



Archbishop Clarke elected to key Anglican committee

Archbishop Richard Clarke has been elected to represent Europe on the Anglican Primates' Standing Committee. He was one of five Primates voted on to the committee, by regions, at last week's meeting of the world's 38 Anglican Primates at Canterbury, England, called by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

The other Primates elected to the Standing Committee were Archbishop John Holder from the Caribbean for the Americas, Archbishop Thabo Makoba from South Africa for Africa, Archbishop Philip Freier, Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, and Archbishop Mouneer Anis from Egypt and the Middle East for Asia.

Among the meetings the group will be expected to attend this year are the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, in April and the ACC Standing Committee meeting in September in London.

Church of Ireland challenged by report on homosexuality

Members of the Anglican Church of Ireland are being asked to consider whether the Church should change its mind on homosexuality as it has in the past on women, slavery, contraception and the remarriage of divorcees.

Ruth Gledhill in Christian Today - A new Church of Ireland report, [A Guide To The Conversation On Human Sexuality](#), asks whether the Church has imposed on its interpretation of scripture "an inadequate analysis of human sexuality".

It also suggests that an "an idyllic vision of modern family life" might have been imposed.

The report suggests that "the moral logic underpinning the negative portrayal of same-sex eroticism in Scripture does not directly address committed, loving, consecrated same-sex relationships today."

The report also quotes St Paul in Galatians 3: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

It says: "As the Church has changed its views on slavery, women's ministry, remarriage of divorced persons in Church, contraception etc, can we welcome members of the LGBT community as full members of our Christian community?"

The General Synod Select Committee on Issues of Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief, which sat and heard evidence over more than two years, found that the witness from parents with children searching for their true sexual identity "was particularly powerful, indeed, almost overwhelming".

All-Ireland Primate and Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Richard Clarke, said the report contained an

enormous amount of advice: "We are encouraged to use the Scriptures reverently and humbly, and helped in finding ways in which we may do this. We are also given practical guidance on how to approach dialogue with those who hold different viewpoints from ours."

Dean John Mann, chairman of the select committee, said: "There are conflicting views voiced in the guide, but there is also plenty of material to make the thinking person reflect, challenge preconceived notions, and give them a voice for their concerns, or the confidence to search out further guidance."

Mann added that the committee viewed their role in the broadest of terms, as having a remit to discuss a range of issues concerning human sexuality. But they realised they had to focus on the "presenting issue" of same-sex attraction.

This was because this issue, beyond all others, "is what is divisive for the Church and causing most hurt and uncertainty amongst its members".

The realised they should not fear "a potentially creative and transforming encounter with those with whom we differ," Mann said...

... Dr Clarke said the actions taken, described by the Archbishop of Canterbury as "consequences" rather than sanctions, were the result of "a determination to walk together, albeit with some at a safe distance from one another." The Episcopal Church and the conservative Primates of the Global South have been at odds since the Americans consecrated an openly gay bishop in 2003.

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.of.ireland.challenged.by.report.on.homosexuality/77080.htm>

Let's talk about sex, says Church in guide

Belfast Telegraph

Alf McCreary writes - The **Church of Ireland** has launched a new guide on human sexuality that tackles controversial issues such as same-sex relationships within the ...

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/lets-talk-about-sex-says-church-in-guide-34375666.html>

Irish Archbishop defends American decision to 'punish' pro-gay church

PinkNews

The head of the **Church of Ireland** has defended an Anglican decision to 'punish' the US Episcopal Church for backing same-sex marriage. Christians ...

January 20

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/01/18/irish-archbishop-defends-anglican-decision-to-punish-pro-gay-church/>

Same-sex issues divisive and hurtful for Church of Ireland – Dean Mann

News Letter

Issues around homosexuality and same-sex marriage are the more “divisive” and “hurtful” to the church than any others, a leading Church of Ireland (Col) clergyman has said.

