographs of the men and of their graves.

The lives of these ordinary men (46 of whom were under the age of 30) who were required to do extraordinary things are brought to life, serving as a permanent reminder of the sacrifice and service of 69 men of the Mall congregation.

The book is a very fine production with many illustrations of documents and other photographs. It is available from the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland. [Buy it now online.](#)

## **Mission to Seafarers appoints new Chairman**

The Mission to Seafarers has announced that Tom Boardley, Executive Vice President of Lloyd's Register has been appointed as the new Chairman of the global maritime welfare charity. Tom will formally take on the role from the incumbent Chairman Robert Woods CBE on the 1 April 2017.

Robert Woods said, "I am pleased to be handing over the chairmanship of The Mission to Seafarers to Tom Boardley. Tom has a great reputation within the industry, and I have no doubt is the right person to steer the Mission through the next stage of the charity's evolution.

I wish him all the very best in his new role.”

Tom who has been with Lloyd's Register since 2009, has 30 years experience in the maritime sector, has worked in senior positions at some of the world's largest shipping concerns and has featured in the Lloyds List Top 100 People in Global Shipping and the Tradewinds Power 100. Tom is currently the President of RINA (Royal Institution of Naval Architects). Previously, Tom was the President of the UK Chamber of Shipping (2015/2016) and was appointed to the UK Maritime Growth Study Advisory Committee in January 2015.

On hearing of his appointment, Tom said, “The Mission to Seafarers plays a crucial role within the maritime industry, it is an honour to be invited to be Chairman of a charity with such a proud history and bright future”.

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## **GAFCON accuses Anglican head office of deceit over 'Consequences' for Gay-Affirming Episcopal Church in USA**

The global Anglican head office is being accused of deception in a row over the role of the gay-affirming Episcopal Church in the USA.

The Episcopal Church allows same sex marriage and consecrates gay bishops and as a result worldwide Anglican leaders at the last primates meeting in January 2016 imposed "consequences".

As part of those consequences, which the primates insist are not "sanctions", The Episcopal Church (TEC) was barred from decision making in matters of doctrine for three years.

But GAFCON, a conservative grouping within the Church, accused Anglican officials of half-truths, manipulation and compromise in a dispute over whether TEC delegates voted at a recent meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), a decision making body in the wider Anglican Communion.

Staff at the Anglican Communion Office insist TEC did not officially vote because the decisions were agreed by consensus, not by ballot.

GAFCON's head, former Archbishop of Sydney Peter Jensen said this was "sophistry" in a statement on Friday.



"The Primates agreement in January was never limited to the narrow issue of the method of voting," he said.

"Whether a meeting uses a consensus model, or a voice vote, or paper ballots, or electronic ballots is of no relevance. The Episcopal Church was not to take part in decision making on issues pertaining to polity or doctrine. They did."

TEC representatives Rosalie Simmonds Ballentine, Ian Douglas and Gay Clark Jennings attended the meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, in April last year and insist they voted on every resolution that came up, including those on doctrine and polity.

"As the duly elected ACC members of a province of the Anglican Communion, this was our responsibility and we fulfilled it," they said in a statement.

They added they were dismayed by a report on the Anglican Communion News Service that suggested they did not vote on those key matters.

"It could be inferred from today's ACNS story that we did not fulfill our voting responsibilities at [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

ACC-16 to comply with a communiqué issued by the primates of the Anglican Communion in January 2016," they said.

"The communiqué sought to impose consequences on the Episcopal Church for its adoption of marriage equality at our 2015 General Convention. Such an inference would be incorrect."

A prominent member of The Episcopal Church added on Facebook: "The intent here is to show that the top bishops of the communion have the power to discipline churches for allowing same-sex couples to marry, and have done so. But they have no such power, and the Episcopal Church's reps voted on every issue at the meeting in question. I know those reps personally and have spoken with them about this."

The GAFCON affiliated primates added: "The future of the Anglican Communion does not lie with manipulations, compromises, legal loopholes, or the presentation of half-truths; the future of our Communion lies in humble obedience to the truth of the Word of God written."

## **Eco Church Campaign Sees 450 Churches Go Green In First Year**

To mark the first anniversary of the Eco Church initiative 'green communions took place across the UK from Canterbury Cathedral to York Minster.

As part of the scheme, churches undertake positive environmental steps which demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth and are awarded bronze, silver and gold awards accordingly.

In its first year, 450 churches have signed up, consisting of hundreds of small actions from using a renewable energy supplier and improving energy efficiency to teaching about creation care and ensuring its land is sustainably managed.

