



**News from and prayers
for Ukraine**

**Irish news and GB
church in media review**

ZIMBABWE EXPERIENCE WITH CHRISTIAN AID

Ballyclare woman Pamela Gray is part of a Christian Aid team which is jetting off to Africa next month to help with the charity's work in impoverished areas of Zimbabwe.

Newtownabbey Times - Pamela, a member of Ballyclare Presbyterian Church, has been involved with Christian Aid for over 30 years and is a local organiser with the charity. She is delighted to have been invited to join the mission trip, which is scheduled to leave on March 21.

The team will be travelling to remote areas of the southern African country, visiting projects that are supported by Christian Aid.

Pamela, a part-time music teacher, is particularly interested in the Open Schools Worldwide scheme, which promotes education using the 'School in a Bag' resource.

"I was delighted to be asked to join this trip, which involves 10 people from all over Ireland. Zimbabwe is one of the more challenging areas where Christian Aid works," she explained.

"We are starting off in Harare, the capital, and then we are heading off in a minibus. We will be visiting schools, water conservation and farming projects in the more remote areas of the north west and west of Zimbabwe.

"As a music teacher I am particularly looking forward to visiting schools that use the Open Schools Worldwide scheme."

Over the past few months Pamela has been busy fundraising for her trip. And she reached her target by selling Christmas angels, organising a sausage and mash lunch at Ballyclare Presbyterian Church and holding a Zimbabwe-themed quiz.

On her return home, Pamela plans to give a series of illustrated talks about her mission trip with Christian Aid to groups and organisations around Newtownabbey.

CORK ASHES TO GO

Ash Wednesday will be observed at the Chapel of Christ the Healer, Cork University Hospital once again by the opportunity for patients, staff and visitors to reflect, pray and to receive ashes as symbols of our penitence and mortality.

opportunity to meet our new locum chaplain the Reverend Anne Skuse.

At 07:30 and again at 12:00 there will be two short services of reflection and the imposition of ashes for those who wish to receive them as a potent biblical symbol of our brokenness and mortality -themes which illness can bring into a gritty foreground of experience.

Outside these times, there will be reflective music, prayer cards and ash available in the chapel with the invitation for all who wish, to sign themselves with ash at a time that is convenient for them.

Hospital Chaplain Daniel Nuzum says '*Ashes to go* provides an open invitation for all in the hospital community to take some time out for personal reflection and prayer and to avail of the opportunity to receive ashes in the privacy of the beautiful Chapel of Christ the Healer. When all is done we are but dust... in this place of illness, suffering, mystery and healing we take ash to come close to our pain and invite God to meet us, to touch us to heal us.'

Ashes to go first started at St John's Episcopal Church in St Louis, Missouri, USA in 2007 and is an imaginative way to meet God's people where they are and to invite reflection, prayer and healing.

For further information please contact Daniel Nuzum at (021) 454 6400 or daniel.nuzum@hse.ie

Further information can be found on Twitter @chapelcuh or Facebook: Chapel of Christ the Healer.

PERMANENT DIACONATE

After a long period of discussion within the diocese of Down and Connor, Bishop Treanor has given the 'Green Light' for the permanent Diaconate as a ministry of service within the diocese of Down & Connor.

If you are interested please contact Fr John Murray, Vocation Director, at 200 Finaghy Road North, Belfast, or tel [90913761](tel:90913761) or office: [95088030](tel:95088030), mail@frmurray.co.uk.

Applicants should be male 35 years and older and if married should be married for a least 10 years.

STORMONT LAUNCH OF FLOURISH!

'Flourish!', a churches' initiative on suicide, at Stormont yesterday morning.

'Flourish!' is a partnership between the Churches' Community Work Alliance NI, Lighthouse Ireland and clergy from across the Christian churches in Northern Ireland. The initiative has the support of the four main church leaders in Ireland. It provides a training pathway for churches on suicide prevention, supporting people bereaved by suicide and promoting positive mental health.