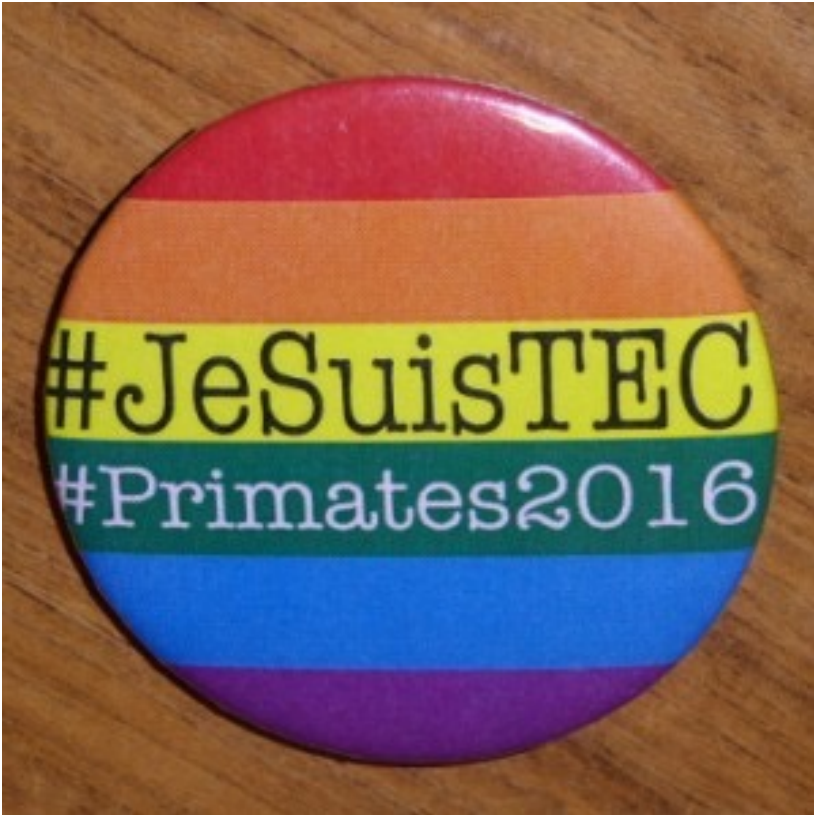
<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/same-sex-issues-divisive-and-hurtful-for-church-of-ireland-dean-mann-1-7167163>

Scottish perspective on Primates’ meeting

US branch ban threatens diversity, says church head

The Scotsman reports - The Scottish Episcopal Church has warned that the decision by the global Anglican church to restrict the activities of its liberal US branch because of its support of same-sex marriage risks stifling its ability to express diversity.

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, primus of the Scottish church, said it would give “further



St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, has issued badges, for supporters to wear in solidarity with the US based Episcopal Church. The badges can be obtained from [the Cathedral's online shop](#).

consideration” to the contentious decision by Anglican primates, but stressed that it sees itself as “a diverse church in a diverse communion.”

The meeting of primates in Canterbury said the US church had made a “fundamental departure from the faith and teaching” by endorsing gay marriage.

In their statement, the primates sounded a warning to other Anglican provinces, including Scotland, which are considering changing church doctrine on marriage in order to allow for same-sex unions. The primates stressed that “possible developments in other provinces could further exacerbate this situation.”

It comes as the Archbishop of Canterbury sought to heal divisions within the church as well as the wider community by apologising for the “hurt and pain” it had caused the gay and lesbian community.

The Most Rev Justin Welby said it was a “constant source of deep sadness” that people were persecuted because of their sexuality, but defended the primates’ decision, stating that it was not the place of Anglican leaders to “divide the church” and that union would be “painful as well as joyful.”

The US church has been banned from taking part in ecumenical and interfaith bodies, internal

committees or votes on doctrine or polity for a period of three years.

The decision, Mr Welby added, was supported by the “overwhelming majority” of Anglican primates.

However, his attempts at reconciliation failed to quell the sense of hurt felt by some.

One senior figure in the Scottish Episcopal Church said Mr Welby’s sentiments had been undermined by the outcome of the meeting of Anglican primates.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth, provost of St Mary’s Cathedral in Glasgow and a prominent LGBT campaigner, tweeted: “What @JustinWelby is saying is often quite good but completely compromised by the actions of @Primates2016.”

