

Lambeg boost for Connor Baby basics project



Donations from Lambeg Parish will support new mums and babies.

The Baby basics' project run by Connor Children's Officer Jill Hamilton and Sister Karen Webb of the North Belfast Centre of Mission got

www.churchnewsireland.org

NEWS November 6

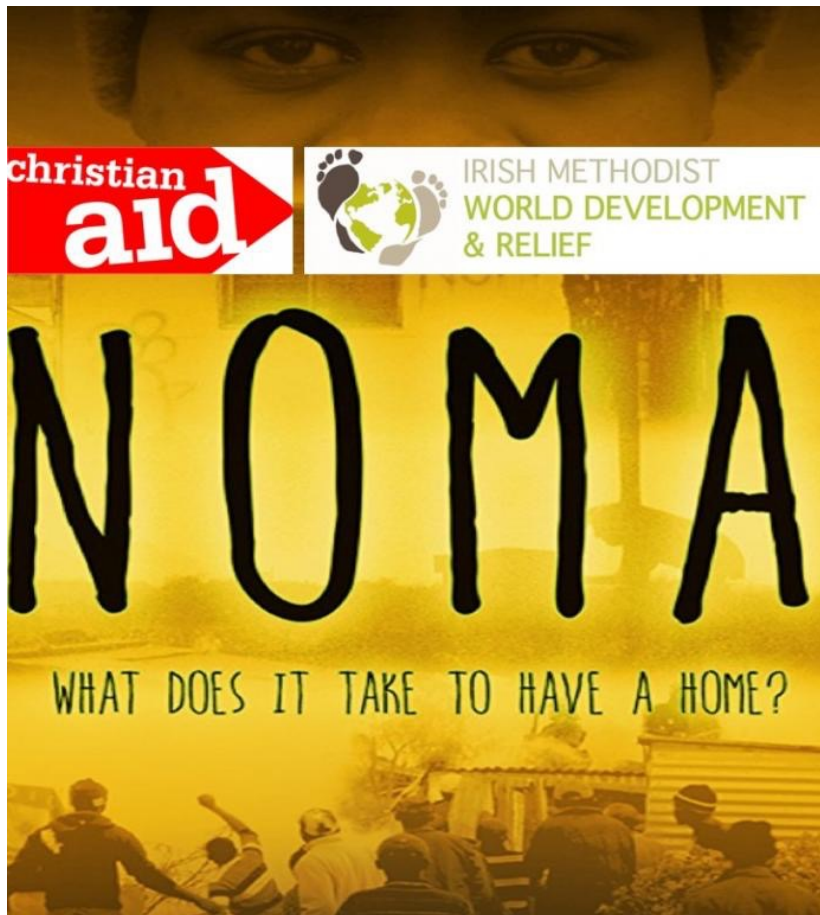
another boost last week with some fantastic donations from Lambeg Parish and the Hilden Centre.

The churches took part in Baby basics' four week challenge, and items which will support new mums and their babies were collected by Karen on Wednesday morning, November 1.

Other Connor parishes which have already committed to this four week challenge are Greenisland and Christ Church, Lisburn, with Glenavy Parish making a substantial donation earlier this year. Read more about Baby basics [here](#), or look for the feature story in the Autumn issue of the diocesan magazine Connor Connections. Any parish interested in supporting Baby Basics Belfast is asked to email Jill at jillhamilton@connordiocese.org or phone or text on 07885897022.

Belfast screening of award winning film on South African house demolitions

Methodist World Development & Relief and Christian Aid Ireland present Pablo Pinedo Boveda's award winning documentary,



Pablo Pinedo Boveda's award-winning documentary of house demolitions in South Africa and the struggle to have a home.

Thursday 9th November 2017, 8:15 pm

Strand Arts Centre, 152-154 Holywood Road, Belfast, BT4 1NY

FREE ADMISSION – booking recommended

(wdrcc@irishmethodist.org)

NOMA. Nomaliphathwe Gwele is like many other young post-apartheid South Africans: impoverished and fed up. Unable to afford the rent of a shack, she joins a land occupation action and builds her own in a new slum, risking violent evictions.

