



950k people joined Keith and Kristen Getty yesterday in singing for gospel black spots

An international hymn sing-in yesterday, Sunday, was to raise awareness about parts of the world where there is little or no access to the gospel.

Nearly 950,000 people signed up to the Global Hymn Sing which was organised by the Christian songwriters from Northern Ireland, Keith and Kristen Getty.

The initiative, held in association with the Asian missionary organisation OMF International, was aimed to encourage more people to support evangelism.

Keith Getty said, "Mission - whether it's 'me' evangelising to people 'I' work with, or whether it's 'my' commitment to giving to mission, or actually going out as mission - is something that has decreased a lot in the West in the last generation."

Almost 4,900 churches representing different denominations and 74 countries supported the third annual Global Hymn Sing.

They sang the 18th century hymn written by Issac Watts, 'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun' - a song chosen by the Getty's because of its historic links to Eric Liddle.

The Scotsman recited the hymn in 1925 when he was asked by reporters at Edinburgh Waverley railway station why he was leaving sports behind to travel to China, where he would become a missionary.

He replied: "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run, His kingdom stretch from shore to shore till moons shall wax and wane no more."

Keith Getty says: "This hymn, Jesus Shall Reign, is very special to me.

"In that moment when the world was against him, Liddell stood firm and continued on the mission he knew God had called him too.

"The story of the church in China has been an incredible one, growing from one million believers to an estimated 100 million believers today.

"We wanted this campaign not only to be about congregational singing, but churches partnering in missions to see more lives

impacted by the transformational message of the gospel."

Derry Cathedral's painting of world famous hymn writer to be restored

Three historic portraits will be restored after St Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry was awarded funding of more than £6,000.

The grant will be used to restore portraits of the hymn writer Cecil Frances Alexander, her husband Archbishop William Alexander, and Bishop William Higgin. When the work is completed the portraits will go on public display in the Cathedral's Chapter House.

The Dean of Derry, the Very Reverend Raymond Stewart, welcomed the donation, which comes from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

He said: "It is very appropriate that the restoration is being carried out this year as it is the bicentenary of Mrs Alexander's birth. She was born in Dublin in 1818 and later moved to Strabane when her father was appointed land agent to the Marquis of Abercorn."



The painting of Cecil Frances Alexander is one of three portraits that will be displayed at Londonderry's Saint Columb's Cathedral following restoration work. The hymn writer composed a number of the world's most famous hymns including All things Bright and Beautiful and There is a Green Hill far away. Most of her hymns were written to introduce children to the elements of the Christian faith.

In 1848 Mrs Alexander published a slim volume of hymns which made her name renowned throughout the English-speaking world.

This was called Hymns for Little Children and included among others All Things Bright and Beautiful, Once in Royal David's City and There is a Green Hill Far Away.

William Alexander began his ministry as a curate in Derry Cathedral. In 1867 he was enthroned as Bishop of Derry in succession to Bishop William Higgin.

William Alexander later became the Archbishop of Armagh. He was the last Church of Ireland bishop to take up a seat in the House of Lords.

Mrs Alexander died in 1895 and is buried in Derry's City Cemetery. A stained glass window in her memory was installed in St Columb's in 1913.

There are sculptures of each of the Alexanders in Belfast Cathedral, along with other Anglican luminaries like Bishop Jeremy Taylor and George Berkeley who enabled the foundation of Harvard University.

Release of film about nun from Derry killed in Ecuador earthquake

A new film chronicling the life of Sister Clare Crockett, the nun from Londonderry who died in an earthquake in Ecuador, is to be released in April on the second anniversary of her death.



The 33-year-old nun, who was from the Brandywell area of the city, died when the school she was teaching in collapsed in the earthquake in Playa Prieta on April 16, 2016.

‘All or Nothing: Sr Clare Crockett’ documents her journey from the streets of Londonderry to taking Holy Orders with the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother.

The religious order, which said the film is being released on a not-for-profit basis, is inviting groups or individuals to organise the screening of the film in cities and towns.

A spokeswoman for the order said: “The important thing is that the organised event does not have an economic purpose, but an apostolic one: with the desire that God’s love, which changed Sr Clare, may be proclaimed through her life.”

They said many strangers wrote to them following Sr Clare’s death saying they believed she was helping them.