Chris Bryant, the Labour MP and former Anglican cleric, said he was turning his back on the church after accusing it of behaving “disgracefully” to its American counterpart.

He said: “I’ve finally given up on Anglican church today after its love-empty decision on sexuality. One day it will seem wrong as supporting slavery.”

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/uk/archbishop-of-canterbury-sorry-for-hurt-to-lgbt-community-1-4002635>

Scottish Provost expresses solidarity with American church

A Scottish Episcopal priest has expressed his solidarity with his the Episcopal Church of the USA, after [sanctions were imposed on it](#) by the Anglican primates earlier this week.

Kaleidoscope reports - The Very Reverend Kelvin Holdsworth, Rector and Provost of St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, has been quick to support his American colleagues – whose sanctions relate to what was described as a “fundamental departure” in allowing same-sex marriage.

Mr Holdsworth told KaleidoScot: “Scottish Episcopalians stand in solidarity with the American Church with whom we share so much.”

The sanctions fall well short of suspension, but mean the American church can no longer represent the Anglican communion on ecumenical and interfaith bodies and will not be able to take part in decision making on issues relating to doctrine or policy. The decision was not unanimous, but was supported by a majority of primates.



The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth

Asked about the implications for the Scottish Episcopal Church, Mr Holdsworth said: “People in Scotland rarely take kindly to being told what to do by decisions made south of the border. The resolve of those pressing for change in Scotland has been strengthened by this decision.”

At last year’s General Synod the Scottish church voted in principle in favour of same sex marriage, although this will require a change in Canon Law. Once this decision is implemented,

the Scottish church could find itself in a similar situation to its American counterpart.

While the majority of Anglican primates believe supporting same sex marriage is a fundamental departure from the church's moral teachings, the Scottish church appears to take a different stance and could be on a collision course with its more conservative colleagues.

The Most Reverend David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, while disappointed with the sanctions imposed on the American church, found reason to be positive. He told Kaleidoscot: "In advance of the Primates Meeting, there were many predictions of breakdown and of fracture in the life of the Anglican Communion. It is therefore encouraging that the Primates have agreed to 'walk together' and that a Task Group will be established to work on our ongoing relationships.

"However that unity has come at some cost to the ability of the Communion to express the diversity which has always been a valued characteristic of the Anglican Way. The consequences which follow the decision of The Episcopal Church (in the United States) to change its Canon on marriage are a sign of that change. The Scottish Episcopal Church sees

itself as a diverse church in a diverse Communion. It is important to us that we seek to sustain our unity as we continue to address issues of human sexuality in our General Synod.

“Further consideration will be given to these matters by our Faith and Order Board and by the College of Bishops.”

More at -

<http://www.kaleidoscot.com/scottish-provost-expresses-solidarity-with-american-church-6364>

150th jubilee of ‘Mother of Perpetual’ help begins

As part of the celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of the veneration to the icon of ‘Mother of Perpetual Help’ Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin on Monday launched a jubilee pilgrimage which will see the popular icon visit every cathedral in the country between April and May.

Speaking at the launch, Archbishop Martin said, “The pilgrimage of this icon will certainly bring help to many who are troubled, and will hopefully lead those of us tempted to be closed in our own security to open our hearts more fully to



those in need and to change our Church for it to be more fully a true icon of God's mercy.”

He commended the Redemptorists for organising the jubilee pilgrimage, which he said would undoubtedly have the support of people on all parts of the island.

Fr Seamus Enright CSsR, Rector of Mount St Alphonsus in Limerick and Chair of the 150th Jubilee celebrations, explains in a recent article in Reality magazine that Blessed Pope Pius IX presented the Icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help to the Redemptorists for veneration in their newly-built Church of Sant'Alfonso in December 1865.

“It was much in need of restoration so it was April 26th 1866 before it was solemnly installed there. The Holy Father gave the Redemptorists a

mandate: they were to promote devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help throughout the world. Just over a year later, the first copy arrived in Ireland.”

According to the Fr Enright, the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help has a long connection with Ireland.

It was from Limerick that devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help spread in time to new Redemptorist communities, first in Dundalk and then Belfast, as well as to churches and homes throughout Ireland.

