

**The essential daily  
brief on the Irish  
churches**



*Gillian Kingston (centre) with (L-R) Kirby Hickey (USA) Treasurer WMC, Bishop Ivan Abrahams (South Africa) General Secretary WMC, Rev Dr Heather Morris President MCI, Bishop Paulo Lockman (Brazil) President WMC, Rev Donald Ker Secretary of Conference MCI and Ken Twyble Lay Leader MCI.*

## **New World Council Role for Irish Methodist**

**The installation of Gillian Kingston as Vice-President of the World Methodist Council took place on Tuesday 1 April in Dublin at the Centenary Church, Leeson Park.**

The vacancy arose following the death of Bishop Sarah Davis. The officers of the World Methodist Council, President Bishop Paulo Lockmann (Brazil),

General Secretary Bishop Ivan Abrahams (South Africa) and Treasurer Mr Kirby Hickey (USA), officiated at the installation. The Rev Andrew Dougherty (Dublin District Secretary) welcomed them to Dublin, and the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev Dr Heather Morris spoke about Gillian's gifts and prayed for her as she enters this new sphere of service.

Gillian Kingston is a former Lay Leader of the Methodist Church in Ireland, and is a chaplain at University College Dublin.

## **Brownies to celebrate 100 years of lending a hand**



### **Guides members to attend mega birthday bash in Dublin Zoo.**

Three thousand Brownies will travel from every corner of the country to attend a mega Brownie centenary birthday bash in Dublin Zoo on Saturday 12th April.

Brownies - the branch of Irish Girl Guides (IGG) that caters for girls aged 6.5 – 10.5 years - started in Newbridge, Co Kildare, in 1914 and today there are 4,000 Brownies in Ireland.

For the past 100 years Brownies has offered girls the opportunity to develop their confidence and skills through participation in a wide range of games, activities and challenges in a fun and non-competitive environment. Taking as

their motto, 'Lend a Hand', they are also encouraged to think of others and to contribute to their local communities.

IGG Chief Commissioner Helen Concannon says: "Trying to stay relevant and in touch with each new generation of young girls can be a difficult task but it is one the Irish Girl Guides has excelled at. Tens of thousands of girls have benefited from their involvement and most have moved on to Guides (age 10.5-15) where they continue to grow and mature and are introduced to the international aspects of the Guiding movement."

Martina Fox, chair of Brownie Branch, has had the daunting job of organising the mega event. However, over 20 years as a Brownie leader means she is well up to the task. She became a leader when her own daughters joined Brownies in Oranmore, Co Galway, and has continued ever since as she enjoys seeing girls "blossom from shy children to beautiful confident ladies" as a result of their involvement in Guiding.

"The fun and the friendship allow them a safe space to be themselves," she says. "The significance of the centenary is that we were here for girls in 1914 and, though girls' needs have developed and changed over the years, the core values they get in Guiding never changes, which is why it will definitely exist in 2114."

Emer Hickey, one of last year's BT Young Scientist and European Young Scientist of the Year award winners, will be among the 1,000 leaders helping out at the celebration. Emer enjoyed Brownies so much that, despite her many and varied interests and hobbies, she continued on to Guides and now is a member of Senior Branch (age 14.5-26) as well as being a Young Leader.

"I have so many great memories from Brownies and often laugh about some of the memories with my friends," she says. "Through my involvement with Guiding, I have learned a lot about myself and about how to treat others. It has really influenced the way I am today as I apply many of the things I have learnt through Guiding in my everyday life."

Emily O'Reilly (age 7) of Lily Brownies, Newbridge, is looking forward to the centenary celebration. "Brownies is so much fun," she says. "I am so excited to go to the zoo and to celebrate Brownies' 100th birthday with my friends and all the other Brownies from all over Ireland. I can't wait to see the elephants - they're my favourite animals!"



**Niav Connolly (age 10)** of Ballyroan Brownies in Dublin has been eagerly counting down the days. "I love Brownies," she says. "We make cool crafts, sing songs, play fun games, make new friends, go on trips and earn great badges. I'm so excited about going to the Brownie 100th party."

**Irish Girl Guides** has over 12,000 members, ranging in age from 5 to 26 years. 1,800 young and adult leaders are involved. Guiding started in Ireland in 1911 and operates throughout the 26 counties with the volunteer leaders providing an educational programme of fun and challenging activities that foster confidence and leadership skills in girls and young women, enabling them to become responsible citizens.

*Irish Girl Guides welcomes new members from age 5, young leaders from age 15 and adult volunteers from age 18. To find out more, see [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie).*

## **Jewish Council express revulsion at anti-Semitic message sent to Shatter**

**The Council urged politicians to stand collectively in solidarity with the minister against all forms of religious abuse or intolerance.**



***A Garda stands on duty outside the Minister for Justice, Alan Shatter's, house in South Dublin***

The Jewish representative of Ireland today expressed their "revulsion and abhorrence" at the anti-Semitic message that was sent to the Minister for Justice Alan Shatter's home this morning. following the incident at the home of Justice Minister Alan Shatter TD earlier this morning.

[An image of Nazi soldiers at a rally was contained in a package](#), along with white powder, arrived to the Minister's home in Ballinteer, south Dublin earlier today.

