

Church News Ireland



Image of the day

**Archbishop Welby celebrates 150th year
of mission and ministry
in
Shankill Parish, Belfast**

People and places



Archbishop Welby celebrates 150th year of mission and ministry in Shankill Parish, Belfast

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, and his chaplain, the Rev Tosin Oladipo, joined the congregation at St Matthew's, Shankill, for worship on Sunday February 6.

They were visiting Belfast to take part in the annual 4Corners Festival, and were invited to St Matthew's by the rector, the Rev Tracey McRoberts.



Since rioting in nearby Lanark Way last April, Rev Tracey McRoberts and Fr Martin Magill from St John's (Upper Falls), one of the organisers of the 4Corners Festival, have been working together on a weekly basis and have had held more than 60 meetings with a range of people to discuss issues in the Falls and Shankill.

Fr Magill encouraged Rev Tracey to write and invite the Archbishop to speak to the people in St Matthew's during this, their 150th year of mission and ministry in Shankill Parish.

Conor Burns, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, also attended the service having met with Rev Tracey and Fr Martin on a number of occasions. The Minister mentioned St Matthew's, Fr Martin and Rev Tracey in The House of Commons Dispatches on Monday February 7.

Archbishop Welby gave the address at Sunday's service.

Rev Tracey McRoberts said: "The congregation felt honoured in their 150th year to be joined by the Archbishop."



Afghanistan: Moderator calls for prayers and support

In response to the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), Right Reverend Dr David Bruce, is encouraging PCI members across Ireland to pray for the people of Afghanistan and to support the work of partners operating in the country.

February 11, 2022

The United Nations estimates that 95% of the 40 million people in the country, currently in the grip of winter, do not have enough to eat. More than eight million people are on the brink of famine, and there are fears that without emergency relief some 23 million people will face desperate hardship in the coming months.

This has come about due to the worst drought for nearly 30 years, the recent conflict and change in government, economic collapse and mass unemployment, which has caused the cost of food and basic necessities to soar. As the Covid-19 pandemic continues the country's healthcare system is also very close to collapse.

Encouraging PCI members to consider their response to this humanitarian emergency, Dr Bruce said, "In recent weeks, the desperate situation of millions of people in Afghanistan has been hitting our news headlines. I want to encourage members of our congregations up and down this island to pray earnestly for those who are experiencing such unimaginable hardship and suffering at this time.

"I am conscious that there are already many existing appeals for support of numerous good causes, and many people are feeling the pressure of the increase in the cost of living. In the face of the unfolding disaster in Afghanistan, I ask that you to prayerfully consider giving as generously as you are able through the emergency appeals of PCI's relief and development partners, Christian Aid or Tearfund."

Christian Aid Ireland and Tearfund have each launched an Afghanistan Crisis Appeal and are taking donations through their websites. Both are working through local organisations