Present were - Health Minister Edwin Poots, North Belfast, MLAs Nelson McCausland, William Humphrey and Paula Bradley, who hosted the event, Jo Murphy, Coordinator of Lighthouse, Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher, Rev Mervyn Ewing, Jennymount Methodist and Rev John McClure, Church of Ireland.

APPOINTMENT

The Revd Bill Press, currently rector of the Parish of Kilhorne, Annalong, has been appointed as incumbent of the Parish of Knockbreda in the Diocese of Down.

The date of the institution will be announced in due course.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FORM NEW GRAMMAR

A grammar school in Lurgan, County Armagh, is to amalgamate with two secondary schools to become a non-selective grammar in what is being called a landmark decision.

Read more:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-26418140>

GIVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP AN MOT

“The Marriage Course” is being offered by the Methodist Church’s East Belfast Mission.

“We will be running the marriage course on Wednesday evenings beginning on 19 March. This is a seven week course for couples to take time to relax, enjoy a meal, and invest in their relationship.

“It is not a ‘group’ course, but tables for two will be set up and each couple will be encouraged to share with one another on topics like communication, resolving conflict, forgiveness, and family backgrounds.

“It is appropriate for those who have been together for one year or 61 years, and whether you are married or living together. More information is in the leaflet holders at reception or in the cafe.’ See -

www.themarriagecourse.org

C of E DIOCESE FIRST FOR WOMEN BISHOP VOTE

Yorkshire has become the first place to vote for women to become bishops by the end of the year, the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds says.

Read more:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-26406627>



DUBLIN BELLS RING OUT AGAIN

The historic bells of St Bartholomew's Church in Ballsbridge are back in action – day and night – following the decision of [Dublin City Council](#) to drop a noise pollution case.

Irish Times - The bells rang out over Ballsbridge for more than 130 years, until they were silenced last year following a noise complaint to Dublin City Council.

The bells are controlled by a clock and chime every 15 minutes. The church was warned by the council that it faced fines of €3,000 if it did not stop them ringing at night.

Following a complaint in 2009 the church installed a mechanism to silence the bells between 11pm and 7am. However, the mechanism failed twice. Following further complaints to the council, the church was warned to fix the mechanism or turn off the bells, Vicar Andrew McCroskery said. It was decided last September to stop the clock and silence the bells.

However, Rev McCroskery said the church recently received notice from the council that it was dropping the action. "Out of the blue we got a very short email from the council saying they were no longer pursuing action against us in relation to the clock and we could turn it back on."

The church's legal representatives sought clarification that the council would take no further action in relation to the bells, and once that was received the decision was made to restart the chimes on a 24-hour basis.

The clock and "carillon", a multiple musical bell mechanism, at the [Church of Ireland](#) parish church on Clyde Road were installed in 1881 and are protected structures. In addition to failing, the mechanism that stopped the clappers was putting a strain on the clock and bells, which could cause permanent damage, according to a specialist horologist engaged by the church.

Rev McCroskery said he had received considerable support locally for the reinstatement of the bells.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/st-bartholomew-s-bells-ring-out-once-more-1.1710228>



WORKING CLASS POLITICS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

A post-Haass event, panel discussion and open debate on 'Working Class Politics in Northern Ireland',

12th March, 6pm Queens University Belfast, Peter Frogatt Centre, Room 02/018

The panel is made up of:

Dr. Tony Novosel, (University of Pittsburgh), author of Northern Ireland's lost opportunity: The Failed Promise of Political Loyalism

Tommy McKearney (Independent Workers Union), Author of The Provisional IRA: From Insurrection to Parliament

Dr. Steve Baker, (University of Ulster), co-author of The Propaganda of Peace

Prof. Graham Walker (Queens University Belfast), author of A History of the Ulster Unionist Party: Protest, Pragmatism and Pessimism

The organiser, John Barry is Professor of Green Political Economy. John states - "There will be plenty of time for discussion and questions from the floor.

