



CNI



Participants with keynote speakers: Graham Philpott, Tim Dunwoody, Sarah O'Boyle and Ian McCammon. Methodist President the Rev Brian Anderson (back row, extreme left) was amongst the those who took part in the event.

Communication of Churches in response to world development

Many are influenced more by what they read in the paper than by what they read in the Bible.'

This was one of the observations at a gathering of representatives from the Churches' world development committees, hosted by Christian Aid.

Keynote speakers at the gathering – held in Dromantine Retreat Centre, Newry – included Ian McCammon (Interserve Scotland and Ireland); Graham Philpott, (Director Church Land Programme, South Africa); Tim Dunwoody (Methodist World Development and Relief Committee); and Sarah O'Boyle (Christian Aid).

There was opportunity to discuss best practice for churches engaged in world development and how the real and lasting impact of that support may be conveyed to the wider Church. Participants were reminded that justice is at the heart of the Gospels and also embedded in the Old Testament through prophets such as Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra and Amos.

In seeking to put their faith into action, church members need to look to those prophetic voices found in God's Word and be open to learning lessons from them. Graham Philpott spoke of 'the uncounted making themselves count' and

the challenges faced by the poor and marginalised to have their voices heard.

Churches should not rush to abandon their schools

Church communities which see faith-based education as part of their mission of evangelisation should not rush to abandon those schools deemed to be still genuinely at the service of that mission, a leading professor of theology has said.

Addressing a meeting hosted by the Iona Institute on the topic, 'The Future of Denominational Education', Professor Eamonn Conway of Mary Immaculate College said, "Co-operation in the policy of divestment should be conditional upon tangible commitments in regard to non-interference through public educational policy in the implementation of the characteristic spirit of schools that remain faith-based."

Professor Conway said this included anti-bullying policies as well as policies on sex education.

He called for more effort to be put into making the case as to why the State can and should fund faith-based schools and colleges.

The reality is that Catholic education globally is thriving.

Estimations suggest that there are currently roughly 51 million pupils in catholic primary and secondary schools worldwide and that the number is increasing.

Similarly, the number of Catholic universities and institutes of higher education now exceeds 2,000.

But he warned that a subcultural secularist elite of education policy-makers, politicians and media, in the context of the Forum on Patronage and Pluralism, has sought to banish specific expressions of religious conviction and to impose the teaching of an inherently secularist approach to the study of faiths, in a new programme called 'Education about Religions and Beliefs & Ethics'.

On the issue of parents who find they have no alternative but to send their children to a faith school due to the lack of alternative patrons, Professor Conway said this should not happen.

"Their right to have their children educated in accordance with their beliefs should be vindicated by the State," he stated.

However, Professor Conway, who is a priest of the archdiocese of Tuam, said there is a danger that the current focus on possible discrimination on the basis of baptismal certificates or their absence could distract from other equally pressing forms of exclusion that stem from economic injustice.

“We can be grateful that faith-based schools score so highly in regard to inclusion across a whole range of important criteria and we should not lose sight of this in the present debate,” he said.

He recalled the finding of the 2012 ESRI report ‘School Sector Variation Among Primary Schools in Ireland’ that Catholic primary schools are “more likely” to have members of the working class and the traveller community and the “widest spread of nationalities”.

Arklow Presbyterian Church celebrates centenary

Arklow Presbyterian Church in County Wicklow has held a Service of Celebration to mark the Church’s centenary.



Those who took part in the Service of Celebration were: Back Row (left to right) Father Martin Cosgrove P.P., Parish Priest of Saint Mary and Saint Peters Catholic Church, Arklow, Councillor Pat Kennedy, Vice Chair of Arklow Municipal Council, Rev. Michael Anderson, former minister of Arklow Presbyterian Church, Rev. David Bruce, Secretary, Council for Mission in Ireland, Rev. Jim Carson, former APC minister, Rev. Trevor Gribben, PCI's Clerk of the General Assembly and Rev. Alistair Bill, former minister.

