



Pope Francis held a meeting with the World Methodist Council. Its vice president, Irish Methodist Gillian Kingston, gave him a few words. "On a number of occasions you have reminded Christians that we must exercise a radical hospitality."

New Methodist Centre opens in Rome marking 50 years of dialogue

Pope Francis said on Thursday that Catholics and Methodists have much to learn from one another.

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another as they work together in loving service to the world. His [words came in an audience](#) with leaders of the World Methodist Council, the Methodist Council of Europe and the Methodist Church in Britain who here for the opening of a new ecumenical centre in Rome.

“If we cannot as yet think alike in all things, at least we may love alike”. Those words were written by John Wesley, one of the founders of the Methodist movement, in his *‘Letter to a Roman Catholic’* in the mid-18th century. Wesley also stressed that Catholics and Methodists are called “to help each other in whatever...leads to the Kingdom”.

In his meeting with the global Methodist leadership, Pope Francis said it’s true we do not as yet think alike in all things, noting that especially on issues of ordained ministry and ethics, much work remains to be done. But, he stressed, none of these differences constitutes such an obstacle as to prevent us from loving in the same way and offering a common witness to the world.

Half a century since the joint Catholic-Methodist dialogue commission began its work, its members are preparing to publish a new document on *‘The Call to Holiness’*, an area

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where the Pope said members of the two Churches have much to learn from one another. We must both do what we can, he said, to ensure that members of our respective congregations meet together and encourage each other. Even where differences remain, he added, these can and must become the impetus for further reflection and dialogue.

Welcoming the opening of the new [Methodist Ecumenical Office in Rome](#), the Pope said it's a sign of growing closeness and of our shared desire to overcome all that stands in the way of our full communion.

Rev. Robert Gribben is a minister of the Uniting Church of Australia and chair of the World Methodist Council's committee on ecumenical relationships. At this important moment in the life of the global community, he shared some thoughts on the importance of working for Christian unity and the significance – for Methodists – of this Jubilee year of mercy.

Gribben says he believes the theologians have done "a wonderful job in clearing the way for us to walk together...."

One of the obstacles, he says, is peoples' inability to move - or "maybe their inability to

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believe that such good things have actually happened..."

Getting the local church structures to change is an enormous challenge, he notes, especially in a world where Christian faith is under attack we tend to be defensive and hang onto what we know...

Gribben says that the word 'mercy' features prominently in the hymns of Charles Wesley....apart from the word 'love', he says, "there could hardly be a more important word in all Christian doctrine and practice".

Bishop of Clogher elected President of the ICC

The Annual General Meeting of the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) was held in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin on Thursday 7th April 2016. During the meeting the Rt Revd John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher, was elected and installed as President of the ICC for 2016-2018. He succeeds Rev Dr Donald Watts of the Presbyterian Church. Bishop McDowell will be assisted by the Revd Brian Anderson as Vice-President. Mr Anderson is currently the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland.



The Rt Revd John McDowell, President of the Irish Council of Churches, with Mr Mervyn McCullagh, outgoing Executive Officer, Irish Council of Churches.

Bishop McDowell said: 'I am very honoured to take up this role at a time of great challenge and opportunity for the Churches in Ireland. In doing so, I wish to thank the Past President, the Revd Dr Donald Watts, and outgoing Executive Officer,



Irish Council of Churches (ICC) meeting in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin on Thursday

Mr Mervyn McCullagh, for their leadership and hard work in refreshing and enhancing the work of the ICC. I look forward to helping to develop and provide a voice for Ireland's Churches to connect through a common belief in Christ over the next two years.'

The meeting reviewed the ICC's work in recent years including the Irish Churches Peace Project and its engagement with government on welfare reform, climate justice, marriage legislation and the integration of migrants and refugees. The Council reaffirmed 10 commitments which included a recognition and appreciation of

cultural and ethnic diversity as gifts of God, working towards inclusive communities, and co-operation with migrant-led Churches and chaplaincies in providing pastoral care and support to migrants.

The Irish Council of Churches was founded in 1923 and is the formal national body through which its member churches formally engage, dialogue and act on a wide variety of issues. Its membership comprises 14 denominations: the Antiochian Orthodox Church, the Church of Ireland, the Cherubim and Seraphim Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Lutheran Church in Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Moravian Church, the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Religious Society of Friends, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Salvation Army. More information is available on its website: www.irishchurches.org

The Rt Revd John McDowell has served as Bishop of Clogher since May 2011. He was formerly Rector of St Mark's, Dundela, and an Honorary Secretary of the General Synod. He is Chairman of the Church of Ireland's Commission on Christian Unity and Dialogue.