"The event is free and open to the public and I would ask you pass it onto your networks and people you think would be interested in this topic.

"While it is free could you email me at j.barry@qub.ac.uk to confirm attendance?"

School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofPoliticsInternationalStudiesandPhilosophy/>



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CATHOLICS MORE LIKELY TO BE JAILED BEHIND BARS

More than fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement, Catholics continue to form a higher proportion of the prison population and are more likely to be punished when behind bars.

The Legacy - Prison reforms that emerged from the peace process have failed to tackle the high number of Catholics being jailed, but experts said the disparity may be due to issues such as poverty and unemployment.

The overall Northern Ireland population is 48% Protestant and 45% Catholic, but in jails the positions are reversed, with 53.2% of inmates from a Catholic background, and 34.2% of prisoners Protestant.

New figures obtained by The Detail also reveal that last year Catholics accounted for almost 70% of all the disciplinary charges levelled against inmates, while Protestant prisoners accounted for just over 20% of punishments. More at -

<http://www.thedetail.tv/legacy>

BIBLE SOCIETY ACTIVE IN UKRAINE

Hundreds of protestors in the Ukrainian capital Kiev have received food, drink, prayer support and copies of the Bible from local Bible Society staff.

They offered people sandwiches, tea and coffee in the morning and evening for months and led prayers from the main stage in Independence Square. Hundreds of thousands of protestors have taken to the streets in the Ukrainian capital since November.

Read more: [Bible Society](#)

Read more: [Catholic Herald](#) 25/02/2014

Read more: [The Baptist Times](#) 24/02/2014



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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

Fred Drummond, director of prayer at the Evangelical Alliance, has written a prayer for use during this week:

Gracious God, we thank you that you are a God of compassion and mercy.

We pray for the people of the Ukraine. For those weighed down by fear and confusion we pray for peace and clarity.

For those lost in grief and sorrow bring the warmth of your care and the strength of your presence.

We pray that you may raise up peacemakers who have a positive vision of unity and hope.

We ask that you may lift the voices of understanding and reconciliation that they may be heard. May bonds of love overcome suspicion.

O God have mercy.

*In Jesus name,
Amen*

Read more:

www.eauk.org/current-affairs/news/week-of-prayer-for-ukraine-and-crimea-2-9-march.cfm?utm_content=buffer5ef6c&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

NEWS REVIEW

App to encourage rush-hour travellers to pray on their way to work –

The Church of England has designed an app for smartphones and tablets featuring morning and evening prayers for each day of the year. Users can switch between traditional and contemporary language. **Read more: [The Telegraph](#) 24/02/2014**

Ministers accused of discriminating against RE in schools – The government says it is right to focus bursaries on subjects which are needed most like maths and physics. **Read more: [The Telegraph](#) 24/2/14; Read more: [Christian Today](#) 25/2/14**

NEWS REVIEW

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni signs a bill toughening penalties for gay people – It includes life sentences for gay sex and same-sex marriage. **Read more:** [BBC News 24/02/2014](#)

Call to find creative ways to do Lent – People are being encouraged to mark Lent in ways that focus on helping others and to pray for church outreach. **Read more:** [The Church Times 28/02/2014](#)

More than a hundred Bibles for seafarers in the Falkland Islands thanks to Bible Society supporters – Bibles have been sent to the Lighthouse Seamen's Centre in Stanley, which is visited by hundreds of sailors and fishermen each year. **Read more:** [Bible Society 25/02/2014](#)

It's a woman! No, it's a man – Jane Williams, the wife of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, and a noted theologian, was asked to name her favourite female biblical character. Far from naming either Esther or Ruth she said: 'I am afraid I have to say my favourite biblical figure is a man and I don't have a favourite woman'. She chose St Paul, calling him: 'maligned and misunderstood'. **Read more:** [Mail on Sunday 22/02/2014](#)