



Welby claims British law prevents ACC from debating his decision to exclude same-sex spouses from Lambeth



Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, left, told a news conference April 27 that his decision not to invite bishops' same-sex spouses to the 2020 Lambeth Conference was

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painful for everyone involved. Archbishop of Hong Kong and ACC Chair Paul Kwong, right, also participated in the news conference.

The members of the [Anglican Consultative Council](#), meeting in Hong Kong April 28-May 5, cannot formally discuss Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby's decision to exclude the same-sex spouses of bishops invited to the 2020 Lambeth Conference.

Welby told a news conference on April 27, in response to a question from Episcopal News Service, that the ACC is the only one of the Anglican Communion's [Instruments of Communion](#) that is governed by British law. It is incorporated as "an English company with a charitable aim." Via the ACC [constitution](#), the trustees "very clearly specify what it can and cannot do," he said.

"Doctrine is not one of the issues that it does," Welby said of the council.

The ACC's "object," according to its constitution, is to "advance the Christian religion and in particular to promote the unity and purposes of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, in mission, evangelism, ecumenical relations, communication, administration and finance." The constitution lists 30 specific powers of the ACC after making the general statement that "the council has the power to do anything which is calculated to further its Object(s) or is conducive or incidental to doing so."

Welby said "there will be an opportunity outside the conference for members of the conference to ask me questions" about any subject they would like, and he said,

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he has no doubt that Lambeth will come up. “And, that will be in a private session so people can express themselves freely and clearly, and express their disagreement, which is perfectly proper.”

He noted that the decision about who to invite to the conference has been the sole prerogative of the archbishop of Canterbury since the first conference in

1867.

Formal discussion of the Lambeth Conference is currently on the agenda for the late morning of May 4 as one of three
churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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items in the 19th of the meeting's 21 business sessions. Also on that session's agenda are a discussion of ACC finance and organizational matters (carried over from the previous session) and the first of two times when the members will consider resolutions. The session is scheduled to last 75 minutes. The last meeting of the ACC saw passage of 45 resolutions, all of them on one up-or-down consent calendar vote.

Both The US Episcopal Church's Executive Council and House of Bishops, as well as a number of dioceses, have objected to the decision announced Feb. 15 in an ACNS - Anglican Communion News Service blog by Anglican Communion Secretary General Josiah Idowu-Fearon.

Idowu-Fearon wrote that Welby had invited "every active bishop" to the periodic gathering of the Anglican Communion's bishops set for July 23-Aug. 2, 2020. That decision represents a change from the previous Lambeth Conference. In 2008, then-Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams refused to invite Bishop Gene Robinson, who in 2003 became the first openly gay and partnered bishop in the Anglican Communion.

However, Idowu-Fearon said in his blog post that "it would be inappropriate for same-sex spouses to be invited to the conference." He said the Anglican Communion defines marriage as "the lifelong union of a man and a woman," as codified in Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference.

Welby's decision promoted push-back in Britain as well, including at the University of Kent in Canterbury, where

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most of the conference will take place, and among some members of the House of Parliament.

“It is worth noting that the controversy is not only one way,” Welby said, adding that he has received “a significant number of letters” objecting to his decision to invite bishops who are in same-sex marriages when none were invited in 2008. “That’s a point that is sometimes forgotten.”

Diocese of New York Bishop Assistant Mary Glasspool currently is The Episcopal Church’s only actively serving bishop who has a same-sex spouse, Becki Sander. The Rev. Thomas Brown is due to be ordained and consecrated on June 22 as the next bishop of the Diocese of Maine. He is married to the Rev. Thomas Mousin.

The only other active bishop in the Anglican Communion to whom Welby’s decision is known to apply is Diocese of Toronto Bishop Suffragan Kevin Robertson. He married Mohan Sharma, his partner of nearly 10 years, on Dec. 28, 2018. *Report by Mary Frances Schjonberg/ Episcopal News Service*

Sri Lankans celebrate mass on TV following Easter attacks

Sri Lanka's Catholics have celebrated Mass in their homes by a televised broadcast as churches across the island nation shut over fears of militant attacks, a week after the Islamic State-claimed Easter suicide bombings killed over 250 people.

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A man reacts during mass burials near St Sebastian Church in Negombo, Sri Lanka April 28, 2019

Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the archbishop of Colombo, delivered a homily before members of the clergy and the country's leaders in a small chapel at his Colombo residence - an extraordinary measure underlining the fear still gripping this nation of 21 million people.