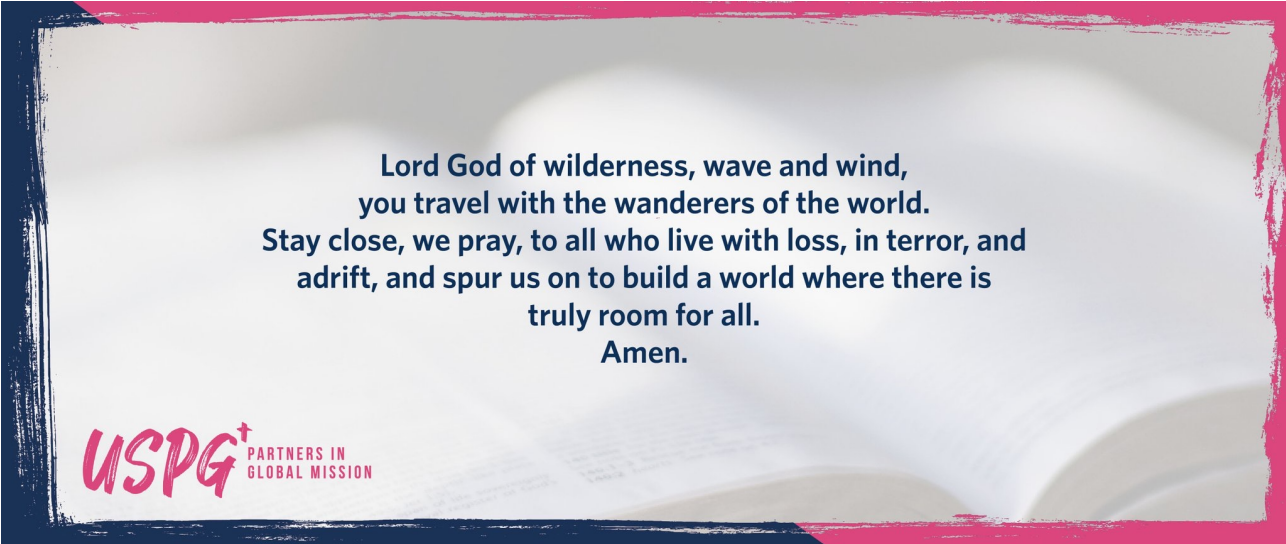
February 11, 2022

on the ground to bring food and aid to the people of all faiths and none, who are most affected.

In concluding, Dr Bruce said, “I am constantly reminded of the generosity of Presbyterians across the country in supporting others both locally and globally, and I trust that our members will play their part in supporting the people of Afghanistan, including our brothers and sisters in Christ living there at this time of great need.”

Supporting the Moderator in his appeal to congregations, Rev Uel Marrs, Secretary to the Council for Global Mission said, “In addition, congregations and individuals may wish to support the work of one of our partners in global mission – SAT-7, the Christian satellite television station run by and for the people of the Middle East and North Africa. The organisation broadcasts the Christian message of hope into Afghanistan through the SAT-7 PARS Channel, especially supportive of the small Christian community in Afghanistan.

“We were privileged to hear of their work in Afghanistan at our October General Assembly. This work is incredibly important in sustaining and building up the Church in the



Lord God of wilderness, wave and wind,
you travel with the wanderers of the world.
Stay close, we pray, to all who live with loss, in terror, and
adrift, and spur us on to build a world where there is
truly room for all.
Amen.

USPG⁺ PARTNERS IN
GLOBAL MISSION

February 11, 2022

Middle East, North Africa and into Central Asia, spreading the gospel in the Afghanistan through such difficult days,” Mr Marris said.

The women behind the World Day of Prayer 2022

Members of the England, Wales and Northern Ireland team share their stories

A team of forty women from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI) have produced the resources for the World Day of Prayer, which takes place on Friday 4 March. Here two of the team’s leaders share their perspectives on the ‘creation’ of WDP 2022.

The commission

It is August 2017. I am in Brazil, in a meeting room in a hotel, together with nearly 200 other women from around 80 different countries. I am one of three delegated from the England, Wales & Northern Ireland National Committee who are attending the International Meeting of World Day of Prayer, which takes place every five years. We have talked, sung, eaten, laughed and prayed together for five days – and now we have reached the final session.

Before this meeting took place, national Committees were invited to submit suggestions for themes and writing countries for future Days of Prayer; and for the second – if not the third – time we have suggested a theme and put our names forward to be a writing country. These submissions



have been considered by a group of delegates – a long process with much prayer and discussion.

Dr Elizabeth Burroughs

The decisions of the group are announced:

“For 2022, the title will be ‘I Know the Plans I Have for

You’. based on Jeremiah 29:11 and the writing country will be (pause – worthy of the Oscars) England, Wales & Northern Ireland; for 2023, the title will be...”

I’ll never forget that moment. But it was only the start. Four years of hard work were ahead of us...

The Executive Director of World Day of Prayer gave me a very long list of instructions: we had to form a writing group of 30 – 40 women, as diverse in background as possible – and most of them should be under 50, preferably under 40. We needed such a large number, she said, because some would undoubtedly drop out along the way. In fact, none did.

President of the World Day of Prayer National Committee for England, Wales & Northern Ireland, Dr Elizabeth Burroughs.

Informed prayer : prayerful action

In 1926 women in the United States and Canada celebrated a Day of Prayer on the first Friday of Lent. They distributed

February 11, 2022

this material across the world and the Women's World Day of Prayer was born. Six years later the first Women's World Day of Prayer Services were held in England. (Scotland's had started in 1930).