Belfast and Derry prayer vigils for vocations

A Eucharistic Prayer Vigil for Vocations to the Priesthood, the Permanent Diaconate and Religious Life will take place in St. Patrick's Church, Belfast on Thursday 21st April 2016 from 7.30pm – 10pm. The Vigil will conclude with Mass at 9pm.

A vigil of prayer for vocations to Priesthood and Religious Life will be held on Friday 22 April 2016 at 7.30pm, in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Steelstown, Derry. Bishop McKeown will celebrate Mass. This will be followed by

Eucharistic Adoration. The event will be hosted by the St Joseph's Young Priests' Society and the Apostolate for Eucharistic Adoration. All welcome.

The theme of the Holy Father's Message for Vocations Sunday 2016 (17 April) is 'The Church, Mother of Vocations'. In his message Pope Francis urges all the faithful to assume their responsibility for the care and discernment of vocations.....The Church is the House of Mercy, and it is the "soil" where vocations take root, mature and bear fruit." The full text of the Pope's Message for Vocations Sunday 2016 can be accessed on www.catholicnews.ie

Archbishop Clarke of Armagh at Anglican Communion Standing Committee in Lusaka

The Standing Committee of the ACC of which Archbishop Richard Clarke of Armagh is a member, met in worship and prayer on 6-7 April at Holy Cross Cathedral in Lusaka, Zambia to effect its regular business and also prepare for the 16th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council to follow. The Standing Committee expresses its thanks to the Province of Central

Africa for its generous hospitality and welcomes the opportunity of hearing African voices on issues facing the world and the Church.

The meeting opened with a review of the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committee, which was particularly useful for the primates on the Standing Committee all of whom were newly elected at the last meeting of the Primates. Secretary General Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon followed with a review of his first ten months in office emphasizing insights he has gained into Anglican ecclesiology through his extensive travels around the Communion. The Secretary General's report was followed by a discussion of the networks of the Anglican Communion noting those that are currently still active and those that seem to have lapsed.

The Standing Committee received a report from the Archbishop of Canterbury on the Primates' gathering in January 2016 and noted the stated commitment of the Primates to 'walk together' despite differences of view. The Standing Committee welcomed the formation of a Task Group as recommended by the Primates to maintain conversation among them with the intention of restoration of relationship, the rebuilding of mutual trust, and healing the legacy of hurt. The Standing Committee considered the

Communiqué from the Primates and affirmed the relational links between the Instruments of Communion in which each Instrument, including the Anglican Consultative Council, forms its own views and has its own responsibilities.

The Standing Committee spent substantial time reviewing the programme and processes for ACC16 including a brief on its communications strategy. The roles and responsibilities of Standing Committee in the ACC meeting were clarified with specific attention to our work as table facilitators. We noted with regret that some provinces will not be attending ACC16 and that this will result in the loss of their views from our discussions. We hold in our prayers all members of the ACC who will not be with us in Lusaka. The Standing Committee urges all members of the ACC to engage openly and respectfully with each other as we explore the theme of 'intentional discipleship in a world of differences.'

In additional business, the Standing Committee: noted the accounts and approved new trustees for the Anglican Alliance; discussed processes related to the development of possible new Anglican provinces in Sudan, Chile, and Peru; considered the situation of the Church of Ceylon; reviewed the Reports and Financial Statements

of the Anglican Consultative Council and of the Lambeth Conference Company; and adopted objectives for the management of the Anglican Communion Office Archives. The Chair, The Rt Revd Dr James Tengatenga, the Vice Chair, Canon Elizabeth Paver, and the following five members of the Standing Committee elected by the ACC were thanked as they complete their terms: Mrs Helen Biggin, Professor Joanildo Burity, The Rt Revd Dr Ian Douglas, The Rt Revd Dr Sarah Macneil and Mr Samuel Mukunya.