"This is a time our hearts are tested by the great destruction that took place last Sunday," Mr Ranjith said.

"This is a time questions such as, does God truly love us, does He have compassion towards us, can arise in human hearts."

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In a rare show of unity, President Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and opposition leader Mahinda Rajapaksa attended the Mass.

Their political rivalry and government dysfunction are blamed for a failure act upon near-specific information received from foreign intelligence agencies that preceded the bombings that targeted three churches and three luxury hotels.

All Sri Lankan churches were asked to ring bells on Sunday while the lamp lighting takes place.

The US Embassy in Colombo has warned against attending any service at a place of worship this weekend.

In the eastern district of Ampara on Sunday, where a gunfight and explosions left 15 people dead the previous day, soldiers guarded St Mary Magdalen's Church, where a sign on the gate said the church and the school would be closed until May 6.

A nearby mosque also had soldiers stationed outside.

The Islamic State group, meanwhile, claimed three of the militants who blew themselves up during a police raid in Ampara that was linked to the Easter bombings.

In a statement carried by the extremists' Aamaq news agency, IS identified the bombers by their noms du guerre as Abu Hammad, Abu Sufyan and Abu al-Qa'qa.

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It said they opened fire with automatic weapons and "after exhausting their ammunition, detonated ... their explosive belts".

Sri Lanka's military said the gunfight on Friday night near the town of Sammanthurai left 15 dead, including six children, when militants opened fire and set off explosives in suicide bombings as security forces closed in on their safe house.

At the main police station in Ampara, an outdoor stage now holds what police recovered after the firefight.

The IS-aligned militants had created a bombmaking factory at the home, complete with laboratory-style beakers and thick rubber gloves.

Bags of fertiliser, gunpowder and small ball bearings filled boxes. Police found gallons of acids, used to make the fire of the blast more lethal.

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Police also recovered religious tracts in Tamil glorifying suicide bombings, saying they granted the attacker direct entrance to heaven.

The government on Saturday formally banned two extremist groups purportedly connected to the attacks, allowing officials to confiscate their property, presidential spokesman Dharmasri Ekanayake said.

The government, crippled from a long political crisis between the president and prime minister last year, promised swift action to capture militants still at large.

Mr Sirisena said about 140 people had been identified as having links to the IS.

Police confirmed that the leader of the local militant group blamed for the attack, Mohamed Zahran, died in the suicide bombing at the Shangri-La Hotel.

Zahran appeared in an IS video claiming responsibility for the coordinated assault, and authorities in both Sri Lanka and Australia confirmed links between IS and the attack.

Person-centred support to homeless will sustain future communities

Sister Jean Quinn, chairwoman of Sophia Housing and executive director of UNANIMA International, a United Nations coalition of Catholic religious congregations focused on concerns of women, children, migrants and the

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environment, has called on housing policy to promote belonging and a community spirit.

For two decades, operating under the slogan ‘providing homes, supporting people’, Sophia Housing has offered vital support to those struggling to rebuild their lives as a result of homelessness. The services provided by Sophia Housing extend far beyond basic accommodation, they promote a sense of belonging and community spirit. The organisation emphasises the importance of ‘person-centred’ support for individuals and families dealing with homelessness. Spaces such as the Wisdom Centre in Dublin’s Cork Street offer a tranquil environment for people to seek wisdom of mind, heart and spirit. Sophia is currently supporting 617 adults and 169 children, alongside 134 people who avail of support through outreach programmes.

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Writing for /The Irish Times/ on 23 April, Sister Quinn said: “As a Daughter of Wisdom I’m proud of the supportive role played by religious congregations in the work of Sophia. Many congregations have given property to Sophia for use as homes. As the needs for large properties declines these congregations are ensuring that buildings will continue to serve those most in need in different ways.

“I am acutely aware of our rich heritage of service and commitment to social justice. Religious sisters continue this tradition in different ways, and new models are emerging throughout the world”, Sister Quinn said.

As executive director of UNANIMA International, Sister Quinn represents 22 congregations with 20,000 members in over 80 countries. The priority of this organisation is to put the provision of adequate homes at the centre of UN policy. As a result of the work of Sister Quinn, homelessness will be a key theme at the Commission on Social Development in 2020.

