



# CNI



## **Moira Parish youth team prepares for Uganda**

LOGIC, a youth programme of Moira parish offers all young people between the ages of 12–18 years a safe and friendly environment in which to socialise, make friends, experience new challenges and opportunities.

In July 2017 CMSI is facilitating the visit of a team from LOGIC to Arua in Uganda to experience what life is like for their peers in this part of the world. The area is home to many refugees fleeing the fighting in South Sudan. The

young people from LOGIC will have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the many challenges that these young people face daily.

Through a partnership between St John's Moira and Ibba Diocese South Sudan, it is planned that some young people from Ibba will visit Arua to spend time with the LOGIC team. The Bishop of Ibba visited LOGIC in 2014 when he was presented with a football trophy which he has used to engage young people in his area in a football competition with a message of peace and reconciliation, vital at this time of such unrest in South Sudan. This will be an opportunity to swap stories and perhaps play a game or two of football!

The trip will be a challenging and exciting opportunity to experience life in another culture. The visit will take each person out of their comfort zone, discovering things about themselves which they may be surprised by, developing and equipping them with new life skills. It will be an amazing journey for each young person taking part, who knows what potential may be realised in each of these young people as a result.

To raise funds for this trip LOGIC are hosting a concert by the award winning Murley Silver Band in St John's Parish Centre, Moira. [Click here to find out more about this event.](#)

## **Calls for greater transparency on C of I's financial support for its bishops**

The Church of Ireland has been urged to apologise by one of its own rectors for allegedly "stonewalling" over revealing how much it costs to financially support bishops, Alf McCreary writes in The Belfast Telegraph.

Canon Jonathan Barry, rector of Comber, accused the church of obstructing the independent Church of Ireland Gazette.

"Parishes cannot go on being financially bled in terms of assessments by people who refuse to be transparent, refuse to give account and react obstructively when asked," he said.

The Gazette raised the matter last July 27, but the Representative Church Body (RCB) did not reply to its questions until November.



***Church of Ireland Gazette editor Canon Ian Ellis claimed that he had encountered a 'brick wall' while investigating the cost of financial support for bishops***

In December, the Gazette asked the RCB about the costs and purpose of a residential meeting of Bishops in a Portmarnock, Co Dublin, hotel. It transpired that these costs had not been included in the earlier costs assessment.

A Commission for Episcopal Ministry was set up in 2012 to make recommendations about the future of the Bishops' ministry, but the commission told the General Synod - the

church's governing body - that it was not a priority to provide a detailed analysis of financial issues.

The RCB told the Belfast Telegraph it was "content that it is entirely reasonable for the bishops to hold residential meetings, and is satisfied with the one held most recently at Portmarnock".

There are 12 Church of Ireland bishops, including the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin.

On March 24 the RCB told the Gazette that the total costs for bishops in 2016 was €1.7m. This included stipends, pensions, state insurance, travel and subsistence.

The RCB paid 46% and the 12 dioceses paid 54% of the costs.

The diocesan money is raised from parishioners' collection plate donations and other means.

The RCB said in its March 24 statement that episcopal costs were included in the church's book of reports, but the Gazette claimed its detailed questions had not been fully answered.

Canon Ian Ellis, editor of the Church of Ireland Gazette, told the Belfast Telegraph last night:

"Many parishioners give sacrificially to the Church.

"Straight questions deserve straight answers.

"I have encountered a brick wall, and the situation has gone on too long."

## **Annual Seedtime and Ploughmen's Service at Ballyblack Presbyterian**

The congregation of Ballyblack Presbyterian Church annually hold a service of thanksgiving for the entire farming community referred to as their Seedtime and Ploughmen's Service. This service was held recently and the congregation were delighted that the church was filled to capacity.

The service was conducted by the Reverend Bobbie Stevenson, the Vacancy Convener. The praise was led by Ballyclare Voice Choir who sang several pieces during the service and then entertained the congregation in the church hall after a delicious supper was served by the ladies of the congregation.

The special guest speaker was Barclay Bell, president of the Ulster Farmer's Union, who in his "Farming Focus" encouraged the



***Pictured are (back row): the Reverend Bobbie Stevenson, John Kennedy, Dr Christine Kennedy, Barclay Bell and Billy Robson OBE. (Front row) Pauline Davidson, Will Taylor, Joy Dalzell and Alex Warden***

congregation to buy local produce and do all they can to sustain the farming economy through these days of uncertainty. The first lesson was read by Billy Robson OBE, former president of the RUAS. Billy said that he was delighted to be returning to the congregation of his ancestors. The second lesson was read by Joy Dalzell on behalf of Newtownards Young Farmers' Club.