Irish Redemptorists setting out off from Limerick took copies of the icon with them to Australia and New Zealand (1882), to the Philippines (1906), to Sri Lanka (1939) and India (1940).

Devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help was already well established in Teresina (Brazil) when Irish Redemptorists replaced their American brethren there in 1964.

“The spread of devotion from Limerick shows how faithfully Irish Redemptorists have taken the mandate of Blessed Pope Pius IX,” Fr Enright said.

In his address at the launch of the Jubilee Pilgrimage, Archbishop Martin said that, “Despite a growing interest here in Ireland in icons, there is still a lack of widespread understanding of what an icon is in religious art. Icons are not photographs.”

“They are not attempts by an artist to portray his or her personal ideas of how Jesus or the Blessed Virgin or a Saint may possibly have looked like. They are more like an impressionist portrait than a photograph: their task is to lead us in contemplation into the mystery of God.”

An icon speaks to the heart and evokes prayerful reflection, the Archbishop explained.

Presbyterian Moderator’s visit to Westminster

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie, is completing a two-day visit to Westminster to meet and encourage a cross section of Northern Ireland’s parliamentarians.

The Moderator’s visit to the Palace of Westminster in London, to meet local Members of Parliament and Members of the House of

Lords, has become an annual event for successive Moderators.

“I meet with many politicians, throughout the year,” Dr. McNie said. “While many of the day-to-day issues that affect Northern Ireland are determined at Stormont, it is also important to meet, listen to and encourage our MPs and Peers who have the responsibility of holding the Government of the United Kingdom to account and for taking decisions on other important areas of public life and policy, including international affairs.”

In conclusion, Dr. McNie said, “Last week, on the appointment of Mrs Foster as Northern Ireland’s First Minister, I was reminded that the Bible calls on all Christians to pray for those in authority. This includes those at Westminster, and I will be praying for the work our parliamentarians are called to do and the decisions that they are asked to make.”

Irish Methodist Church celebrates ten years of ‘Follow the Star’

In the Autumn of 2006, a young genius called Janette McCormick arrived at what was then



Relaxing after a performance of 'Follow the Star'

called DYCW, now IMYC (Irish Methodist Youth and Children).

With 25 years' classroom experience, Janette came with a dream that was to transform Christmas for many. Her vision was an interactive telling of the Christmas story for the under eights. She wanted to give children the chance to experience the Christmas story in an age-appropriate way, accessing the story at their own level.

The (then) unique selling point was that the children would get to see the Christmas story acted out by adults, rather than simply being in it themselves. This meant that we would need a grumpy innkeeper, a gentle Mary and Joseph, a starstruck wiseman, a couple of silly shepherds and a panto villain Herod.

Running alongside the drama would be arts, crafts and dressing up. Children would get to make angels, crowns, donkey masks, Christmas cards, play memory match, snap, read stories, listen to music and play with nativity sets.

All this would finish with Rosie and Tom, our puppets, explaining the true meaning of Christmas through the Christingle story. Janette pitched the concept to David, who, clearly angling for a certain role, wisely said yes, and was promptly asked to be an innkeeper. All of this was fantastic, but a key question remained. Would they come? Would schools come and allow their children to participate? Thankfully the answer was yes and Follow the Star (FTS) was born.

the ten years of 'Follow the Star' is celebrated in the February issue of the *Methodist Newsletter*.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

The Vatican has thanked Belfast City Council for inviting Pope Francis to Northern Ireland's capital city

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/vatican-thanks-belfast-for-invitation-to-pope-francis-1-7166475>

More Catholics than Protestants entering higher education in NI

News Letter

Figures showing that roughly 50 per cent more Catholics than Protestants are entering higher education each year indicate that more should be done to make universities welcoming for Protestants.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/about-50-per-cent-more-catholics-than-protestants-enter-higher-education-1-7167390>

Same-sex couples have just been given the legal right to adopt

Journal.ie

Confused about what new legislation will mean for families? Read on.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/children-and-family-relationships-bill-1943129-Jan2016/>