The film – released in Ireland, Spain, the US and Ecuador – is based on an archive of photographs and recordings of Sr Clare in the last 15 years.
Report courtesy the News Letter

Dean of Connor to be gaoled

The Very Rev Sam Wright, Dean of Connor, is set to serve a term in Crumlin Road Gaol come March.

Thankfully, the Dean has been found guilty of no crime, but is being incarcerated in the Belfast prison in order to give children in northern Uganda freedoms we all take for granted. These include hygienic toilet facilities, Bible teaching, and a caring face as they prepare to bed down in a city street.



Sam 'The Dean' Wright
Prisoner Number: AB00529



Dean Sam is one of a number of 'volunteers' who will be locked up for the day on Monday March 12 by a group of young people from Lisburn Cathedral. This group is fundraising to visit Uganda with local charity [Abaana](#) in July this year.

The team will be working across a range of Abaana's projects, including building a new toilet block at Ayila Primary School in northern Uganda; holding a three-day holiday bible club at Ayila; and working with street children in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda.

In order to escape their gaol cell, Dean Sam and the other volunteers will have to raise sponsorship to pay their bail – before they are released. The Dean is hopeful that he will be out in time for Sunday services the following weekend!

If you would like to help support the team in their work in Uganda this summer, please contact Neville Jones on 07796936768 or by email neville@abaana.org.

No tea to be served at Graan Novena for 'health and safety reasons'

Mass-goers attending a popular Novena in Co Fermanagh will no longer be served tea for "health and safety reasons".

The Novena of Hope at The Graan outside Enniskillen has been serving tea and biscuits to the faithful since it was first held 29 years ago.

However, The Graan's new rector, Fr Charles Cross, who has taken over from Fr Brian D'Arcy, said he took the decision after listening to

concerns raised by some of those involved in organising the nine days of prayer and reflection.

"It's because of carrying the tea in the narrow confines of the church - there were concerns that it could be spilt and somebody could get scalded."

He said it was due to health and safety concerns that the novena previously stopped serving sandwiches.

"There are other reasons too - the age of some of the servers who are carrying the tea. Some people have been serving for 28 or 30 years."

He added: "There won't be tea but there will be the blessings of God which is the whole point of it."

Fr Cross said biscuits will still be served "for people who aren't off them for Lent".

"Someone left in five boxes of chocolate biscuits so we will enjoy them," he said.

GAA pundit Jarlath Burns will be one of the speakers at this year's Novena.

Others include the director of Irish Jesuit Communications, Pat Coyle, Church of Ireland

Bishop Trevor Williams and Catholic lay deacon John Taafe.

The nine days of prayer will run from March 3 to March 12. Report courtesy The Irish News.

26 students at C of I Readers training weekend

A total of twenty–six students were in attendance at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute over the course of last weekend for the beginning of two further training courses.

Fourteen men and women from seven dioceses were embarking on the one year Foundation Course programme, whilst twelve started the fifth cycle of Reader training, lasting two years.

The weekend entitled ‘Fit for the Purpose’, took as its theme a biblical and personal exploration of various matters to do with vocation. The main facilitators were Canon Christina Baxter, former Principal of St John’s College Nottingham, and Canon Maurice Elliott, Director of CITI. Also in attendance from St John’s were the Rev Dr John Tomlinson, Course Director, and Jacqui Brown, Course Administrator.

Bishop of Egypt receives Archbishop of Canterbury's award for peace and reconciliation

The Bishop of Egypt, Mouneer Anis, has received an official award from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, for his “invaluable” contribution to the work of peace and reconciliation. The Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Inter Faith co-operation was presented to Bishop Mouneer last Wednesday during a meeting of the Anglican Inter Faith Commission in Cairo. He was presented with the award by Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, on behalf of Justin Welby at Cairo Cathedral.

The citation for Bishop Mouneer's award recognises his relationship with the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, the leading Islamic mosque and educational institution in Alexandria. It says that Bishop Mouneer “has made a unique contribution and example through his ability to establish deep relationships; this is largely because of his openness, creativity and ambition to move people towards reconciliation. At times, this inevitably makes him a counter cultural voice within his setting.



The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Josiah Idowu-Fearon, presents the Hubert Walter Award to Bishop Mouneer Anis in Cairo Cathedral on behalf of Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby.

“Particularly of note is his role as a bridge builder between the most important official international Christian-Muslim dialogue that the Anglican Church has with al-Azhar al-Sharif and is a most highly trustworthy representative for Archbishop Justin to the Grand Imam himself.