Front Row (left to right) organist Alison Crammond, Emily Kearon, APC's Clerk of Session, Rev. Katherine Meyer, Christ Church Sandymount, Dublin, Vacancy Commission Convener, and Tara Crammond, Sunday School superintendent and a great-granddaughter of founding member of Arklow Presbyterian Church Joseph Crammond.

Members of the 120-strong congregation, civic dignitaries and representatives from other churches in the town gathered to give thanks and celebrate 100 years of Arklow Presbyterian Church.

During the last number of years Arklow has developed as a commuter town for Dublin and also seen its population grow; some of those coming into the town have found a spiritual home in the Presbyterian church.

Emily Kearon, Arklow's Clerk of Session, explained that there had been Presbyterians living in Arklow and the surrounding area since the 1800s, with meetings taking place in the town in the 1870s and 1880s. Yet it wasn't until 1915 that the Church was built and a Minister appointed. "The centenary has been a great opportunity to give thanks and celebrate the past one hundred years and look forward to the next hundred years," she said.

"I was delighted that it went off so well and so smoothly, especially when around 150 people packed the church. It was a very special occasion and a wonderful opportunity to welcome so many friends and visitors, like the granddaughter of one of our founders. She came

all the way from Canada with her husband for the service. In fact, there are two families who are descended from our founders who still attend and are now into their fifth generation of worship here.”

While the congregation is currently seeking a new minister, who will be its 13th in 100 years, Arklow’s last minister, Rev. Michael Anderson, the leading force behind the building of the new Church, attended the service. His immediate two predecessors also attended, Rev. Jim Carson, Minister from 1989-2006 preached the sermon: ‘Jesus the same today, tomorrow and forever’ and Rev. Alistair, Bill, who was minister from 1982-1988, led prayers. The Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), Rev. Trevor Gribben led the prayers of intercession.

Those gathered in the County Wicklow town heard three short greetings from Councillor Pat Kennedy, Vice Chair of Arklow Municipal District Council who spoke on behalf of the District and County Councils and Canon Martin Cosgrove of Saint Mary and Peter’s Catholic Church, who brought the greetings of the other churches in the town. As a Home Mission Church, David Bruce,

Secretary of the PCI's Council for Mission in Ireland brought greetings from the Council.

The centenary was also an opportunity to showcase the new extension that was completed in 2012 at a cost of €500,000 (£367,2000). The extension includes a new worship area and seating with three halls – which are used extensively by the local community for various activities various – meeting rooms and a new entrance and foyer. The renovations were funded largely by the congregation, generous supporters and supplemented with a grant from the Presbyterian Church's Home Mission.

Council Secretary, Rev. David Bruce said, “The story of Arklow Presbyterian Church is like Ireland’s recent story. It is changing rapidly, welcoming “new Irish” from all corners of the globe and redefining its relationship to the community.

“The church in Arklow wants to hold on to the best of the past, but adapt to the needs of a radically changed town which has been heavily impacted by the recession; a town which is now re-emerging and full of energy. The new church building, Montessori school, youth activities and outward-looking focus says to Arklow that the

church believes in the town, loves the people and is here to stay.”

Belfast book launch of 18th century sermons

Tomorrow - Tuesday - evening in St Anne's cathedral, Belfast, the seventh volume in the RCB Library's 'Texts and Calendars' series, *Preaching in Belfast, 1747–72: a selection of the sermons of James Saurin*, will be launched by the Bishop of Clogher. The volume has been edited by Professor Raymond Gillespie from NUI Maynooth and Roibeard O Gallachoir, a graduate of the MA in Historical Archives in Maynooth who is shortly to join the staff of the RCB Library.

