

Irish news 19th February

Coleraine: church finds car boot sale connection to community

Fiona Spence of Inspire - describes how a church car boot initiative is supporting the local economy – and introducing people to Jesus



On a Saturday morning on the north coast of Northern Ireland, one church's car park is overflowing with cars.

People haven't driven up for a service or conference. They've flocked from miles around to attend the church's monthly car boot sale.

Over the last 18 months thousands of people have pocketed a bargain, or attracted new customers to their small business, thanks to Causeway Coast Vineyard church in Coleraine.

Here the church has found a unique way of using its large premises to reach out to the local community.

"At the first car boot sale in July 2012 we expected about 30 to 50 traders," says Ricky Wright, director of Vineyard Compassion, a charity set up by the church to tackle poverty. "But for the first one we had close to 100 traders.

“Now we’ve started running out of space. We’ve had at least 2,000 shoppers for the last couple of months.”



The church started the sales – which also incorporate a farmers’ and craft market and a cafe – because they needed income for the Compassion charity.

It runs 22 projects including a job club, food and clothing banks and a debt help service. Any profits made by the car boot sales are ploughed back into this ministry.

“The sales fit the theme of tackling poverty and supporting the local economy,” Ricky continues. “Local families can get spare cash by selling goods and others can buy secondhand items.

“People are getting the opportunity to trial new business ideas, like cooking or craft, in the farmers’ market. There’s one lady who makes pesto and she’s started trialling her business by selling at the market.

“It fits on a number of levels: it raises money, helps tackle poverty and gives the church a point of connection to the community.”

And that connection is something the church is determined to make the most of.

“We have teams of children from our kids’ groups giving out freebies, like sweets or muffins, to customers and traders,” explains Ricky. “Also there are people going round offering to pray for people.

“We’re sowing seeds through random acts of kindness. It’s a simple and gentle way, not heavy-handed evangelism.

“Quite a few people have come to the church through the car boot sales. And some have come to faith.”



More at -

<http://www.inspiremagazine.org.uk/Stories/Personal?storyaction=view&storyid=554>

New Media seminar

Many churches have been slow to take advantage of the internet and new technology, viewing these tools with suspicion and mistrust, and sticking to traditional ways of communicating their message.

But the world outside has changed the way it listens.

If you and your church would like to face up to this challenge, join us for this unique event, sponsored by the [Skainos Project of East Belfast Mission](#) and by [Church Resources Online](#), bringing together experienced 'voices from the field' from various churches exploring the use of new media and technologies to reach out and communicate the timeless Christian message.

Where: The Skainos Centre

When: Wednesday 5 March 2014

Tickets: The event is FREE *but please register online via [Eventbrite](#)*

Speakers

Has the world stopped listening to the church? – Nigel Hunter, Church Reach Project Manager

Changing frequencies – Geoffrey Ready, *Avec: Adapting our strategies to embrace the new ways we can communicate the Gospel*

Learning a new language – Stephanie Meenagh, East Belfast Partnership and Connswater Community Greenway: *Overcoming the fears of engaging your church or organisation in digital media platforms like Facebook*

Outside-in transformation – Rev Simon Genoe, Lisburn Cathedral: *How the initial (and continued) development of our website has impacted our church's vision and how we seek to present ourselves*



CHURCH REACH
*Communicating an
unchanging message
to a changing world*

You shall be my
witnesses – Rev John

Dickinson, Carnmoney Church: *Using every resource to communicate the Gospel and build a Kingdom community*

These are my worlds – Pete Waugh, youth worker and blogger: *Moving towards an understanding of the online places young people inhabit*

These brief talks will be followed by questions and panel discussion. Coffee and tea will be served 15 minutes prior to the event which will start promptly at 10.00 am.

New Wine children and youth training



This training day is for church leaders, parents, youth and kids teams, and anyone with a heart to see the kingdom break out amongst a generation released in ministry in their every day lives.

We have a great line-up of speakers joining us to put a practical framework to some of that vision, sharing stories that inspire and leading

seminars relevant to a range of people and situations. **Olly Goldenberg (Children Can)** will be leading the main sessions joined by **Katie Rogers (City Vineyard)** and others from **NWI** and **24/7 Prayer Ireland** having input throughout the day.

Details

The training will take place at Willowfield Parish Church, Belfast and runs from 10.00 am through to 4.00 pm. Tea and coffee will be provided but please make your own arrangements for lunch.

Tickets

Tickets cost £15/€18 per person and can be [booked online](#).

There is a special group rate for groups of 10 or more of £10/€12 per person. This must be booked before Thursday 6 March.

Bible teaching to children

Training outline: Engaging the heart, Engaging Hostility, Engaging Boys, Engaging BIG WORDS.

Rory Bell is director of Teaching and Training Ministries, an organisation that equips ordinary people to teach the Bible to children.

Rory and his wife, Kim, have worked in a number of different sized churches in a range of contexts both in South Africa and the UK. He has conducted extensive training in churches and theological colleges in South Africa, Singapore, Dubai, Zimbabwe, Uganda and throughout the UK and parts of Europe.

When: Saturday 22 March 2014 from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Venue: St Elizabeth's Church Halls, Church Green, Dundonald, Belfast, BT16 2LP

Cost: £15 per person (includes refreshments – bring your own packed lunch)
Booking is essential!

Online:

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Institution

The Revd Bryan Follis will be instituted as incumbent of the Parish of Hillsborough, in the Diocese of Down, on Saturday 15 March 2014 at 3.00 pm.



Religious bodies 'undermined work of child abuse watchdog'

THE Government's lead adviser on child protection has expressed "profound concern" after a former Catholic Church watchdog accused religious bodies of using "covert means" to limit its investigations.

Irish Independent - The sensational claims were made by Ian Elliott, who authored several high-profile reports on the handling of allegations of child sexual abuse in various dioceses.

He told the Sunday Independent that the work of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, which he led until last year, was being undermined by religious bodies consistently cutting its funding.

Mr Elliott believes that efforts have been made to curtail further probes by starving investigators of resources.

He said he could "see no justification" for this "other than a desire to limit the role of the board by covert means".

The remarks have already prompted major concerns in political circles.

The Government's lead adviser on child protection, special rapporteur Geoffrey Shannon, said it was essential that there be a strong, well-funded oversight mechanism for the Catholic Church.

"I think it would be a matter of profound concern if funding was to be cut at the expense of ensuring a robust child protection system," he told this newspaper. More at -

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/religious-bodies-undermined-work-of-child-abuse-watchdog-30013840.html>