NOMA won the Amnesty International Award for the best film with a focus on Human Rights at the Durban International Film Festival, 2016. Admission is free. Thursday, 9 November, 2017 - 20:00 to 22:00 .Strand Arts Centre, Belfast ,Strand Arts Centre, Belfast .
Email: wdrcc@irishmethodist.org

Christmas Tree Festival at Newtownards Community Church

With the arrival of November, the excitement levels are off the scales in the Glen estate, Newtownards, as Glen Community Church, one of Down & Dromore diocese's church plants, puts the final touches to its forthcoming major fundraising weekend.

From Friday 8 to Sunday 10 December they've planned a stunning Christmas Tree Festival, an Outdoor Christmas Market, Christmas Worship



for All and a Community Carol Service – all in the local Londonderry Primary School.

Church leader, Stephen Doherty says: “The school will be totally transformed into a remarkable festive feast of colour and light. It’s going to be the backdrop to 40+ Christmas trees which have been individually designed and decorated by members of our church family,

pupils from the school, local community groups and sponsoring businesses. It promises to be something very special in and around our theme from Ephesians 4:16, ‘together...growing and building up in love’.”

In addition to unique and colourful Christmas trees, refreshments will be served throughout the weekend in a specially designed bistro. Eats and treats will include morning and afternoon teas, lunches and delicious tray bakes!

The event kicks off on the Friday evening with an *Opening Reception* from 8.00 pm with lots of special guests. Bishop Harold and Liz Miller will be present alongside other local clergy and Church leaders; representatives from local community groups and associations; as well as Councillors, MLAs and the local MP. The Trees will be on view until 10.00 pm and again on Saturday from 10.00 am–10.00 pm.

From 10.00 am – 4.00 pm on Saturday there’ll be an *Outdoor Christmas Market* in the school playgrounds with a variety of stalls housed in a large marquee and individual gazebos. Santa will be present in his very own Grotto sited at the top of the school orchard which will be lit up to help follow the path to find the man himself!

The church's worship schedule won't be affected by the Christmas Trees and at 11.00 am on Sunday morning Tim Burns will be the speaker at the *Christmas Worship for All Service*.

The Christmas Tree Festival will be open again from 2.00 pm–5.00 pm, and at 7.00 pm the celebrations will finish with a *Community Carol Service* with some of the members of the New Irish Brass ensemble leading the praise.

A place to call home: Dublin concert for refugee housing

Christ Church Cathedral is holding a concert in aid of Dublin & Glendalough's Diocesan Refugee Housing Appeal on Sunday November 26 at 8pm.

The concert will feature Discovery Gospel Choir and High Hopes Choir who will provide the fabulous music for the evening of awareness raising and fundraising.

Admission to the concert is free but donations are invited towards the appeal.

The Diocesan Refugee Housing Appeal supports the Irish Refugee Council's transitional housing project which helps people who have been given

Refugee Status in Ireland move from the Direct Provision system to independent accommodation.

Apart from having basic shelter needs met, support is provided to enable people to continue the process of integration without the considerable stress of finding suitable accommodation in a highly competitive market. This includes securing full time employment, commencing third level education, pursuing advanced English classes and having qualifications accredited in Ireland.

7 Upcoming events

+++Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, presents its fourth series of candlelit film nights – Utopias/Dystopias – on Mondays in November and December at 6.30pm in the Music Room. Admission is free and all are welcome. No booking is necessary. The series begins next Monday with Lost Horizon (1937), a classic Frank Capra directed exploration of the idea of utopia and science fiction fantasy introduced by Dr Conor O’Kelly of the Film Department in the School of Creative Arts, Trinity College Dublin. Subsequent presentations will be Forbidden Planet (1956), The Handmaid’s Tale (1990) and Gattaca (1997).

+++Leaders of Christian churches in the North West will join the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe in **St Columb's Cathedral** on Tuesday evening for a service commemorating the **500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.**

The preacher will be the Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin & ARdagh. Organized by the Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Board for Mission & Unity, this will be the main diocesan Reformation celebration.

+++On Wednesday the Archbishop of Dublin will attend a **NIFCON (Network of Inter Faith Concern) meeting at Lambeth Palace** hosted by Archbishop Justin Welby.

