

August 16

CNI

Christian charities offer help to Sierra Leone mudslide victims



Christian charities are providing assistance and offering prayer for people affected by the mudslides caused by heavy flooding in Sierra Leone.

A national emergency has been called in the West African country after torrents of water swept through the Regent area, a mountainous town 15 miles east of the capital Freetown, turning roads into churning rivers of mud leaving

August 16



at least 300 people dead. Many were trapped under tons of mud as they slept.

James Chfwelu, National Director of Christian charity World Vision in Sierra Leone told Premier News that while they were prepared for heavy rain, "the devastation this year has been worse. This is the worst that this country has seen".

At least a hundred houses were hit when a hillside in Regent collapsed in the early hours of Monday. It is thought to be the worst flooding in Africa for the past two decades. The death toll looks certain to rise as bodies washed up on a

August 16



beach and workers searched for an untold number buried in their homes.

Speaking during News Hour he said it was "very difficult to rescue people because the equipment for rescue was quite limited as this came so much in a very surprised form".

He explained: "So others were rescued injured but a lot of them died and as of yesterday we were told that more than 600 were still unaccounted for.

August 16

According to Christian charity Tearfund, at present, 312 people are reported to have died and at least 2,000 people have lost their homes, with several thousand still missing.

Government spokesman Cornelius Deveaux said rescue operations began early Tuesday to remove people still believed to be buried in the rubble. Heavy equipment was deployed to dig into the piles of red mud.

He said definitive death figures were unknown "as the mortuary is overwhelmed with corpses - men, women and children".

Rainfall is forecast for the coming days.

Gaston Slanwa, Tearfund's Country Representative for Sierra Leone, is based in Freetown and said: "I drove around Freetown yesterday and saw several houses had disappeared, roads completely gone. On one bridge I saw two people who were already dead being pulled out of the water then put in the ambulance right before my eyes.

"In just one of the church communities we work through, 60 people have died and 300 have lost their homes. We are working closely with all our partners 24/7 to understand how best to support

August 16

them, as well as liaising with the government and other agencies to carry out needs assessments and co-ordinate our response."

Chfwelu told Premier News that he has prayed with some of those affected.

He explained: "First of all we want to be real and just say that this is painful, this is something that was unexpected but I think the word of hope to those that have survived is that even if they are in this desperate situation, either injured, orphaned or homeless, they are much better off than those that actually died because it was so devastating and so many lives were lost.

"Those that have survived, we are making them look forward to God with hope instead of worrying about the situation much more."

Church Lads' Brigade exhibitions in Newtownabbey and Ballymena

Carnmoney Church Lads' Brigade Company, believed to be the oldest youth group in the Newtownabbey area, features in an exhibition of history and memorabilia about the Church Lads'

August 16



Betty Redfern of Carnmoney CGB receiving her Officer's Commission from Councillor Paul Hamill, Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey. Also in the picture is the Rev Paul Redfern and John Williams, CLCGB Second in Command.

and Church Girls' Brigade being held in Mossley Mill Museum, Newtownabbey.

Carnmoney CLB Company has been going in Carnmoney Parish since 1926, and members of the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade from Carnmoney Parish formed a Guard of Honour for

August 16



Members of the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade from Carnmoney Parish who formed a Guard of Honour for the Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Councillor Paul Hamill, when he opened the Mossley Mill Exhibition.

the Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Councillor Paul Hamill, who opened the Mossley Mill Exhibition.

The exhibition will remain at Mossley Mill until the end of August and the Museum is open most days from 10am to 5pm. (Closed Sunday).

August 16

The exhibition moves on to The Braid Centre in Ballymena and runs through September until October 9, coinciding with the Ballymena CLB Company's 120th Anniversary.

New name for Methodist Missionary Society

In the September issue of the *Methodist Newsletter*, the President, the Rev Dr Laurence Graham, explains the reasons for changing the 200-year-old name of the Methodist Missionary Society. He says:

‘In the early years of the Methodist Missionary Society we sent missionaries to various places to pioneer new outreach work and establish new churches. Through such initiatives, churches have grown all around the world. In tandem, though, the Church here in the western world has experienced substantial numerical decline. As a result, many of the areas that were once described as the ‘mission field’ are now, in fact, where the global strength of the Church is to be found. So, we have at least as much to receive and to learn from our partners around the world as we have to give them.

August 16

As our new mission statement puts it: “World Mission Partnership... enables Methodist people in Ireland and friends to join with partners around the world to proclaim Christ’s love and his offer of salvation and to promote Church growth. We do this by partnering through giving and receiving, learning and teaching, praying and being prayed for and serving and being served”.

Delegation of bishops welcomes new Nuncio to Ireland

The first African to hold the role of Papal Nuncio to Ireland arrived on Monday and was met at Dublin Airport by a delegation from the Irish Bishops’ Conference.

Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo is from Nigeria and has served as Apostolic Nuncio to the Dominican Republic and Apostolic Delegate in Puerto Rico.

The 60-year-old was ordained a priest in 1983. Following postgraduate studies in Rome he was appointed to the diplomatic service of the Holy See in 1990.

August 16

He served first in Sri Lanka, then in Haiti, the Antillean Islands (which include Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Saint Lucia, the Bahamas and Jamaica), Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Australia.

One of his first tasks in Ireland will be the appointment of a number of new bishops, as several dioceses have been vacant for some time.

Archbishop Okolo is fluent in his native Igbo and in English, as well as French, Italian, Czech, Spanish and German.

His interests include sacred music, piano, reading and table tennis.

He replaces Archbishop Charles Brown who was appointed to Ireland in November 2011 and served until March 2017.

The Irish American prelate is now Apostolic Nuncio to Albania.

Connor's Big Sing in Lisburn

The Dean and Chapter of Lisburn Cathedral invite anyone interested in learning more about

August 16



contemporary Christian music to a Sunday afternoon training session and evening Praise Service.

The facilitators of the training will be the Cathedral's Director of Music, Mr Stephen McLoughlin, and the leader of the Lisburn Community Choir and Children's Choir, Mrs Julie Harper.

Stephen will train musicians on how to approach new contemporary songs and on the coordination of music groups. Julie will train the singers (sopranos and altos) and Mark Tilley (co-leader of the Lisburn Community Choir) will train the tenors and basses.

August 16

Julie will also cover vocal training exercises, posture and communication. Each church group should hopefully feel better equipped to go back to the parish with the confidence to use much more varied musical material.

The Dean of Connor, the Very Rev Sam Wright, said: “Our hope is for this to be a very exciting, fun and effective way to enjoy and learn the brilliant new songs that are widely used in churches across the UK and Ireland.

“All those interested in contemporary Christian music from Praise Groups, Musicians, Choirs, Musical Directors and Clergy would be most welcome at the ‘Connor Big Sing.’

The afternoon session will teach contemporary songs, and some of these will be included in the evening Praise Service. In addition to the training, a pack of materials will be provided featuring band and vocal arrangements for the worship songs.

The Evening Praise Service at 6.30pm will be open to everyone. (It may be that some churches suggest to their parishioners attending ‘Connor Big Sing’ instead of holding their usual evening service on that Sunday).

August 16

Dean Wright added: “The most recent installation services for the Dean and Canons in Lisburn Cathedral included a number of contemporary worship songs these songs received favourable comments from members of the congregations present – it is as a result of this feedback that the Chapter members felt that we could contribute to the worshipping life of the diocese by providing this training day in contemporary Christian music followed by an Evening Praise Service.”

Download a [timetable and booking form](#). This should be completed and returned by August 31.

The Messy Churches of Innishowen

The Inishowen Methodist Churches and Moville Group of Church of Ireland Parishes held their latest Messy Church event in the wee Hall in Culdaff last Saturday.

Messy Church is a fun-filled way for children and adults to explore the Christian message and make things together. It is based on creativity, hospitality and celebration. Each event includes a Bible story with drama, singing, games, arts and crafts, and finishes with refreshments. Jenny McKeague from Culdaff brings her two boys

August 16

regularly: “it’s heartening to see the children enjoy themselves so much while learning Bible stories and life lessons in an age-appropriate way.”

Currently hosted by the Inishowen Methodist Churches and Church of Ireland (Diocese of Derry and Raphoe), Messy Church is open to families from all backgrounds and traditions. It is primarily aimed at children from 0-12 years accompanied by one or more responsible adults. Messy Church happens every 2 months and alternates between the Methodist Hall in Moville and the Wee Hall in Culdaff. It has been running successfully for more than a year and will hopefully become a monthly event.

Look out for news of the next Messy Church event which will have a harvest theme. Anyone who would like more information can contact either Rev. Alison Gallagher (Methodist Church) on 087 2632906 or Rev. Suzanne Cousins (Church of Ireland) on 083 8003233.

Musicians' Church bans non-Christian music

A London church known as The National Musicians' Church is in a row with one of the

August 16

UK's best-known composers after it said it wouldn't allow choirs and orchestras to play non-Christian music.

St. Sepulchre's Without Newgate Church, in Holborn says an increasingly busy programme of worship and church activities has led to ever higher demands on the church space.

Composer John Rutter said the decision meant the church had "betrayed" musicians, many of whom use it as a rehearsal and warm-up space for larger concerts including the Proms.

Dr Ian White from Victoria Baptist Church in Eastbourne commented that the musicians should respect the church's decision.

