



CNI



The Rev Dr David Clements whose father was murdered by the IRA

Methodist minister, son of a murdered policeman, wrote to Martin McGuinness

The Rev Dr David Clements (*pictured*) whose father was murdered by the IRA over 20 years ago has revealed that he wrote to Martin McGuinness at the end of January asking him to consider making an apology on behalf of the IRA

for the 'cruel things done' to victims of its so-called 'armed struggle'.

'I want you to know how important that would be to so many who have suffered terribly at the hands of the Republican movement,' he wrote.

Dr Clements' father, Billy, was an RUC Reservist who was murdered by members of the East Tyrone Brigade of the IRA in December 1985 in an attack on Ballygawley Police Station. His gun was taken from his body and was used in a number of other murders. It was found in Loughgall following the deaths of eight members of the IRA killed by the SAS in May 1987.

In the letter Dr Clements, who is currently minister of Carrickfergus Methodist church, told Martin McGuinness that he continued to pray for him during his illness.

He also expressed gratitude for the leadership the former deputy First Minister had shown over the last number of years.

'I appreciate the journey you have taken and thank God for the evident grace He has given you along the way. The present crisis notwithstanding, we owe you much gratitude for the part you have played in recent decades.'

He went on to say that the refusal of Mr McGuinness to express regret for his time in the IRA or for what the IRA ‘...grieves me deeply’.

While Dr Clements acknowledged the political and personal difficulties there would be for Martin McGuinness to ‘..speak the words’, he asked him to ‘...consider writing them down to be released at some time in the future, perhaps after you and others concerned have gone into the presence of God’.

Dr Clements said that he did not know if Martin McGuinness had read the letter which closed with ‘I wish you well and will pray for you and your family in the days ahead.’

Speaking as talks to restore a functioning Executive and Assembly ended in stalemate Dr Clements said: ‘I have worked for over 20 years with the WAVE Trauma Centre in support of victims of the Troubles – including support for the Disappeared and the campaign for a pension for the severely injured, which shamefully has not yet been delivered.

‘Victims and survivors face an uncertain future with a comprehensive and inclusive way to deal with the past including the issue that I raised in my letter to Martin McGuinness put on hold.

‘After so much suffering over so many years it’s simply not good enough for victims and survivors to be told once again that they will have to wait for promises and commitments to be delivered.’

Rev Dr David Clements letter to Martin McGuinness

For complete text of letter see -

<http://www.wavetraumacentre.org.uk/news/rev-dr-david-clements-letter-to-martin-mcguinness>

Churches place in post-Catholic Ireland challenged

Over 100 delegates from Irish churches were challenged by the question “Do the Churches have a place in a Post-Catholic Ireland?” It was posed by Dr Gladys Ganiel, the keynote speaker at the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) 94th Annual Meeting in Belfast on Thursday, March 30. Dr Ganiel, Research Fellow at the Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, outlined the challenges and opportunities in secularisation

Dr Ganiel stimulated thought on how the churches might strengthen their united

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witnessing in the face of division and uncertainty. She said that the ICC could be seen as belonging to what she defined as ‘extra-institutional religion’, whereby ‘new religious spaces ... are being created (or discovered) within Ireland’s post-Catholic environment. These are spaces where people use various methods and strategies to keep their faith alive, outside or in addition to the institutional Catholic Church, or indeed, other ‘institutional’ churches’.

Recognising that the ICC, as an organisation, has the potential to greatly engage with and contribute to public life, she stated that “from a sociological perspective, sometimes the margins are the best place to be. While you may lack conventional power or influence, there is an important soft power in your ability to critique and offer alternative visions, and to move quickly to respond to pressing needs.”

In a subsequent presentation to the meeting, ICC President Rt Rev John McDowell, Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher, noted that the Council had been challenged in a critical but friendly way by Dr Ganiel’s presentation to think about ‘the God Space’ that organisations like the ICC might begin to explore.... ways of encouraging and informing its member churches to specifically address witnessing in a pluralist society and

bringing our particular gifts to building up the common good.

The 100+ delegates to the ICC came from Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed, Catholic, Independent and Migrant-led churches in Ireland. In the space of only a few months, the Churches in Ireland have found themselves living and witnessing in a more uncertain social, economic and political atmosphere than could previously have been imagined.

Community club started at Acorn Centre in Derry

The Christ Church, Culmore, Muff and St Peter's (CCCMSP) Group of Parishes have launched a Thursday Club at their parish centre, The Acorn Centre, in the grounds of St Peter's Church on the Culmore Road.