Stunning 'Path of Peace' opened in church garden

School children have helped create a stunning 100ft long “Path of Peace” in a tranquil church garden in Edinburgh.

Youngsters from Duddingston and Parsons Green primary schools made 80 tiles for the pebble mosaic project at Duddingston Kirk Glebe.

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Two pupils kneel beside the tile they created

They are decorated with peace symbols such as doves, hearts and the CND logo which represents nuclear disarmament.

The path, which will eventually wind through the four-acre site on the banks of Duddingston Loch, was officially opened today by Tommy Sheppard, MP for Edinburgh East.

Children from the two schools were the first to walk along it and all those in attendance were invited to commit themselves to live in peace and remember those affected by recent tragic events in Sri Lanka, New Zealand and Northern Ireland.

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A symbol of peace

Mr Sheppard said: “I’m delighted to be able to join with members of the congregation, local community and the pupils who have built this path to celebrate their work.

“It’s an honour to officially open the path and to congratulate all those involved for their hard work in creating a lasting legacy.”

The children involved in creating design slabs for the path - starting last summer - were from P1 and P5-6 classes.

Rev Dr Jim Jack, minister of Duddingston Kirk, said: “In a world of so much conflict, with much of it carried out in the so called name of religion, peace is often overlooked,” he added.

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“Most people of faith and of none have a deep desire to live in peace and a world of mutual respect, acceptance and acknowledgement of a common humanity.

“The church gardens are open for anyone to come and walk the path of peace and to pray for world peace.”

Reflection

The Path of Peace, which took 12 months to create, was funded by a £6,700 National Lottery Awards for All grant.

It features tens of thousands of colourful stones, sourced from Scottish quarries and from as far afield as Japan.

A metal sculpture of a Galloway Vine adorns the wall next to the path and people can engrave the name of a loved one on a copper leaf and hang it on one of the 170 pegs.

Space has been created at the base of the artwork for the internment of ashes and people are invited to lay cut flowers and sit quietly on a bench to reflect.

Karen Morris, head teacher of Duddingston Primary School, said pupils were proud to be involved in creating the Path of Peace.

“Primary 5 pupils particularly enjoyed the sense that they were part of adding to many other community groups tiles and together were promoting a peaceful walk through this wonderful garden while contemplating thoughts of peace and sense of community,” she added.

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“They also loved the idea that this path would still be here long after they are and still be a symbol of peace throughout the community and wider world.”

News briefs



Bringing Cork to Lübeck - the choir of St Fin Barre's Cork sang Choral Vespers at the beautiful Domzu Lübeck on Saturday night.

+++Parish donation to Blackrock Hospice - Rev. Ian Gallagher and Derek Earl presented a donation of €5000 to Susie Cunningham, Blackrock Hospice (Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services) to cover the purchase of four Hybrid

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Pressure Relieving Mattresses and Pumps for the patients of Blackrock Hospice.

One of the most important pieces of equipment for the patients is their mattress. As a patient's condition deteriorates, these special mattresses and pumps aid comfort and prevent tissue damage. The number of patients and families this donation will help is significant.

The Select Vestries of St Brigid's and All Saints' are looking at ways to create a closer relationship with Blackrock Hospice through which our parishioners can get involved and actively support.

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provided to all volunteers. If you're interested in volunteering contact EBM on 028 9045 8560 or email info@ebm.org.uk

+++ East Antrim Charity Craft Fair - The East Antrim branch of Leukaemia and Lymphoma Northern Ireland will hold its annual antiques and craft fair on Saturday May 4. It will take place at Whitehead Community Centre, Balmoral Avenue, from 10.30 am until 4.30 pm. Books, quilted cushions, art, felting, jewellery, terrariums, crochet, decoupage, fused glass, vintage accessories, ham/chutney/marmalade, vintage cake stands, china and collectibles, vintage tools, hand-made cards and boxes, knitwear, bags, dolls, dreamcatchers etc will be on sale. The cost of admission is £1 (accompanied children free). Tea, coffee, scones and traybakes will be on sale. Last year's event raised £2,000 for research into leukaemia, lymphoma and other blood cancers at the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology at Belfast City Hospital.

+++New retreat options at Lough Derg - From May, a host of new retreat options are available at Lough Derg for individuals and parish groups. One day retreats to Lough Derg are scheduled to begin on Saturday 4 May. A new event, for those who serve in lay parish ministry, is the 'Parish Ministry Day' which will take place on Saturday 18 May.