Other members of the local farming community took part in the service. A very generous offering of £1,090.00 was received by Andrew Gill on behalf of the Friends of the Cancer Centre at Belfast City Hospital. - News Letter Farming Life report.

## Colloquium on 'Ecclesia semper reformanda'

Professor Werner Jeanrond, known to many Church of Ireland clergy from his lectures in systematic theology and hermeneutics in Trinity College Dublin in the 1980s and early '90s, will be the keynote speaker at the Search-TCD Chaplaincy Colloquium *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda* (The Church – always in need of Reform) on Saturday April 22 from 10am to 4.45pm in the TCD Long Room Hub. Since 2012 Master of St Benet's Hall at Oxford University, Dr Jeanrond has spent his intervening academic career at the universities of Lund (Sweden) and Glasgow.

His address at the Colloquium will be titled 'Ecclesia Semper Reformanda in Theological Perspective'. Further lectures at the Colloquium will be contributed by historian Prof Alan Ford, who specialises in Reformation issues, Canon



Maurice Elliott of CITI, Bishop Kenneth Kearon, who as former General Secretary of the Anglican Communion offers a wide contemporary focus, and Professor Linda Hogan, TCD's vice-provost, who will speak on 'Setting an agenda for tomorrow's Church'. Responses to the last two lectures will be offered by Kate Turner and Dr Eimhin Walsh. Bishop John McDowell will chair the morning session and the final discussion, with Dr Salters Sterling taking the chair the afternoon.

Early registration (£30 / €35 including lunch and refreshments) is advisable through [subscriptions@searchjournal.ireland.anglican.org](mailto:subscriptions@searchjournal.ireland.anglican.org) or via PayPal on [www.searchjournal.ireland.anglican.org](http://www.searchjournal.ireland.anglican.org)

## **Former Moderator writes new book on history of the Kirk**

A former Moderator has used his experience of life inside Scotland's national church to write a new book on the history of the Kirk.

Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald, who was Moderator of the General Assembly between 2002 and 2003, said he hoped his new work 'From Reform to Renewal' would allow readers



to “have a better understanding of issues and influences which have fashioned the Kirk over the centuries into the body it is today”.

This popular history offers a broad sweep of major themes in the story of the post-reformation Church of Scotland, century by century.

The headline events and key issues of each century are explored:

- . 16th - the aftermath of Reformation; John Knox and Mary Queen of Scots and the laying of foundations for a new presbyterian church;
- . 17th - the struggles between presbyterian democratic concepts of leadership and

episcopacy, kirk and king, crown and covenant, leading to the 1690's establishment of the Kirk as the national church of Scotland;

. 18th - official recognition of a separate Scottish Episcopal Church; fragmentation and splits within the presbyterian establishment; theological and political controversies underlying these;

. 19th - the rise of foreign missions; development of biblical criticism; the major split of the 1843 Disruption;

. 20th - the great reunion of 1929 followed by the kirk's 'glory days' with membership peaking mid-century 1.3 million and its subsequent decline; new ventures - the church extension movement, women's ordination, acceptance of gay ministers;

. 21st - the renewal of mission, the work of the church today and tomorrow.

Dr Macdonald, who was in the influential role of Principal Clerk to the General Assembly from 1996 until 2010, said he chose to write the book now to “offer an accessible overview of the Kirk’s history for elders, church members and the general reader interested in learning more about an important Scottish institution”.

He said the style, while “affectionate”, is not “uncritical”.

“I also seek to make connections as the story unfolds,” he added. “For readers wishing to explore further, there is a bibliography with suggestions for further reading.”

Reform of the Church of Scotland has been in the public sphere recently.

[Theologian Rev Dr Doug Gay used the Chalmers Lectures series at St Giles' Cathedral to outline a series of radical proposals for reform of the central Church.](#)

Dr Macdonald said readers of his new book would be taken on a historical journey that would end with them having a clearer idea about what type of future the Kirk has in Scottish public life.

He added: “People sometimes worry as to whether the Church has a future at all. This book shows that it certainly has had a past, and that one way of securing the future is to learn the lessons of history, and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.”

Finlay Macdonald is a former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church and was its

Principal Clerk until 2010. He is Chair of the Trustees of Iona Abbey and is the author of Confidence in a Changing Church published by Saint Andrew Press (2004), Luke Paul (2012) and Luke Paul and the Mosque (2013) published by Shoving Leopard.