The Club is open to all in the community and offers a range of activities including music, games and quizzes, books and newspapers.

Those who turn up won't go hungry: coffee, tea and scones are available from 11.30am, and lunch is served at 12.30pm – all for just £3.00.



The Rector of the Parish Group, Ven Robert Miller, Archdeacon of Derry, says it's an opportunity for people from any background to come together and enjoy some Christian fellowship. "We've had the Acorn Centre refurbished quite extensively recently," Archdeacon Miller said, "and we're keen to see it used as fully as possible by the whole community. The Acorn Centre's already established itself as a significant local hub, with a variety of groups – church-based and others – using it for their activities.

"We, at CCCMSP, are eager to reach out further – in mission and friendship – to the community," Archdeacon Miller said. "We think our Thursday

club offers outstanding value for those who choose to come along. They'll get to have some fun, make new friends, enjoy good food and fellowship. Where else would you get that nowadays for £3.00?" he joked.

More than £100,000 has been spent over the last couple of years bringing the Acorn Centre up to the necessary health and safety standards. Among the improvements are a new kitchen, toilets, heating and insulation, and new flooring has been laid throughout. The building has also been painted inside and out.

"We welcome everyone to our Thursday Club," the Archdeacon said, "the more the merrier. In fact I'd encourage everyone to spread the word as widely as possible – among family, friends, neighbours and clients – so please get the news out." Photographs at -

<http://derryandraphoe.org/news/item/1156-thursday-club-started-at-the-acorn-centre>

Mothers' Union in Down & Dromore celebrates 13 decades

Mothers' Union members from all over the diocese met in Dromore Cathedral on Monday 27th March.

has prepared in advance for us to do. To finish Bishop Harold showed the congregation a video of Dr Helen Roseveare, “a woman who walked in the way of Mary.”



Rev Gerald Macartney was commissioned by Bishop Harold Miller as the new Mothers Union Chaplain. The new chaplain then commissioned ten new Mothers’ Union trustees; Roberta Rogers, Phyllis Whiteside, Margaret Conn, Clare Stewart, Sally Mccurry, Roberta Macartney, June Reain, Joy Silcock, Carol Bell and Phyllis Burrell.

[Click here for a gallery of photographs from the festival service.](#)



Philomena Lee to speak at Limerick literary festival

The Limerick woman whose story inspired the Oscar nominated film *Philomena* will return to her home town of Newcastle West for this year's Éigse Michael Hartnett.

A conversation with Philomena Lee (84) will be one of the highlights of the annual literary festival celebrating the life of the west Limerick poet and writer who passed away in 1999, aged 58.

Philomena's tragic search for the son she was forced to give up for adoption as a teenager was the basis of a book written by journalist Martin

Sixsmith, which in turn was made into a critically acclaimed film starring Dame Judy Dench.

Philomena's search for her son Anthony, who was born in a mother and baby home in 1951, has touched millions of people in Ireland and around the world, both through the film and the book on which it was based.

That story began when, as a young girl of 18, Philomena became pregnant and was sent to Sean Ross Abbey in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, where her son was born and where they both remained for the next three years, with Philomena working in the laundry and Anthony staying in the nursery.

She was forced to put her son up for adoption when an American family arrived. Philomena subsequently moved to England, where she married and had two further children, only eventually revealing the long-kept secret to her children on her 70th birthday.

Speaking about the forthcoming event, Cllr John Sheahan, chairman of Newcastle West Municipal District, made reference to the recent Tuam baby scandal when he launched this year's festival. Referring to Michael Hartnett, Cllr Sheahan said "[he] was one of Ireland's most important poets. He had a talent for raising the

mirror and showing people what society was really like. He had amazing insights into life, both in the English and Irish language.”

He said he was “absolutely delighted that Philomena Lee would be attending this year’s festival”.

Ms Lee will appear on Thursday 6 April at 7.30 pm and will be interviewed on stage by local journalist Seamus Hennessy at Newcastle West Library, Gortboy, where she will speak about her life and her advocacy for adoption rights.

Online archive of C of I Gazette expands featuring April 1917

The editions for April 1917 are now online in the Archive of the Month series produced by the C of I’s RCB Library. The *Church of Ireland Gazette* is widely regarded by researchers as a first port of call to obtain an accurate insight into the opinions and attitudes of members of the Church of Ireland in times past. In the latest tranche of work just completed, all editions the *Gazette* for the 11-year period between 1900 and 1911 have been added to the system, so there is now a complete run of editions for the period from 1900 to 1923.

CHURCH OF IRELAND GAZETTE, APRIL 13, 1917.