Since then, our World Day of Prayer National Committee in England Wales and Northern Ireland has developed and



Carole Bourne

refined ways of preparing and presenting the service material for our own nations, distributing this, communicating nationally and internationally and ensuring the representation of as many denominations as possible. From Catholics, who joined us in 1969, to free and Pentecostal churches. Quakers, the Salvation Army, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Moravians, Lutherans and Congregationalists have long been represented.

February 11, 2022

Interestingly, the number of different denominations rarely produces major differences in views. More often than not, National Committee members are first and foremost, simply Christian women on the National Committee!

Carole Bourne

Carole Bourne

Beyond the National Committee is a huge network of branches throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We encourage these local organisations to meet at intervals during the year to follow up the themes of our services and to maintain the links between the different churches. We also meet area representatives in July as we run through the service, which they in turn will roll out in a series of Preparation Days in the autumn.

Our strap line, “informed prayer; prayerful action” is reflected in our focus on the needs of those who live in the countries featured in our services and in other parts of the world. The charities we support, through the money collected at our services are usually geared to work with women and children.

Like many church organisations, the age profile of World Day of Prayer has increased over the decades. We have become aware of a need to reach out to younger women. In 2016 we began an outreach to these younger women in an annual Y Pray weekend at the beginning of May. Following the success of these weekends, we have co-opted some of the women who attended onto our Committee and their skill, concerns and expertise has fed into new ways of working.

February 11, 2022

As the theme of this year's service suggests – 'I Know the Plans I Have For You' Jeremiah 29:1-14 – God has plans for us and the Covid pandemic has given us opportunities as well as challenges. Prevented from meeting and worshipping in person, we were obliged to explore the possibilities of Zoom. Like many other organisations, we found ourselves meeting and welcoming people on line from all over the world, as well as some who had been unable to come out and attend a service for many years.

All in all, the appeal of a wave of prayer throughout the world, led by women and focused on their concerns remains inspirational.

Vice-Chairperson, World Day of Prayer National Committee England Wales & Northern Ireland, Carole Bourne.

Explore the EWNl WDP site and find a service near you on Friday 4 March

[[] <https://www.wwdp.org.uk/>]

St James' National School, Durrus feature Chinese New Year on RTÉ

On Monday, 31st January 2022, St James' National School, Durrus featured on RTE News2Day, the RTE children's news and current affairs programme.

The pupils did a feature on the Chinese New Year, which begun on 1st February this year. This year is 'The Year of the Tiger'.

February 11, 2022

Caroline Willoughby, classroom teacher at St James's NS, writes:

The pupils dressed up in red and gold to celebrate the 'year of the tiger' and created and designed their own lanterns. They wrote their wishes for 2022 for the school wishing tree and also drew dragons. The children got an opportunity to sample some delicious Chinese cuisine. We ended the day with a dragon parade performed by the Junior classroom. It was a wonderful celebration and we were thrilled to be featured on the programme to showcase a flavour of what happens in St James'.

You can access and watch the episode here -
[[<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/news2day/SI0000001210?epguid=IH000412369>]



Service of Introduction, Gilnahirk

The Revd Ken McGrath will be introduced as Bishop's Curate for the Parish of Gilnahirk on Monday 2 May at 7.30 pm.

February 11, 2022

The preacher at the service will be Revd Canon Gareth Harron, Vicar of Holywood Parish.

In the media

Holy Trinity National School in Westport still in limbo 12 years on

Mayo News

There are still no plans in place to construct a new school building for Holy Trinity National School in Westport. Twelve years after the building was declared ‘unfit for purpose’ by the Department of Education, the new building is currently at ‘Project Brief Stage’ and has still not been tendered.

School principal, Orla Brickenden, and the Board of Management are calling on Education Minister Norma Foley, to ‘do the right thing’ and begin building ‘without delay’.

A new building for the school was first announced by former Minister for Education Jan O’Sullivan in November 2015. The Church of Ireland school, which is over 200 years old, is currently full to capacity with 62 pupils.

Due to Covid-19 ventilation guidelines, staff are unable to adequately heat the school building. The site of the former Scoil Phadraig building on Altamount Street had been earmarked as the new location for Holy Trinity NS.