Members of the Standing Committee:

President: The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby

Chair: The Rt Revd Dr James Tengatenga

Vice Chair: Canon Elizabeth Paver

Elected by the Primates' Meeting:

The Most Revd Dr Philip Freier

The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke

The Most Revd Dr Mouneer Hanna Anis [not present at this meeting]

The Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba [not present at this meeting]

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Holder

Elected by the ACC:

Mrs Helen Biggin

The Rt Revd Eraste Bigirimana

Professor Joanildo Burity

The Rt Revd Dr Ian Douglas

The Rt Revd Dr Sarah Macneil
Ms Louisa Mojela
Mr Samuel Mukunya [resigned]
Secretary General: The Most Revd Josiah
Idowu-Fearon

Archbishop arrives in Lusaka for ACC-16

<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5700/archbishop-arrives-in-lusaka-for-acc-16>

Warm welcome for Archbishop Welby in Zambia

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2016/04/warm-welcome-for-archbishop-welby-in-zambia.aspx>

Take to the Wicklow hills with Dublin parishioners

Parishioners of St Bartholomew's Church on Clyde Road, are inviting walkers of all abilities to join them in the Wicklow Mountains to raise funds for the restoration of their unique Dublin church.

Pilgrimage has always been an important part of the Christian tradition and of that sense of journeying together in faith and on Saturday May 21 St Bartholomew's is running a sponsored walk following part of the ancient Irish pilgrim route of Saint Kevin's Way. All are welcome to join the group on their journey along the section

of the route from the Wicklow Gap down into Glendalough.

Those interested in taking part can obtain a sponsorship sheet with all of the necessary information (including maps and safety information) by contacting the parish office on 01-668 8522 or by email admin@stbartholomews.ie.

Participants will gather at the upper car park at the summit of the Wicklow Gap at 10.30 am on May 21. The whole walk at an easy pace should take around three hours to complete, including a break for lunch. For those with fitness concerns, the walk is all down hill.

The parish aims to raise €1,000,000 over a two year period for major restoration work on the beautiful church. This year the main focus has been to make the church weather proof and watertight. So far the stonework on the Chancel has been completed and work is ongoing on the String Course at the base of the Chancel. All the stained glass in the Chancel has been cleaned and refurbished.

Other works which have been identified include renovation of the tower, pinnacles, replacing and repairing mouldings, conservation and repair of the stonework and refurbishment of the stained

glass windows. See www.stbartholomews.ie for progress on the restoration and fundraising.

Rector who climbed Windsor Park walls to see Pat Jennings win 100th Irish soccer cap

The late Canon Edgar Turner was such a dedicated Northern Ireland football supporter that he climbed a back wall at Windsor Park to get into the ground to witness goalkeeper Pat Jennings win his 100th cap in 1983.

Belfast Telegraph - The long-time rector of St George's, High Street, Belfast, who was also a Derry City supporter since its formation in 1928, had been delayed at a church meeting and had arrived late at Windsor to find the gates locked, but found his own way of getting in.

The story was told by his friend, the Venerable David Pierpoint, Archdeacon of Dublin, at his funeral in St George's Church on Thursday which was packed with a large congregation including representatives from church, professional, community and sporting life.

In a moving and often humorous homily, Archdeacon Pierpoint referred to Canon Turner's love for the beautiful game.

"He endeavoured never to miss a Northern Ireland home game. He was recognised as the team's oldest travelling supporter (at 96), even making it to the Faroe Islands last year, and he was already booked for the European finals in France."

Canon Turner's lifelong support of the Northern Ireland team was symbolised by the presence of Patrick Nelson, the Chief Executive of the IFA, who read a lesson.

The order of service booklet featured a picture of Canon Turner wearing his Northern Ireland green jersey and cap. In his tribute, Archdeacon Pierpoint said: "Edgar was not just a man who hung around holy people, and this is evidenced by so many here today who have perhaps little or no faith. He never judged people who didn't believe in God, but he saw God in all people."

The Archdeacon also underlined Mr Turner's precision and loquaciousness.

"Many people know the story of one cleric asking Edgar a question as the Enterprise train pulled out of Belfast, and still listening to his

considered response as they arrived in Dublin. Football fans travelling to Slovenia will know this only too well."

Canon Turner's strong support for ecumenism and the NI Mixed Marriage Association to which he was chaplain, was reflected in the wide cross-community congregation, and the Gospel was read by Jesuit priest Fr Tom Layden.

Edgar Turner's comprehensive service to St George's, and the Church of Ireland at large was also underlined by Archdeacon Pierpoint.