The Church of Ireland Cazette

FORMERLY
IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL GAZETTE.

No. 1941—Vol. LIX. (Third Year). DUBLIN, FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1917. (Registered as a Newspaper and as a Periodical Press, 14, Essex Street, W., London, W.1.)

The SERBIAN RELIEF FUND

MAINTAINS A HOSPITAL ON THE MACEDONIAN FRONT.
A splendidly equipped hospital of 200 beds, together with a canteen for the use of the wounded and convalescent, has been established in the vicinity of the firing line.

RELIEVES THE CIVILIAN POPULATION FROM THE WAR ZONE.

CARES FOR THE DESTITUTE SERBIANS IN SALONICA.

CO-OPERATES WITH THE FRENCH IN CARING FOR SERBIAN REFUGEES IN CORSICA, helping them to improve their housing accommodation, establishing work-rooms and in other ways making the lives of these poor people more tolerable.

SHELTERS DISABLED SOLDIERS IN CORFU.

SENDS BREAD TO NEARLY 60,000 SERBIAN PRISONERS OF WAR. Allowing only one penny-worth of food per day for each prisoner, the cost per month is £5,000, and the obligations of the Fund are steadily increasing as the organizers get into touch with other camps. Clothing, which is also greatly needed is being supplied so far as the means allow.

IS RESPON- SIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF 330 GREAT FORMS a nucleus and industrial has been reest-

For all these we
MONEY

Clothing of all kinds (including boots and shoes) for men, women and childer required. Calico, shirting, serge, suiting and blouse lengths as required.

Send your DONATIONS to the EARL OF PLYMOUTH, to whom all cheques should be made payable. Address, 5, Cromwell Road, London, S.W. 7. (only address).

Send your DONATIONS to the MRS. CARE FUND, 5, CROWE ROAD, LONDON, S.W. 7.

Write for latest report, "For Serbia," describing the past, present and future of the Serbian Relief Fund.

FAMINE in the HOLY LAND.



The rapid development of events in the Holy Land is in a remarkable manner opening up a way for the work of the Syria and Palestine Relief Fund.

The recent victory near Gaza means that we shall be able almost immediately to follow the Allied advance with FOOD, MEDICINE and CLOTHING to relieve the terrible distress of the inhabitants who are in the last stage of destitution through the cruelties and privations which they have suffered.

(Reproduced by permission of "The Times.")

To relieve the starving peoples of Syria and Palestine **£50,000** is needed at once

Military Societies of all Denominations have united to carry out this great work. A strong administrative Committee is at work; plans for relief are already made and goods are stored in Egypt ready to be poured into the country by sea or rail. The Fund will be economically administered by those who know the country and people best and relief will be given to all—Christians, Jews and Arabs alike—according to their need.

Please send your DONATION now to the Hon. Secretary, Syria and Palestine Relief Fund, Church House, Essex Street, Westminster, S.W. 1.

Appeals for aid for crises in Serbia, and Syria and Palestine, as published on the front cover and inside the Church of Ireland Gazette, 13th April 1917.

In this context, April's Archive of the Month – which is the work of Library Administrator, Robert Gallagher – focuses on some of the stories making the headlines 100 years ago in April 1917. In that month, four editions of the weekly newspaper appeared, and the content of churchnewsireland@gmail.com

much of them was dedicated to the continuing coverage of the First World War. Writing under the initials of 'W. B. W', Ware Bradley Wells, the newspaper's Editor at this time, continued his weekly column entitled 'The War Week by Week'.

The editions for April 1917 see Wells reporting more encouraging news of the Allied war effort. For example, the 5th April edition of the *Gazette* reports on the discovery of 'The Hindenburg Line', a German defensive position on the Western Front, from Arras to Laffaux, near Soissons on the Aisne.

The advertisement content of the *Gazette* continues to provide particularly rich insight to the stories of the day. In 1917, adverts placed were heavily influenced by the war, with numerous appeals for aid and relief. Indeed, of the four issues published in April 1917, three of the front pages featured full page appeals for donations for soldiers. The Irish Women's Association and the Royal Munster Fusiliers Prisoners of War Fund both sought donations in order to send care packages to prisoners of war. The only exception was the cover of the 13 April edition, which featured an appeal from the Serbian relief fund. Other appeals for aid are found elsewhere in each issue, a striking reoccurring one being an appeal from the Syria

and Palestine Relief Fund, urgently seeking £50,000 to help victims of famine in Syria and Palestine – a particularly sobering theme when considered alongside current events in that part of the world.