[The book can be purchased from St Andrew Press here -](#)

<https://standrewpress.hymnsam.co.uk/>

[Download the first chapter for FREE here.](#)



***Worcester Cathedral***

## **Three Choirs Festival 2017 programme revealed**

The programme for the Three Choirs Festival 2017, which will take place 22-29 July in Worcester, has been revealed.

The eight-day festival features over 70 events, including chamber music, talks, excursions and family activities alongside the choral music for which the event is known.

The week will launch with a performance of Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* by the Three Choirs Festival Chorus and Philharmonia Orchestra, which introduces one of the festival's key themes: echoes of the past.

Artistic director Peter Nardone said his starting point for the festival was 'the historical tension between war-torn Europe and the contrasting atmosphere in the United States in 1917'; as such, the event includes a tribute to the Original Dixieland Jass Band by the Sunset Café Stompers and a recital of Scott Joplin by John Lenehan.

Jonathan Dove's *There Was a Child* will be performed by the Three Choirs Festival Youth Choir. The work captures the second key theme of this year's festival, lost childhood, which also encompasses Howell's *Hymnus Paradisi*.

However, the programme also celebrates youth, from young home-grown performers in the cathedral choirs, youth choir and children's chorus to visiting youth theatre, promising recitalists hand-picked by the Philharmonia and

Royal College of Organists, and the Fellowship Octet of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain.

Other choral repertoire includes Mendelssohn's *St Paul*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, and the *Serenade to Music* by Vaughan Williams. The Three Cathedral Choirs of Worcester, Hereford and Gloucester combine to perform Odes to St Cecilia by Handel and Purcell, and the Choir of King's College, Cambridge will be conducted by former Worcester Cathedral chorister Stephen Cleobury on the last afternoon of the festival.

The festival's flagship choral and orchestral programme will take place in Worcester Cathedral. The stage will be relocated to take advantage of the building's organ, which Wayne Marshall will demonstrate in both a solo recital and alongside the Philharmonia Orchestra in Poulenc's organ concerto and Saint-Saëns' 'Organ' Symphony No 3.

The programme also features a range of activities and events aimed at families and young people, and the Festival Village will be located again on College Green. Free 'Players on the Green' performances will take place twice daily, and free daily sung services will be open to

all. There will also be displays from local craftspeople and an exhibition of John Rowlands Pritchard's work.

The festival will feature new work for services from Thomas Hewitt Jones, Ian King and Piers Connor-Kennedy. The Marsyas Trio will give the English premiere of Hilary Tann's *In the Theatre of Air* and Sarah Connolly will premiere an orchestrated version of Torsten Rasch's *A Welsh Night*. Roderick Williams' new cycle, *Silence and Music*, for vocal trio Voice and cellist Matthew Barley sets the texts of Ursula Vaughan Williams, while a commission from Sally Beamish for mezzo-soprano Kitty Whately sets a new text written specially by Alexander McCall Smith.

Booking opens to the general public on 24 April. The festival is launching a new scheme, 'Festival Firsts', to provide free tickets for local people who have never attended the festival before, by inviting loyal audience members to donate a ticket for a new attender. [www.3choirs.org](http://www.3choirs.org)

## **Concern as guaranteed Lottery funding for repairs to places of worship is axed**



A vital scheme that helps historic and often listed churches fund essential repairs is to end in September this year.

The Heritage Lottery Fund's Grants for Places of Worship programme will close to new applications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The programme may continue in Scotland, as it is a joint initiative with Historic Environment Scotland.

In its place, some funding for repairs to churches and other places of worship can be applied for through the fund's existing Our Heritage and Heritage Grants programmes.

Under these **new arrangements**, 100 per cent of works and activities can be funded with no requirement for partnership funding. The current scheme requires churches to match the funding.

More money will also **be available**. Previous grants were limited to £250,000 per application. Under Heritage Grants, applicants can apply for up to £5 million per application, according to the **HLF**.

Claire Walker, chief executive of the National Churches Trust, which is running an **opinion poll**

**about the changes**, said: 'Many people think that the Church of England or the Vatican pay for the upkeep of the UK's church buildings. That's just not true – it is up to parishes themselves to raise the money needed to repair a leaking roof or fix a crumbling spire.

'That's why the Grants for Places of Worship scheme has been so important in supporting churches, chapels and meeting houses by providing vitally needed funding to ensure these buildings remain in good repair."

'It is therefore important that at least the existing level of HLF grants for funding church buildings continues to be made available through the new arrangement."