"He wasn't just a man with a voice and brain and sociability - he could clean drains, erect precarious scaffolding to fix and change light bulbs, climb on to the roof to fix slates and much more. But above all else, he was a man of devotion and moral character, of self-discipline and prayer."

For full text of sermon see - <http://connor.anglican.org/2016/04/08/edgar-turner-man-saw-god-people/>

**News links to reports on faith,
politics and education**

The suppliers of abortion pills or those who advocate their use should face tough sanctions

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/the-suppliers-of-abortion-pills-or-those-who-advocate-their-use-should-face-tough-sanctions-1-7318390>

Abortion leaders 'open to talks on common ground'

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/abortion-leaders-open-to-talks-on-common-ground-1-7318299>

Belfast rally supports Northern Ireland woman who used abortion drugs

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/belfast-protest-against-prosecution-of-northern-ireland-woman-who-used-abortion-drugs-held-outside-public-prosecution-service-34607776.html>

Why are Northern Ireland's abortion laws different to the rest of the UK?

BBC

Every year women travel from Northern Ireland to England, Scotland or Wales for an abortion. Why?
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35980195>

Addiction, not debt, the scourge on streets of Belfast

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Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/addiction-not-debt-the-scourge-on-streets-of-belfast-1.2602465>

Portora Royal principal Morton slams his successor Enniskillen Collegiate head Armstrong

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/portora-royal-principal-morton-slams-his-successor-enniskillen-collegiate-head-armstrong-34609246.html>

Seaforde church fraud accused 'sells his house to repay money'

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/seaforde-church-fraud-accused-sells-his-house-to-repay-money-34609268.html>

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/man-accused-of-defrauding-church-has-sold-his-house-1-7318169>

All Muslims have duty to inform gardai of any suspected potential terrorist threat, Imam of Ireland's biggest mosque says

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/all-muslims-have-duty-to-inform-gardai-of-any-suspected-potential-terrorist-threat-imam-of-irelands-biggest-mosque-says-34608249.html>

Michaela McCollum has mended her ways and is on the path to redemption, says Archbishop Walsh

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/michaela-mccollum-has-mended-her-ways-and-is-on-the-path-to-redemption-says-archbishop-walsh-34609009.html>

Ind/Guard

Further coverage of a pastoral letter issued by the bishops of the Church in Wales which apologises "unreservedly" to gay couples for discrimination they may have faced within the Christian community. Introducing the letter, the Archbishop of Wales says, "We are not ready, as a church, to take the step of authorising same-sex marriage, the debate is not over."

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/welsh-anglican-church-apologises-to-lgbt-people-but-still-wont-let-them-marry-a6973241.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/07/welsh-anglican-church-apologises-gay-lesbian>

BBC/Premier

Reports that Christian NHS worker, Victoria Wasteney, yesterday lost her appeal against a ruling which suspended her for giving a Christian book to a Muslim colleague, praying with her and asking her to church. She was found guilty by her employer, the East London NHS Foundation Trust, in 2014 of "harassing and bullying" the colleague. She was suspended for nine months and given a written warning. Ms Wasteney

challenged the decision at an employment tribunal last year, but it ruled that her employer had not discriminated against her.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-35988115>
<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Christian-who-gave-prayer-book-to-Muslim-loses-tribunal-appeal>

Mail

Further coverage of the decision by Chancellor of the Diocese of Bristol who refused a request from parents to have an engraving of Thomas the Tank Engine on their three-year-old son's gravestone. Justin Gau, declined a request by the parents of Max Gainard, who died last February after developing a rare complications when he caught mumps. In his judgment, the Chancellor said churchyards were consecrated ground and memorials had to be consistent with that status.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3527783/Church-England-tells-parents-three-year-old-son-died-complications-mumps-t-five-inch-picture-Thomas-Tank-Engine-gravestone-s-not-appropriate.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

Christian Today

Report that repairs to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem are starting. The renovation will cost \$3.4 million and will see the shrine at the centre of the church, which dates back to 1810, completely rebuilt. The Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches will each pay a third of the cost.

Economist

Article reflecting on China's relationship with Christianity and examines signs of rapprochement with the Vatican.

<http://www.economist.com/news/china/21696511-two-articles-examine-chinas-often-troubled-relationship-christianity-first-looks-signs>

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