Dr Ruth Valerio, Churches and Theology Director for A Rocha UK, which leads the scheme with support from the Church of England, the Methodist Church, Christian Aid and Tearfund, said: "Looking after our common home is an essential part of living out the Gospel, and Eco

Church can inspire and equip us to do that well.  
I'm thrilled with how Eco Church has taken off



***Christian Aid Chair Dr Rowan Williams  
speaking at the launch of Eco Church last  
year***

this year, and it has been exciting watching churches of all shapes and sizes getting involved. I've particularly loved visiting churches that have gained awards and seeing the impact that taking part in Eco Church has had on them as a church and in their communities."

On Sunday green communion services were held across the country including cathedrals in

Canterbury, Salisbury and Ely, York Minster and Bath Abbey. Other churches included Chichester's Revelation Family Church, a part of the Pioneer Network, Severn Vineyard in Bristol and C3, a large charismatic congregation in Cambridge. A special order of service was written by the Precentor of Canterbury Cathedral, Matthew Rushton, containing bible verses, liturgies, and prayers and there was even an earth-friendly bread recipe on [the Eco Church website](#).

Izzy Woodman, the Eco Church Rep for Lyme Regis Baptist Church said: "What I have particularly enjoyed about Eco Church is how accessible and easy to use it is. It gets churches thinking about the environment on a practical, spiritual and missional level in a way that I don't think the church has ever been challenged to before. It looks at all areas of church life and provokes you to think about areas you had never thought of having an impact on the environment."

This sentiment was shared by Sue Charlton, of St Stephen's Church, Ealing. "The Eco Church process is generating a lot of discussion with creative ideas flowing and it's been great to have the structure to work with. It's not just a few of us working for ecology, peace and justice any more but the whole of our growing congregation."

**Pope Francis invites you to celebrate St. Valentine's Day!**

In his document on *The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)*, Pope Francis refers directly to Saint Valentine's Day as an opportunity to make the most of traditional religious practices, invite couples to grow in love and help their children to prepare for their future married life.

This is why, as part of the preparations for **World Meeting of Families** in Ireland in August 2018, we invite you to mark this St. Valentine's Day in a special way:

**Here are some ideas you may wish to consider:**

- \* Download a *Joy of Love* token for your loved one from the World Meeting of Families 2018 website [www.worldmeeting2018.ie](http://www.worldmeeting2018.ie), or collect one from the venues listed there. In giving these gift tokens to your loved one on St. Valentine's day you are committing to do one or several of the following:
  - A technology-free evening, to do an activity of your choice.
  - Set aside time to pray together.
  - Go for a hand-in-hand walk together.
  - A special dinner, cooked by me!
  - Loads of tender hugs!
  - A journey down memory lane: take time to remember how we met and have grown together.
  - Pray together as a couple, using the prayers and scripture reading on this card.
- \* If you are a single person, searching for your life-long soul mate for marriage, undertake to pray regularly the prayer for a single person on this card.
- \* Did you know that a reliquary containing the remains of St Valentine is in Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin? Visit St Valentine's shrine and pray through his intercession for your intention in regard to finding love or growing in the love you have already found.
- \* Send your prayer intention for love sought or love already found to the Carmelite Friars in Whitefriar Church in Dublin through their website [www.whitefriarstreetchurch.ie](http://www.whitefriarstreetchurch.ie) or by email to World Meeting of Families 2018: [prayers@worldmeeting2018.ie](mailto:prayers@worldmeeting2018.ie).





**WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES**  
22-26 AUGUST 2018

**CELEBRATE THE JOY OF LOVE THIS ST VALENTINE'S Day**

14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY



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## Pope Francis invites the Church to celebrate Saint Valentine's Day

In his 2016 apostolic exhortation on *The Joy of Love (Amoris Laetitia)*, Pope Francis referred directly to Saint Valentine's Day saying, "I think of Saint Valentine's Day; in some countries, commercial interests are quicker to see the potential of this celebration that we are in the Church" (AL 208). Inspired by the Holy Father's encouragement of greater use of Saint

Valentine's Day in the Church, the World Meeting of Families 2018 has produced a new resource for couples to use this year as part of ongoing preparations for WMOF2018 in August 2018.

The WMOF2018 office has prepared flyers inviting couples to celebrate the Joy of Love this Saint Valentine's Day. The flyers include prayers, some words of encouragement from Pope Francis and some ideas on how to mark Saint Valentine's Day.

A series of special gift tokens that couples can give to each other have also been made available. These include: a technology-free evening; time for prayer together as a couple, go for a walk together; a special dinner at home, loads of hugs; and a journey down memory lane where the couple takes time to remember how they met and have grown together.

The resources are available in each Cathedral across Ireland, in Veritas Shops and in Accord centres nationwide. They can also be downloaded from [worldmeeting2018.ie](http://worldmeeting2018.ie).