+++The Wednesday **lunchtime recital in St Mary's cathedral, Limerick**, will be given by the Academos String Quartet who will play octets by Mendelssohn and Shostakovitch.

+++ **A short series of lectures on 'Reformation 500' will take place in St Ann's church, Dublin**, after the Daily Eucharist each Wednesday in November. The speaker will be Dr Graeme Murdock who is Associate Professor of Modern History and Director of the Centre for European Studies in Trinity College. The first lecture, next Wednesday, will be on 'Protestants:

children of the Reformation'. The celebration of the Eucharist begins at 12.45pm.

+++A celebratory evening of poetry and music in recognition of the life of the Revd Canon Liz McElhinney will take place in Shankill parish church, Lurgan, on Friday evening at 8.00 pm. The event will feature readings of a selection of Liz's inspirational poems by the internationally acclaimed actor Ian McElhinney, as well as musical contributions from the cross-community Lurgan Musical Society, Shankill Parish Choir, soloist Nicola Brown and traditional Irish musicians led by Sean Hanily from Dublin.

+++The November Prayer Walk organised by the North Belfast Centre of Mission will begin at Joanmount Methodist Church on Monday November 6. Meet at 7.30pm and aiming to finish up by 9pm.

Texts published for 2018 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Next year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which traditionally takes place in the northern hemisphere each January, has been prepared by



the churches of the Caribbean. The annual event traditionally takes place between the feast of St Peter on 18 January, and the feast of St Paul on 25 January. Some southern hemisphere countries hold the week on a different date to avoid January holidays.

Next year's theme is "Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power". Following the usual pattern, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) asked churches in a region to prepare the material – this time the Caribbean – before it was submitted to an international editorial team of WCC and Roman Catholic representatives to refine the text to ensure that it can be prayed

throughout the world, and to link it with the search for the visible unity of the church.

The completed text, published jointly by the WCC and the PCPCU, is now available in English and French on the [WCC website](#). Additional translations are expected to follow in the coming weeks.

Scripture Union in NI has come a long way since its first beach mission in 1893

As Scripture Union celebrates 150 years of sharing God's Good News with children and young people around the world, the organisation in Northern Ireland continues to go from strength to strength.

The first beach mission in Northern Ireland began in Portrush in 1893 and from that small beginning, nearly 125 years later, there are around 1,200 volunteers serving across more than 45 summer activities including camps, traditional beach missions, and outreach in urban and rural settings.

These summer outreach activities complement work that is carried on throughout the year by



Beach missions in Northern Ireland have grown

Christian teachers and volunteers in schools up and down the country. Chair of the SUNI council Alistair McCracken, 66, has journeyed with the organisation for over 50 years.

He said: “As a boy of 13 or so I went to a Scripture Union camp with schools from all over Northern Ireland. I was at Ballyclare High School at the time. “There used to be a series of boys camps out in the far west of Donegal.

“The camps were under canvas with activities like canoeing, swimming, games and

orienteering alongside a strong elements of Bible teaching.

“The leader of the first camp I went to was David Hewitt, who was an Irish and Lions rugby international.”

Mr McCracken went on to become a team member of summer missions before getting involving with committees and eventually moving onto council where he holds the position of chair.

While Scripture Union activities have been running in Northern Ireland for more than 100 years it was only in 1970 that SUNI became a recognised group with the charity commission.

Mr McCracken said: “There’s been enormous growth in my time. When I was first going to camp there was probably only three or four camps happening and five or six missions.

“In 2017 we had almost 50 activities between our camps and missions.

“The way in which adults interact with children has changed.

“When I first started it was very formal, with the leaders being referred to as Mister That, Mrs



A beach mission at Portstewart in 1921

This or Miss The Other. It's first names terms now and there's a lot more young leaders.

“Looking back over those 50 odd years there are so many people who have had a tremendous influence over me as a Christian and as a person. “I would still bump into people from those early camps who I would have made friends and stayed friends with and that's really very special.”