[[] <https://www.mayonews.ie/news/37976-holy-trinity-still-in-limbo-12-years-on>]

Church of England faces calls to ban flower foam in funeral arrangements

Daily Mail

The Church of England is facing calls to ban floral funeral arrangements that are deemed 'harmful' and 'damaging' the planet.

Its legislative body, the General Synod, has been asked to consider a ban on floral foam, which provides both water and support to cut flower arrangements, in favour of more eco-friendly options.

The foam is not biodegradable and is used to spell out names of the deceased at funerals, or is cut into elaborate shapes for weddings.

[[] <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10496335/Church-England-faces-calls-ban-funeral-flower-arrangements.html>]

The Very Rev John McIndoe, English-born senior figure in the Church of Scotland – obituary

The Telegraph

He served as Moderator of the General Assembly in 1996, and was Minister of the 'expat' St Columba's church in London.

[[] <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2022/02/06/rev-john-mcindoe-english-born-senior-figure-church-scotland/>]

A discovery of Northern Ireland's lost holy relic

BBC Travel

While searching for a new path in life, two former nuns created a wondrous "Coastal Camino" that is bringing travellers to an otherwise neglected part of Northern Ireland. [\[\[\] https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20220206-a-discovery-of-northern-irelands-lost-holy-relic \]](https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20220206-a-discovery-of-northern-irelands-lost-holy-relic)

Church of England Synod calls for more protection of child trafficking victims -

Belfast Telegraph

The Church of England Synod has urged the Government to ensure the ... Bill is currently being debated in the House of Lords (Tim Ireland/PA). [\[\[\] https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/church-of-england-synod-calls-for-more-protection-of-child-trafficking-victims-41330918.html \]](https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/church-of-england-synod-calls-for-more-protection-of-child-trafficking-victims-41330918.html)

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Rural Churches Prayer Zoom around the world

The International Rural Churches Association is connecting communities in prayer online on 7 and 8 March.

The International Rural Churches Association is inviting anyone with a passion for rural ministry to join them on

February 11, 2022

Zoom all or part of the 24 hours from 7 to 8 March. The event celebrates and helps us pray together for rural people, places and ministries across the globe.

The event starts by joining in with the 41st Annual Rural Ministry Conference hosted by the Centre for Theology and Land at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, USA, at 3.00pm (GMT), on Monday 7 March. The virtual gathering then travels westward round the globe through North and South America, the Pacific Islands, into Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Malawi, Uganda, South Africa, Eastern Europe and from 12-1pm on the 8 March it will focus on England, Wales, North Ireland and Scotland.

Members of CTE's Churches Rural Group Heather Major and Anne Wright, are looking for contributors to help share stories of God at work in rural places. They would like pictures of rural contexts in the UK and potentially short videos of no longer than 2 minutes to help international delegates understand something of the nature of rural ministry in the UK.

For further information and contacts see -
[[<https://cte.org.uk/irca2022zoom/>]]

The Supreme Act of Love: following Jesus from Holy Week to Pentecost

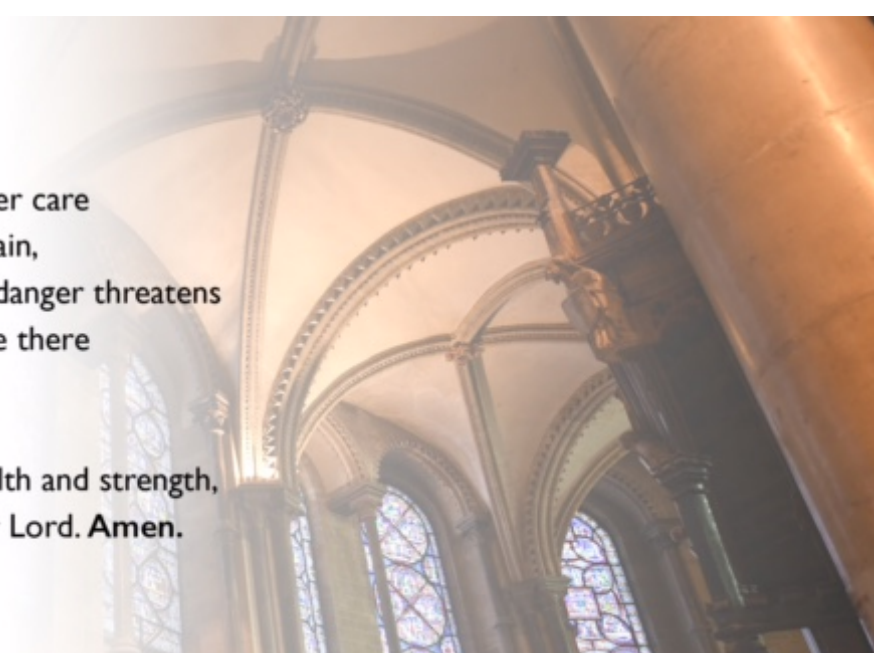
St Paul's Cathedral Adult programme presents Andrew Nunn and Paula Gooder in conversation. Premieres online on Tuesday 22 March, 7.00-7.45pm