The issues of the *Gazette* for April 1917, as with other content, provide unique insights not only into the Church of Ireland and its perspective on the world in 1917, but the burning issues of the time. Full analysis plus access to the online search engine covering all editions between 1900 and 1923 is now available through the April Archive of the Month slot here:

www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive

To go straight to the search engine click: <https://eSearch.informa.ie/rcb>

and for assistance see [Informa Search Guidelines](#)

Wells' own interesting personal story in the context of the Easter Rising in Dublin has previously been analysed here:

www.ireland.anglican.org/news/6413/reporting-the-rising-a-church while a full list of all *Gazette*

editors is available here:

www.ireland.anglican.org/cmsfiles/pdf/AboutUs/library/Archive/Aug13/Editors.pdf

Irish mission agency responds to South Sudan crisis

As the crisis worsens in South Sudan and East Africa, the Church Mission Society Ireland has continued to discuss with its Global Partners how best to support them as they respond to the suffering on their doorsteps.

The current food shortages have added to what was already a humanitarian disaster in South Sudan – thousands of innocent people being slaughtered; hundreds of thousands forced to flee their homes and seek refuge in other parts of the country or in neighbouring countries.

Speaking about the latest developments, CMSI's Partnership Coordinator for South Sudan, Linda Abwa commented:

“CMSI welcomes the various emergency appeals that have been launched in recent weeks and we encourage people to support these appeals. The suffering in South Sudan has gone largely unnoticed for far too long – this recent turn of events is part of a much bigger story of turmoil and devastation.

“We ask for continued prayer for the Church in South Sudan, which has been working tirelessly



in recent years to care for the displaced, the hungry and the hurting. The Church is one of the main sources of hope and help in this crisis – it's often where people turn in times of need. We want to stand with our partners and champion their work."

In addition to its own South Sudan Appeal (details on the CMSI website), CMSI is providing opportunities to find out more about the crisis and to pray for the Church in South Sudan. Three 'drop-in' prayer days have been organised for the coming weeks. They will each run from 10am to 2pm and will feature various interactive

prayer stations as well as an opportunity to contribute to a 'Book of Blessing' for each of CMSI's four partner dioceses in South Sudan.

- Saturday 8th April – Dromore Cathedral
- Saturday 29th April – Ballyrashane Parish
- Saturday 13th May – Kill O' The Grange Parish

On **Friday 19th May**, CMSI will host a special event about the South Sudan crisis and the Church's response. The guest speaker will be Bishop Anthony Poggo, who is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Anglican Communion Affairs and was formerly Bishop of Kajo-Keji Diocese in South Sudan. The event is taking place in Grosvenor Hall, Belfast and will include contributions from other agencies, as well as opportunities for discussion and prayer. Further details will be announced in the coming weeks.

Today in History

April 1, 1548: Parliament orders the publication of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP). Though Thomas Cranmer is rightly credited with the final form of the BCP, he worked with a committee of scholars, including Reformer Martin Bucer, to shape his famous liturgy

April 1, 1745: David Brainerd begins his missionary work among the Native Americans of New Jersey, having previously worked in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. The New Jersey natives showed more interest than most, but Brainerd died of tuberculosis only two years into his work there. Still, his diary, published by Jonathan Edwards, became a major force in promoting missions work, inspiring missionaries like William Carey, Henry Martyn, and Thomas Coke (see issue 77: Jonathan Edwards).

Tomorrow in History

April 2, 742: Charlemagne (Charles the Great) is born. When Pope Leo III crowned him "Emperor of the Romans" on Christmas Day, 800, Charlemagne announced, "Our task [as secular ruler] is externally, with God's help, to defend with our arms the holy Church of Christ against attacks by the heathen from any side and against devastation by the infidels and, internally, to strengthen the Church by the recognition of the Catholic faith." Indeed, within his kingdom he was far more influential in church affairs than the pope. Charles appointed and deposed bishops, directed a revision of the text of the Bible, instituted changes to the liturgy, set rules for life in the monasteries, and sent

investigators to dismiss priests with insufficient learning or piety.

April 2, 1877: Fundamentalist Baptist evangelist Mordecai Ham is born in Allen County, Kentucky. At the end of his ministry, he claimed one million converts—including Billy Graham, who made a declaration of faith at a 1934 Ham meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina

April 2, 1914: Three hundred Pentecostals meet at the Grand Opera House in Hot Springs, Arkansas, for a ten-day conference. Though originally intended merely to organise annual conferences, by its close, the conference had birthed the Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism's largest denomination

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