In August 2017 the organisation welcomed only its fourth General Director Damian Wharton, who follows in the footsteps of Rev David Armstrong,

Rev David Bruce, and Helen Warnock – now principal of Belfast Bible College.

Mr Wharton, who is from Lancashire came to Northern Ireland four years ago to become pastor of City Church Belfast. The 46-year-old father-of-three said: “I’ve always had a heart for working with young people. As I’ve had my own children it’s become even more of a reality for me.

“SUNI is a great team, a great organisation. I’m privileged to be part of it.

“I love it here in Northern Ireland. My wife Andrea is originally from Bangor. She moved to England with me when we got married but now she’s back home.” Of the organisation he added: “It’s an opportunity to give hope to people, or at least share hope to people.

“That’s one of the things that attracted me to this role, that we are bringing hope to children and young people through camps, missions or in a school context.

“Some who may have heard it before and some who may never have heard it before.”

Young people are the focus of SUNI and their vision to reach out to all children and young people with the gospel message has fuelled the development of schools' work through the E3 model –

Engaging school pupils, Equipping Christian teachers, and Empowering churches to be actively involved in Schools Ministry. E3 is currently operational in seven areas across Northern Ireland, and work is underway to explore the potential of the initiative in other locations. This is all supported by the Resource Centre at SUNI headquarters in east Belfast, which provides Bible reading materials to individuals, and teaching resources to churches with contemporary Christian literature and music also available.

SUNI is one of 135 Scripture Union movements in countries across the world. The Northern Ireland branch has links with the Scripture Union movement in Russia and supports the work in St Petersburg financially and through prayer.

A special event will take place for SUNI in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast on Saturday, November 18. It will be an opportunity to gather across the generations to worship together, open God's Word, celebrate the stories of the past and the

present, and inspire one another for the future that is ahead for SUNI

For more information and to book tickets go to www.suni.co.uk/150, email info@suni.co.uk or call 02890454806. Tickets £10 per person, £7.50 for under 16s

Report courtesy The News Letter

Christian ex-minister becomes first Tory MP investigated under party's new code

Christian Conservative former Cabinet minister Stephen Crabb has been referred for investigation under the party's new code of conduct.

The Ex-Welsh secretary **apologised for sending explicit texts to a woman** he interviewed for a job in 2013 when she was 19-years-old and admitted he had said "some pretty outrageous things" to the woman after meeting her.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd has signalled MPs found guilty of sexual harassment could be



Christian Conservative former Cabinet minister Stephen Crabb

kicked out of the Commons under a tough new crackdown.

Ms Rudd predicted that the wave of sleaze allegations sweeping Westminster would lead to a positive "clear-out" which would leave Parliament and the Government in better shape.

The Home Secretary said she wanted the sanction of sacking MPs to be considered as part of a major overhaul of anti-harassment procedures at Westminster.

She told Sky News: "I think that that is one of the things that I would encourage the review to look at. It may be the case, it may not.

"It is wrong for us to have a knee-jerk reaction based on the past week. I think what we need to do is look at the whole issue. There needs to be a procedure put in place as soon as possible."

The Home Secretary said Westminster was undergoing a "watershed moment". Her comments came as it emerged three more Tory MPs are to have allegations against them looked into by officials.

Ms Rudd described as "disgusting" an incident in which former defence secretary Sir Michael Fallon is alleged to have lunged at a journalist and tried to kiss her on the lips.

The comments came after Jane Merrick alleged in The Observer that the incident took place after a 2003 lunch when she was a 29-year-old junior political reporter.

Asked if such behaviour was disgusting, Ms Rudd told Sky News: "Completely disgusting. Absolutely wrong. And it was right that he has stepped down."

Ms Merrick contacted Downing Street about her claims just hours before Sir Michael's shock resignation.

Ms Rudd insisted the end result of the spate of claims about inappropriate behaviour that has rocked politics will be positive.

The Home Secretary told BBC One's The Andrew Marr Show: "I think it is something that will take place in terms of clearing out Westminster of that sort of behaviour.

"And I think that Westminster afterwards, including the Government, will be better for it.

"When we are confident that men and women can work in a respectful environment and people who have been on the receiving end of abuse of power can come forward, that will be a positive thing."

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