February 11, 2022

The dramatic and mysterious events of Holy Week and Easter are at the heart of Christian faith. Andrew Nunn says that Holy Week is like a pebble thrown into a pond and its effects are felt in Jesus' resurrection, the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, and all the way into the present day and our own lives. Andrew Nunn and Paula Gooder explore what happens at the Last Supper, on the Cross, and at Easter and Pentecost, including some of what it means to them personally, and how we can keep the season in a way that means we come to know Jesus better.

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn is Dean of Southwark Cathedral. His new book is *The Hour is Come: The Passion in real time* (2021).

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral. Her latest books are *Women of Holy Week: An Easter Journey in Nine Stories* and *Journalling the Psalms: A Guide for Reflection and Prayer* (both 2022).



Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there
to hold them safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

February 11, 2022

The event is free, but if you are able to make a donation to the continuing learning programme at St Paul's Cathedral when you register for the event they would be very grateful.

by Adult Learning at St Paul's Cathedral

[\[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-supreme-act-of-love-following-jesus-from-holy-week-to-pentecost-tickets-251149493897\]](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-supreme-act-of-love-following-jesus-from-holy-week-to-pentecost-tickets-251149493897)

Perspective

Racial Justice and the church's mission by the Archbishop of York

The Archbishop gave a speech at General Synod on Monday following a presentation by the Chair of the Archbishops' Racial Justice Commission Lord Boateng. The speech follows in full...

Dear sisters and brothers, please remind me to make a mental note never to have Lord Boateng as my warm up act. Paul, we are deeply in your debt, we are convicted by your words, and we are determined to be different.

I want to build on what we've heard, in what may seem a strange way. I want to say that doctrine matters. If we follow scripture, doctrine tells us what we need to know in order to live consistently as members of the Body of Christ. 'Doctrine therefore', as Rowan Williams has put it, 'serves communion'.

February 11, 2022

If one were looking for an example of new doctrinal definition in the face of lethal distortion of Christian truth, the best example might be the Barman Declaration of 1934 by representatives of the Protestant churches in Nazi Germany who affirmed, in the face of the most hideous racist ideology, that there could be no meaningful Christian fellowship with those whose pseudo theology justified discrimination and racial exclusivism. To do otherwise was to show that you do not understand the confession of Christ as Lord.

The Kairos document issued in South Africa in 1985 also appealed to the fullness of what is opened up to us in Christ as a redeemed humanity therefore challenging a state theology that sought to justify oppressive racism.

Doctrine matters. Doctrinal fidelity and theological precision are not luxuries. They shape the way we live in a Christ centred and Jesus Christ shaped church where there can be no room for racism but where we must honestly, and painfully, and penitently confess that racism is a gaping wound in the body of Christ.

Theologians matter too. No less a person than Karl Barth was the main author of the Barman Declaration, and a large group of mainly black South African theologians from Soweto produced the Kairos document.

Sometimes, the church's opposition to racism, particularly in our own day, is dismissed as some sort of inappropriate dallying with race politics and culture wars. Not so! We make our stand on Christian doctrine, particularly on what

February 11, 2022

we learn about ourselves through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

So, with you, Synod, I do thank Lord Boateng (and the members of the Commission) for that challenging, prophetic and sometimes uncomfortable presentation and for his willingness to chair the Commission for Racial Justice. But the reason Archbishop Justin and I have commissioned this work is because of what we believe about Christ and what it is to be a Christ centred Church and to make it clear that there can be no racism in the Church, and that we must now face up to the failings of the past and change our future: for ourselves but also for the world that Christ came to save.