Three-day pilgrimages will run over summer 2019 from 31 May – 2 June, 5 – 7 July, and 9 – 11 August. For further information phone after 6.00pm – M: 086 358 3027 / 01 4941171 and (00353) 71 9861518.

Email: info@loughderg.org. See www.loughderg.org

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Today in Christian history

April 29, 1380: Italian mystic Catherine of Siena dies from exhaustion brought on by her efforts to bring unity to the church. Her visions, experienced since childhood, and her persistent pleading led Pope Gregory XI to return the papal seat to Rome from Avignon, France.

April 29, 1429: Joan of Arc, who had experienced mystical visions and voices since childhood, enters the besieged French city of Orleans to lead a victory over the English. The next day, the English retreated, but, because it was a Sunday, Joan refused to allow any pursuit. On a sortie the next year, The English captured Joan and put her on trial for heresy.

April 29, 1607: English settlers establish the first Anglican church in the American colonies at Cape Henry, Virginia.

News Links

[Parts of the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Hong Kong being livestreamed](#)

Episcopal News Service

... ACC vice chair and member from the **Church of England**, and Anglican Communion Secretary ... **Press** conference with Welby, Kwong and others.

[Growing up mixed race in the Troubles](#)

BBC News

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By Robin Sheeran BBC **News** NI ... Catholic mother and a Pakistani Muslim father, Joe didn't fit easily into Northern **Ireland's religious/ethnic** divide.

[Fr Martin Magill says NI politicians felt pressure at Lyra McKee funeral](#)

BBC News

N. **Ireland** Politics · NI Local Elections 2019 · Local **News** ... funeral has said people in the **church** put "pressure" on them to join a standing ovation. ... During the funeral service, Fr Magill had commended Northern **Ireland's** political ... The British and **Irish** governments announced on Friday a new talks ...

[Calls for same-sex marriage in NI as part of Lyra's legacy RTE.ie](#)

Friends of Lyra McKee are calling for her legacy to be the introduction of same-sex marriage in Northern **Ireland**. Talking to Marian Finucane, journalist ...

[Extinction Rebellion's prophecies are not new](#)

Church Times

In 1969, the Vicar of Great St Mary's, Cambridge, travelled to Belfast to deliver the **Church of Ireland's** Annual Theological Lectures. He began in ...

[Former **Irish** PM delivers lecture at the St Mary's Institute of Theology](#)

St Mary's University, Twickenham

Former **Irish** PM delivers lecture at the St Mary's Institute of Theology That global obligation was always there in the Catholic **Church**, but it took on a ...

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[Church of Ireland manse in Keady vandalised by drinking youths](#)

Armagh i

A “large crew” of youths vandalised a **Church of Ireland** manse in Keady ... “Also the **Church of Ireland** Manse on the Crossmore Road was attacked ...

[Newmarket in mourning following death of Canon Reuben Butler](#)

The Clare Echo (press release) (blog)

“I think one of the biggest difficulties is the **church in Ireland** had say in the last two generations has been a majority church, you were either Roman ...

[Westmeath rated as the midlands' marriage hotspot](#)

Westmeath Examiner

... 40 were ceremonies officiated by the Humanist Association, 37 by the Spiritualist Union of Ireland and six were **Church of Ireland** ceremonies.

[Dublin bridge renamed after stained-glass artist Harry Clarke](#)

Irish Times

He created more than 160 stained-glass windows for **religious** and commercial commissions throughout **Ireland**, England, the US and Australia.

[Derry City Cemetery Series: The best hymn writer in the English language lies buried on a 'green ...](#)

Derry Now

Anyone who has ever set foot in an **Irish church** will without doubt at some point has either sang or listened to the hymns 'All Things Bright and ...

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[Is it time for British apology on Easter Rising?](#)

IrishCentral

One of Britain's leading authors and editors stated in 2016 in the establishment newspaper The Telegraph that it is time to apologize to the **Irish** for the ...

[The evolution of digital innovation and customer experience](#)

TechRadar

The **Church of England** has been rolling out contactless collection plates across the UK since last September – with great results. Churches at the front ...

[500 churches in C of E still ban female priests](#)

The Times

An internal **Church of England** report has revealed that 500 of its churches are operating a male-only policy for priests, five years after it had agreed to ...

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