'The fact that the Government's Roof Repair Fund, which made available £55 million in 2015-2016, was substantially oversubscribed, shows that there is a need for more, rather than less, funding to ensure the long term survival of our precious heritage of church buildings.'

A poll by ComRes, commissioned by the National Churches Trust in December 2016, showed that more than four in five Britons agree that the UK's churches, chapels and meeting

houses are an important part of the UK's heritage and history.

The poll also showed that 57 per cent of British adults believe it is the government's responsibility to help to fund repairs."

HLF is facing declining income due to fall in lottery sales.

In a letter sent by Sir Peter Luff, Chairman of the HLF, to the Church of England, Sir Peter says: 'I am anxious to ensure that the Churches of the United Kingdom all understand exactly what it is we are doing and why we are doing it and are able make suggestions that we should consider before we finalise our detailed plans.'

He added: 'We remain absolutely committed to supporting the heritage of places of worship. We are not scrapping grants for places of worship, but rather merging them into existing programmes. As we do this we will protect the proportion of our funding to churches, make applications less onerous, offer places of worship more flexibility in what they can apply for, provide clear explanations of the new process, and so enhance the sustainability of the places of worship themselves. In the longer term we will consult on further possible changes that

will benefit churches and others, such as increasing the thresholds for the smaller *Our Heritage* grants to levels significantly higher than the current £100,000.'

Sir Peter is offering to meet church and other faith leaders to reassure them of HLF's 'undimmed commitment to the heritage of places of worship'.

However, churches and other bodies are concerned because the new arrangements mean that for the first time since 1977 there will be no dedicated or 'ring-fenced' Government or Government heritage body funding for churches.

And although the HLF has said that funding for churches will be maintained at similar levels, churches will have to compete for funding with other organisations, which may be better resourced or more experienced at making funding applications.

And even though same amount of money may be available to churches, there are fears this will go to larger, more prestigious projects the HLF can showcase and not to the small churches that need roofs fixed.

There is now a move among church leaders to campaign for an annual Government repair fund of £10 million.

A source said 'The manner of the HLF consultation on these changes was really terrible. Indeed, they did not consult Historic England at all.

'In particular, the HLF decision was taken in isolation from the work of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's Church Sustainability Review, which has been examining issues including maintenance costs and repairs and funding from lottery and central government grants, and is expected to report shortly. And their announcement came in the middle of a Government review into the work of the HLF and before the HLF's own consultation on its next Strategic Review.'

## **News briefs & Upcoming events**

**+++ St Patrick's Hospice Coffee Morning** - A coffee morning in aid of Our Lady's Hospice was held in tSt Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Thursday, 16 March. The amount raised that morning was €771.40, the highest total raised at a Cathedral coffee morning. To date the

Cathedral has raised over €11,500 with these coffee mornings.

### **+++The Mission to Seafarers Spring Auction -**

The Spring Auction will be held in The Flying Angel Seafarers' Centre on Saturday April 22 starting at 10.30am. Refreshments will be available and there is parking at the rear of the Flying Angel Centre which is in Prince's Dock Street, at the main gate of Belfast Port. For further details please contact Colin Hall-Thompson on 02890 751131 or email [colin.hall-thompson@mtsmail.org](mailto:colin.hall-thompson@mtsmail.org).

## **Today in Church History**

**April 8, 1378:** Bartolomeo Prignano is elected Pope Urban VI. Mired in political controversy even before his election (threats from masses of violent demonstrators helped drive his election), his violent demeanor did little to contradict rumors that he was insane. His electors conspired to leave Rome and name a new pope (Clement VII), starting the Great Western Schism.

**April 8, 1546:** At its fourth session, the Council of Trent adopts Jerome's Latin translation of the Bible (called the Vulgate), completed in 405, as the only authentic Latin text of the Scriptures. It

became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

**April 8, 1857:** A small group of Dutch immigrants, meeting in Zeeland, Michigan, organize the Christian Reformed Church.

**April 8, 1901:** After nearly 30 years of successful church planting in New Guinea, Presbyterian missionary James Chalmers (accompanied by missionary Oliver Tomkins, who had just arrived in the field) sets out to explore a new part of the islands. No one ever saw the two again. A rescue party learned the men had been clubbed to death and eaten by cannibals. When London preacher Joseph Parker heard the news, he exclaimed, "I do not want to believe it! Such a mystery of Providence makes it hard for our strained faith to recover. Yet Jesus was murdered. Paul was murdered ... I cannot but feel that our honoured and noble minded friend has joined a great assembly.