We now move to a take note debate, and it is my privilege to update you on a number of areas of this work and I'm very grateful to the business committee for giving us this time.

As we have heard, the Anti-Racism Task Force was commissioned last year and through its report From Lament to Action identified 47 actions which of course included the establishment of an independent Commission for Racial Justice, all so that we can be held to account as a church and that we can deliver systemic change across the Church, and ensure a properly resourced Racial Justice Unit is set up.

The Commission has already met three times, GS 2243 starts to outline the progress.

You will see that thirty-five of those recommendations that lay within the remit of the National Church Institutions - on them work has begun immediately, and you can see where

February 11, 2022

progress is still needed. Other recommendations were reserved to take into account the thinking of the Racial Justice Commission as it emerged. However, I want to assure you that all the recommendations are being carefully and prayerfully explored both by CMEAC and the Racial Justice Commission. I say that with some feeling as many Synod members will know, I have had the privilege to be a member of CMEAC for 10 years - CMEAC is the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns. Some of those recommendations from some of those reports which were not acted upon, I was one of the authors of those.

Under the Chair of the Dean of Manchester and with new terms of reference, CMEAC remains the body for taking this forward. It is worth reminding ourselves, yet again, of all the work that that group and its predecessor, [CBAC, the Committee for Black Anglican Concerns] has done.

In the coming months, CMEAC will publish new information around Race & Ethnicity, including a diocese-by-diocese report on the work undertaken on Anti-racism, racial justice, Belonging, Inclusion and Diversity, and – hopefully! – a project to commission a collection of sacred liturgical objects that will narrate the rich diversity of heritage, culture, and ethno-social community found in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion.

@ @ @

‘Staying Awake in Gethsemane; Catalyst Theology for Racial Justice in the Church of England’

The resource, ‘Staying Awake in Gethsemane; Catalyst Theology for Racial Justice in the Church of England’, will be published with SCM press later this year, and will be



available to dioceses so that our parishes can begin to engage more fully with this agenda.

Other work has included a national conference in collaboration with the British & Irish Association for Practical Theology and a roundtable on how to support the planned migration from Hong Kong in collaboration with the Teahouse, the support network for the Church of England East Asian and Chinese-heritage clergy. As you will remember, for those who have been on Synod for a while, there has been a variety of roundtables and activities also supporting the work of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Networks, and Persian & Farsi speaking networks.

Synod, much is happening but there is so much that still needs to be done. All is far from well. But I think all we can do today is clearly demonstrate our determination to put in

February 11, 2022

place a clear national strategy that will support the work of Racial Justice and enable our dioceses and parishes to be involved, and to build capacity.

Our desire is nothing less than to ensure and to share with the world the fullness of what is opened up to us in Jesus Christ as a redeemed humanity - this work is so important and it is why becoming a diverse Church, as one of our stated objectives, flows directly from what it means to be a Church that is in Christ.

Therefore of course, we do not do this alone. It is for every diocese and every parish and every congregation to be involved and to see this as a gospel imperative. Of course, there will be decisions, strategies, policies and structural changes. And hard decisions lie ahead. But as our inspirational and dedicated advisor, who we must pay tribute to her work, Sanjee Perera, often reminds us, it can only be achieved with love, and with the guidance of the Spirit, anchored in the gospel. It cannot be mandated. But it can be compelled by love, that love and that new humanity we see in Christ.

Companions, the work of racial justice is the work of the gospel. In Christ there can be nothing less.

So let me quote from the Kairos statement of 1985 written by black theologians in Soweto and still a challenge for the Church of England today - "For those Christians who find themselves on the side of the oppressor or sitting on the fence, the way forward is to cross over to the other side and to be united in faith and action". It is now at last to this faith

February 11, 2022

and action and delivery that the Church of England must now commit itself in love and for the sake of the gospel.

Synod, I move the motion standing in my name.

Most Rev Dr Stephen Cottrell

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/general-synod/watch-general-synod-live>

Poem for today

She Walks In Beauty
by Lord Byron

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,

February 11, 2022

But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

Speaking to the soul

A short reading and prayer on this site daily.

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houston.mckelvey@btinternet.com