The Jewish Representative Council said it was “deeply disturbed by this morning's event here in Ireland. It highlights a growing trend across Europe where political discourse and support is growing for parties and groups who adopt racist views in politics”.

They added that “in stark contrast to these trends, Ireland through its Minister for Justice Alan Shatter had organised naturalisation ceremonies for applicants seeking citizenship in Ireland, where he stresses the importance of a common Irish citizenship drawn from diverse cultures, creeds and previous nationalities”.

The Jewish Representative Council of Ireland expressed their support for the Minister and his family following this incident this morning and encouraged all those in the political process, “from whatever persuasion they may come, to put politics aside and stand collectively in solidarity with the Minister against all forms of racism, religious abuse or intolerance”.

The Chair of the Jewish Representative Council of Ireland, Maurice Cohen said it was “ironic” that the incident occurred the day following a reception held in Áras an Uachtaráin by President Michael D Higgins to honour the occasion of the 8th meeting of the Annual Anglican / Jewish Commission being held in Dublin.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/make-sinn-fein-pay-welfare-price-says-ukip-1-5974674>

## **Poor Protestant boys underachieving**

**Poorer Protestant boys in Northern Ireland are seriously underachieving at school according to a new report.**

BBC News Ni - Only Roma and Traveller children are getting poorer results, according to the study by the Community Relations Council.

However, the figures show that 76% of Catholic girls from better off backgrounds are among the highest achievers.

Girls from this background are beaten only by Chinese girls in the UK table.

The study by the Community Relations Council has compared all ethnic groups across the UK using five good GCSE grades as the measure of success.

The report found that just over half of Northern Ireland's Protestant boys who do not get free schools meals achieve five GCSEs.

Dr Paul Nolan, the academic who carried out the research, said there would be long-term consequences if action was not taken.

"They are being locked out of employment. Even if we get investment into places like east Belfast, these kids will not be able to get jobs because they won't have the qualifications," he said.

"I think we have been sleep walking into an inequality gap.

Read more:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-26855040>

## Irish Church has yet to establish national mission

**A major national mission called for by Pope Benedict XVI more than four years ago has still not been set up by the Church here.**



*Pope Benedict XVI*

Irish Catholic - Pope

Benedict, in his 2010 pastoral letter addressed to the Catholics of Ireland, proposed a nationwide mission be held in Ireland for all bishops, priests and religious, in an attempt to renew the Irish Church.

However, more than four years later, the Church in Ireland has still not established the mission and has apparently no concrete plans to do so.

In his letter, the Pontiff said a nationwide mission for all members of the clergy and religious congregations would lead to an improved understanding of their vocations and a rediscovery of their faith.

The Pope proposed the new mission draw on experienced preachers and retreat givers from Ireland and elsewhere to explore Church documents, the liturgical rites of ordination and profession, and recent pontifical teaching.

However, a spokesman for the Irish Church confirmed to The Irish Catholic this week that the suggested national mission is “yet to take place”.

“A number of initiatives were proposed by Pope Benedict in his letter to the Catholics of Ireland. Some of those have been implemented and some are yet to be implemented. The proposal of a national mission falls into the second category,” the spokesman said.

### Initiatives

“All these initiatives are part of and support the ongoing process of renewal of the Church in Ireland,” he said, adding “this particular initiative is yet to take place”.

Pope Benedict’s pastoral letter followed revelations of clerical sex abuse within the Irish Church, which rocked the institution.

Calling on Irish bishops, priests and religious to establish the nationwide mission, Pope Benedict said: “It is my hope that, by drawing on the expertise of experienced preachers and retreat-givers from Ireland and from elsewhere, and by exploring anew the conciliar documents, the liturgical rites of ordination and profession, and recent pontifical teaching, you will come to a more profound appreciation of your respective vocations, so as to rediscover the roots of your faith in Jesus Christ and to drink deeply from the springs of living water that he offers you through his Church.”

<http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/irish-church-has-yet-establish-national-mission#sthash.bW9RmrP3.1vFzMB7k.dpuf>

## 140 young people gather for The Event

**More than 140 young people from parishes across Connor Diocese came together for a night of praise, fellowship and fun at The Event on Saturday March 29.**

Organised by Engage, the new diocesan youth council, the gathering was held in the parish hall at St Patrick’s Ballymena. The young people were



accompanied by 30 youth leaders, and several clergy were also present at what proved to be a wonderful evening.

The Mark Ferguson Band provided the music and the young people raised the roof with their enthusiastic praise. Andrew Frame of the Church of Ireland Youth Department



interviewed some young people on the part God plays in their lives, and the Rev Simon Genoe, Vicar at Lisburn Cathedral, gave an engaging and inspiring talk the theme of Following Jesus and Being a Disciple.

There were moving moments of quiet prayer and a chance for the young people to receive personal prayer. Around the hall were beautifully designed prayer points which invited thoughts and inspired reflection.

Of course there was lots of fun and friendship and plenty of goodies to enjoy, including oodles of pizza and a chocolate fountain.

The Rev Peter Ferguson, who is heading up Engage, said it had been a fantastic evening. "It was a team effort and we are all pulling together and in the right direction," he said of the Engage team.