Pastor McConnell: I will meet with Muslim leader who reported me to police

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/pastor-mcconnell-i-will-meet-with-muslim-leader-who-reported-me-to-police-34371968.html>

SF politician runs up £16k bill on printer toner cartridges (yes, again)

Journal.ie

<http://www.thejournal.ie/sf-politician-runs-up-16k-bill-on-printer-toner-cartridges-yes-again-408232-Apr2012/>

Petition calls for suspension of Bishops in Lords after 'punishment' of pro-gay church

PinkNews

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/01/18/petition-calls-for-suspension-of-bishops-in-lords-after-punishment-of-pro-gay-church/>

Church decline: Is evangelicalism to blame?

Christian Today

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.decline.is.evangelicalism.to.blame/76962.htm>

ITV - The Archbishop of York is in Bridlington [as part of 6 month pilgrimage](#). He is meeting people to pray with them and give out blessings across the Diocese of York.

<http://www.itv.com/news/calendar/update/2016-01-18/archbishop-of-york-in-bridlington-as-part-of-6-month-pilgrimage/>

Daily Express

Coverage of the Church Commissioners and Pensions Boards long term and diversified investment strategies which have been interpreted in the *Express* as a comment on the role of Britain in the EU. Caroline Spelman MP, Second Church Estates Commissioner, in a written answer to Tory MP Tim Loughton, stated that the national investing bodies as long term investors would not be impacted by a referendum.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/635733/Brexit-campaign-boost-Church-of-England-gives-blessing>

Ind/ Mail Online/Reuters/[Christian Today](#)/ Telegraph/Yahoo

Donald Trump is widely reported in the media talking about his relationship with God and how Christianity is under siege. There are calls from some MPs to have Donald Trump banned from entering the UK, the issue was debated yesterday in Parliament without a vote.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/donald-trump-fluffs-bible-reference-in-speech-at-christian-liberty-university-a6819946.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-1244997/Trump-vows-protect-Christianity-misquotes-Bible-verse.html>

<http://uk.reuters.com/video/2016/01/18/trump-we-have-to-protect-christianity?videoId=367080366&feedType=VideoRSS&feedName=LatestVideosUK&videoChannel=2603>

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/trump-courts-evangelicals-says-christianity-under-siege-011055707.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/donald-trump/12105940/donald-trump-muslim-ban-uk-debate-live.html>

Ind

Report that Hampton Court Palace will host the first Roman Catholic Service since the Reformation. The palace is referred to as the backdrop to the birth of the Church of England and the service is described as a symbolic milestone in reconciliation.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/hampton-court-palace-to-host-first-roman-catholic-service-since-the-reformation-a6820136.html>

Christian Today

Report that The Rheinische Evangelische Kirche in Germany with 2.6 million members has voted to allow same-sex marriage.

Mail Online/Mirror

Report on Britain's oldest newlyweds - with a combined age of 186 have married at St Hilda's Church in Smethwick, West Mids.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3405243/Britain-s-oldest-newlyweds-combined-age-186-finally-tie-knot-falling-asleep-sofa-reception.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/smitten-pensioners-combined-age-186-7200283>

Christian Today

Report on figures published today by Lancaster University on Church attendance and a look at the impact of evangelism. http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church_decline_is_evangelicalism_to_blame/76962.htm

ITV.com

The Children's Society's shop in Lancaster was among city centre buildings affected by flooding. Lancaster Priory Church is now housing the charity shop to support its work.

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

<http://www.thevisitor.co.uk/news/local/flood-hit-lancaster-charity-shop-moves-into-church-1-7681977>

NewsRT.co.uk

An innovative festival aimed at showcasing Ripon Cathedral to the wider community is to take place later this year. Ripon Cathedral Revealed will take place in May and is a Festival of Flowers, Music, Spirituality and Food and Drink.

<http://www.newsrt.co.uk/news/new-festival-to-build-links-with-cathedral-3834358.html>

GET CNi HEADLINES EACH DAY

Facebook and Twitter

Click on logo at CNi Home page

www.churchnewsireland.org

Please share CNi with your friends

www.churchnewsireland.org