James Saurin, a descendant of a prominent Huguenot family, was appointed as vicar of Belfast in 1747, and one of his first acts was to write a series of sermons that he preached to his congregation over his long tenure as vicar. Some fifty–five of these sermons were recently discovered in St Anne's cathedral, having been preserved and used by Saurin's son and grandson for their preaching. This edition includes twenty of these sermons. They provide a vivid insight into the mind of a Church of Ireland

clergyman in the rapidly changing town of Belfast at the middle of the 18th century and illuminates many of the key issues of the world of provincial Ireland.

See -

www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2015/preaching-in-belfast

Time capsule placed in new roof at Ahoghill church

A screenshot of life today is to be frozen in time in a capsule to be secreted in the new roof of St Colmanell's Parish Church.

The time capsule contains the names of parishioners and members of the local community who supported the church roof appeal, some coins and their monetary value in terms of today's world, a letter from the rector the Rev Gary Millar, and photographs of church life.

The re-reroofing of the church in Ahoghill is currently underway and is nearing completion.

To help with this major cost, the parish had applied for a 'Listed Places of Worship Church Roof' grant.



Mr Tommy Dowds, representing Martin and Hamilton Contractors, receiving a time capsule from the Rev Gary Millar which will be place in the church to mark the re-roofing of St Colmanell's Church.

“We were deflated when the application was turned down, but equally happy that Portglenone’s application was successful,” Gary explained

“As a result, there was not enough money to proceed with the church roof and therefore we looked into the possibility of borrowing money from the bank. After much prayer and

discussions two parishioners, Linda and Jeff Kyle, came up with the idea of 'sponsoring a tile.'

"'Sponsor a tile' was launched at the Parish Fete in June and by September just over £46,000 was raised."

Gary said this was more than enough to meet the shortfall in Parish Funds and therefore work on the roof started in July. It is hoped it will be completed by mid-November, in time for the parish's Christmas Tree Festival.

And while it is intended the roof will last for many years to come, some day in the future, someone investigating below the eaves and tiles atop St Colmanell's may discover the time capsule and learn more than they expected to about life in Aghogill c2015!

Anglicans have reconciliation "in our DNA" says Archbishop Welby

Anglican churches are "deeply involved" in reconciliation work in conflict zones around the world, the Archbishop of Canterbury has said.

Speaking at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington last week, Archbishop Justin Welby said more than half of Anglican provinces are facing persecution or are in post-conflict or actual conflict.

The Archbishop also said the mainstreams of all faiths must “challenge and subvert” radicalisation and religiously-motivated violence within their traditions.

Later the same day the Archbishop preached at Virginia Theological Seminary where he spoke of the need for a united church focused on Jesus that serves the weakest and poorest amid their suffering.

Reflecting on his visits to every Anglican province during his first 18 months in office, the Archbishop said a “striking” common feature was Anglican involvement in reconciliation and meditation work.

“It seems to somehow be in the DNA of Anglicanism,” he said. “Despite our own differences, we seem to find ourselves doing this stuff.”

The Archbishop gave the example of a visit to Bor in South Sudan which has been ravaged by civil war. “What we found [there] was the Archbishop leading the reconciliation work. We see that all over the place.”

On taking office in 2013 the Archbishop announced that reconciliation – within and beyond the church – would be a key priority for his ministry.

“The more you see of [war] – and I spent quite a lot of time doing this, over quite a many years now, long before I was Archbishop – the agony that you see is beyond all description. And as many people here know, it sears the soul.”

The Archbishop said his role in supporting Anglicans to be reconcilers and meditators was “to bless that work of reconciliation and to strengthen it, and for us from Lambeth [Palace] to encourage and develop local skills in reconciliation where they are facing conflict.”