“Moreover, Bishop Mouneer is incredibly generous with his time: cultivating relationships with those from different faiths and background whilst running the Cathedral in Cairo, all within a

context in which Christians are a vulnerable minority. He also maintains good contact across different institutions, with charitable and political leaders and is able to bring together all of these networks for the common good.

“His contribution, overall, to reconciliation is particularly significant and one which is worthy of praise and celebration.”

The citation singles out the Imam-Priest Exchange, founded by Bishop Mouneer, and described as an “ambitious, internationally acknowledged project” which has “brought hundreds of priests and imams together to learn about one another’s traditions and beliefs and to commit to working alongside one another. His vision and efforts has enabled this programme to not simply consist of meetings, but of tangible follow up projects at grassroots level.”

Responding to the presentation, Bishop Mouneer said: “I am greatly honoured that Archbishop Justin would award me with this distinguished recognition. It was a real pleasure to receive it in the context of the first meeting of the Anglican Inter Faith Commission from Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon. I feel I don’t deserve this great honour.”

Archbishop of Canterbury's warning over austerity and Brexit

Austerity is “crushing the weak” and Brexit has divided the country, the Archbishop of Canterbury has warned.

The Most Rev Justin Welby issued a plea for Britons to be “generous” in adapting to newcomers to the country and called for people to show “care for each other”. “Brexit has divided the country – and now we need a new narrative. One that is rooted in all that is best in our history – solidarity, courage, aspiration, resilience and care for each other,” he told *The Mail on Sunday*. “There is a danger that there is a schism in our society into which the most vulnerable are falling. Austerity is crushing the weak, the sick and many others.” See CNI Media review for press links.

Major post and internships available at World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches (WCC) seeks a director for the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, a position located in

Geneva, Switzerland. Starting date is Sept. 1. Contract duration is four years. Objectives are to lead, inspire, and direct the work of Mission and Evangelism, sustaining and developing close relationship with the commission and promoting programmatic work conducted within the framework of the WCC towards the visible unity of church. Responsibilities include to support the work of the commission, prepare its meetings and coordinate reporting follow up; give leadership to the mission and evangelism team, ensuring the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting projects and activities and the implementation of plans within the approved WCC budgets and policies; help churches and missionary bodies or movements to dialogue on each other's understanding and practices of mission and evangelism, with a view to enhance common witness and mission in unity; develop a network of relationships with persons and bodies responsible for and/or involved in mission and evangelism within the WCC's member churches, affiliated bodies and a wider constituency, including Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and movements; be responsible for training in mission and evangelism, and for organizing seminars on these and related topics in different parts of the world, if needed in cooperation with the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey; inspire

theological reflection on the ecumenical understanding and practices of mission and evangelism through regular publication of the International Review of Mission; work together with staff in other programmatic and transversal areas ensuring an integrated approach in the council's work. Qualifications include a university degree in theology, preferably in missiology; a minimum of five years of experience and a strong track record in project management, preferably in an international, ecumenical, and/or church-related environment; ability to represent, interpret, and communicate the positions of the WCC to partners, intergovernmental organizations, other stakeholders, and WCC constituencies; excellent command of written and spoken English; knowledge of other working languages of the WCC (Spanish, French, and/or German) is an asset; sensitivity to multicultural and ecumenical settings with respect to gender, race, disability, and age diversity; prepared to travel up to 20 percent of work time. The deadline for applications is April 30. Full applications (curriculum vitae, motivation letter, application form, copies of diplomas, and recommendation letters) are to be sent to recruitment@wcc-coe.org . The application form is available at www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/job-openings . The WCC is an equal opportunity employer. The sole criteria for

recruitment, training, and career opportunities are qualification, skills, experience, and performance to all its staff members.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites applications of church-engaged young adults to undertake an internship with the council at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2018. Through the participation of young adults already actively involved in their churches, the program's overarching goal is to strengthen church and ecumenical relations among member churches as well as to create benefits for young adults through capacity building, ecumenical formation, international and multicultural exposure, among other things. The internship offers an 18-month program for four young people aged 21-29. Interns are assigned to work for 12 months at the WCC offices in Geneva in one of the program areas of the WCC. This is then followed by a six-month work placement in the intern's own country. Available work areas include Communication, Health and Healing, Just Community of Women and Men, and Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. The application deadline is March 15. For more information, contact youth@wcc-coe.org .

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