Speaking during News Hour on Premier radio he said: "I can understand their regret over this and I would hope that they would be able to appreciate that churches don't just exist as places to meet or to play music.

"That there fundamental purpose is to communicate a Christian gospel that is going to hopefully change society."

August 16

At St. Sepulchre's - which is now part of a network founded by evangelical church Holy Trinity Brompton - "music and musicians are at the heart" of its ministry, according to the church's website. It also states that "We believe that God loves music, and that He delights in how we use our gifts".

White said the church's decision "throws up the whole area of what our buildings and our churches are to be used for".

He added: "In our Baptist network we don't have such a sacramental view of the Church so we do let other people use it but only with certain qualifications

A petition to reverse the action has received 2,500 signatures.

Rutter told the Daily Telegraph that the timing of the decision was "significant" because of the retirement of the former Bishop of London Richard Chartres earlier this year. His successor has not yet been appointed.

Rutter explained: "I know Richard Chartres was a great friend of music and he would have been

August 16

the first to say 'come on'. But he is gone and so there's nobody else.

"The Church of England needs all the friends it can get. It shouldn't be making enemies - it's un-Christian."

In a letter sent to groups which used the church regularly, Rev David Ingall who is the priest in charge said the church had become "conscious of the challenges of using a space dedicated to worship for non-religious hiring".

A spokesman for the church said: "An increasingly busy programme of worship and church activities has led to ever higher demands on the church space, and the hire space is also shared with the church administration office. We do wish to reiterate that we remain committed to our ministry as the National Musicians' Church. In the coming weeks we will reflect and pray, and consult with members of the musicians' community about how best to fulfil that ministry moving forward."

New Zealand diocese to vote on transfer of cathedral to State

August 16



Christchurch cathedral after an earthquake

The Synod of the diocese of Christchurch will consider donating its earthquake-ravaged cathedral to the country's government as a gift to the people of New Zealand. This new option will go alongside two existing options – to reinstate the existing cathedral or to demolish and replace it with a modern building – when the Synod meets to decide the building's future on the last day of its three-day meeting next month (7-9 September).

The iconic cathedral occupies a prime site in a major square in the city. But it has stood derelict since the 2011 earthquake because a local

August 16

heritage group, the Great Christchurch Buildings Trust, has consistently challenged the diocese's plans to demolish the cathedral and replace it with a modern purpose-built building. The cathedral's worship has been taking place in a temporary "cardboard cathedral".

The diocese won the legal challenges and engaged in consultations and discussions with government officials to find an agreeable solution. After the talks broke down, the diocese decided that the final decision should be taken by the Synod next month.

The Synod was to have been asked to decide between two options.

Option A would see the former building reinstated. It would be part-funded by a \$10 million (NZD - approximately £5.6 m GBP) grant and \$15 million loan from the New Zealand Government; a pledge of \$13.7 million from the Great Christchurch Buildings Trust; a potential loan from Christchurch City Council; and additional fund-raising. This option would proceed in three stages, each of which would only commence once the funding for that stage is in place. The proposal would require the government to enact legislation "to streamline

August 16

project consenting and approval processes,” the diocese said.

Option B would see “an inspiring highly functional new cathedral” built on the site of the existing building. This would be funded by the \$42 million available as a result of the cathedral’s insurance.

If the Synod chooses the new option, Option C, it will direct the Church Property Trustees (CPT), which owns the church’s buildings on behalf of the dioceses, “to enter into negotiations with the Government for the gifting of the Christchurch Cathedral building in the square to the people of New Zealand,” the diocese said in a statement. “CPT would share its extensive knowledge and experience of the building to assist the Government in its reinstatement. The diocese would seek permission to use the building for large services such as Easter and Christmas as part of any agreement.”

Press watch

Irish friar posthumously awarded Zimbabwe’s highest honour

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/irish-friar-posthumously-awarded-zimbabwe-s-highest-honour-1.3187363?mode=amp>

August 16

Irish archbishop and English priest lead cross-cultural mission training in Myanmar

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2017/08/irish-bishop-and-english-priest-lead-cross-cultural-mission-training-in-myanmar.aspx>

Catholic woman bishop on Irish vocations recruitment drive

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/catholic-woman-bishop-on-irish-vocations-recruitment-drive-1.3186561?mode=amp>

7 great things Glen Campbell said about his faith in Jesus

<https://www.premierchristianity.com/Blog/7-great-things-Glen-Campbell-said-about-his-faith-in-Jesus?utm>

Interview with Katharine Welby-Roberts,

daughter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in advance of the publication of her book *I Thought There Would be Cake*. The book will be published by SPCK on Thursday. Christian Today and Premier report on a Sunday Times interview.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b090vd4c>

<https://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Justin-Welby-s-daughter-admits-she-hid-depression-from-dad>

CNI