More at -

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2015/10/anglicans-have-reconciliation-in-our-dna-says-archbishop.aspx>

Media digest

Obsv/BBC/Tel/Mail/Sky/S Times

Reports on letter to the Prime Minister signed by 84 bishops urging the Government to take in 50,000 refugees by 2020 not the 20,000 currently agreed, which the bishops say is not an adequate response. (see *News from CofE above*)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/17/bishops-rebuke-cameron-over-refugees>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/17/bishops-letter-to-cameron-refugee-crisis>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34564894>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/11938714/Bishops-row-with-David-Cameron-over-offer-of-help-to-refugees.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-3277459/Bishops-urge-UKs-Cameron-Syrian-refugees.html>

<http://news.sky.com/story/1571453/bishops-urge-cameron-to-take-in-more-refugees>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4589156.ece>

Analysis

Obsv

How the Church of England and British Government fell out over the 'moral crisis' of refugees.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/18/church-of-england-letter-david-cameron-refugees>

Eve Stand

Report that around 30,000 teddies are making their way to refugee children thanks to a campaign encouraging British youngsters to donate their bears. The Facebook initiative Project Paddington is run by trainee priest, Joy French and has been supported by the Archbishop of York and other church leaders.

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/refugee-crisis-charity-initiative-sees-30000-teddy-bears-reach-syrian-children-a3092991.html>

S Tel/Mail

Reports on opposition to the proposed new extended Sunday Trading laws noting concerns from the CofE as well as from some Labour and Tory MPs.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/shopping-and-consumer-news/11938454/Church-anger-at-longer-Sunday-shopping-hours.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/11936876/Conservative-MPs-rebellion-to-sink-Sunday-trading-hours-relaxation.html>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3277315/Rebel-Tories-threat-Sunday-trading-bonanza.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3277315/Rebel-Tories-threat-Sunday-trading-bonanza.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3277315/Rebel-Tories-threat-Sunday-trading-bonanza.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

S Times

Report that belief in the values of the BBC entitles an employee to the same protection at work as faith in Christianity, Islam and the world's other leading religions, a review for the state equality quango has concluded.

http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/culture/film_and_tv/tv/article1620894.ece

S Times (money)

Report on conmen trying to steal money from retired clergyman Michael Green, former Rector of St Aldates, Oxford, and his wife, Rosemary, focusing on the different security checks carried out by their two banks which resulted in two different outcomes.

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/business/money/Consumer/article1620293.ece>

Comment from money editor

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/business/money/Consumer/article1620080.ece>

Times

Article about Bishop Graham Kings who has been appointed as Mission Theologian by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The report states that he'll be working to promote the theologians of the Global South and speculates that he might also help heal the rifts in the Communion ahead of the Primates meeting in January.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4587996.ece>

Mail

Report on Character Education discussion document launched yesterday with quote from Bishop of Ely. The article highlights case studies where Church of England schools can provide 'character'. (see link to discussion paper at the top of the digest)

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3276785/Schoolchildren-taught-injustice-alongside-maths-English-classrooms-Church-England-says.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

Times/Tel

Report that Tory MPs could rebel against plans to relax Sunday trading. It says a vote is expected within weeks. A Church of England submission to Government is quoted in the article explaining its opposition to the proposals.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/politics/article4588880.ece>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/11936876/Conservative-MPs-rebellion-to-sink-Sunday-trading-hours-relaxation.html>

Mail

Article about a businessman who has announced he will travel to the Swiss clinic Dignitas to die on Monday after being diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease earlier in the year. Includes comment on opposition to the Assisted Dying Bill.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3276007/Reports-death-greatly-exaggerated-Terminally-ill-man-way-Swiss-clinic-announced-assisted-suicide-LinkedIn.html>

Ind

The Archbishop of Aleppo in Syria has called on the Government to stop backing Islamist rebel groups. He was speaking to MPs at the Lords this week in a meeting organised by a group set up to support persecuted Christians.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syrian-archbishop-pleads-for-uk-to-stop-backing-anti-assad-islamist-groups-a6697226.html>

BBC

A consultation has started on the Isle of Man to gauge public opinion on same sex marriage.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-isle-of-man-34550061>

Letters

Various letters on the role of rural churches.

October 19

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/16/rural-churches-still-perform-a-vital-role>