



Churches can't criticise same-sex relationships and still welcome gays - Rev Steve Chalke

PCI Congregations encouraged to find a 'Twin' Overseas

Irish Presbyterian congregations are being encouraged to twin by the church's Mission Overseas. Congregational twinning is an intentional, partnering relationship with a congregation from another culture or geographical region - a cross-cultural partnership in the gospel.

A spokesperson says - It gives opportunity for fellowship and shared learning among believers from different backgrounds. Through good communication and the building of a godly relationship, twinning aims to strengthen and encourage both partners as they seek to be part of God's global church.



Cathedral prayers for Climate Justice

Members of Eco-Congregation Ireland led midday prayers for climate justice in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, to mark International Day of Prayer for Climate Justice

Pictured following midday prayers in Christ Church Cathedral on the International Day of Prayer for Climate Justice are from left: Gillian Armstrong, Eco-Congregation Ireland's Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) representative, the Ven Andrew Orr, ECI chairperson, the Very Rev Dermot Dunne, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, and Catherine Brennan SSL, ECI's Catholic rep.

A number of PCI congregations already enjoy the benefits of having a long-term twinning relationship with a church overseas.

For example Newcastle Presbyterian with Hodos in Transylvania, Romania and Drogheda with Kambui in Kenya - read articles in [Mission Overseas Take 2 \(2014\)](#) - pages 4 and 5.

[Presbyterian Mission Overseas](#) has recently produced a NEW guidelines on Twinning designed to help those considering starting a twinning / partnership with a church overseas.

The new guidelines were launched at our October 'Celebration of Global Mission' event, during which Brenda Kerr spoke of the new twinning relationship which has been established between Templepatrick Presbyterian and Fornos - a congregation of the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, Ukraine.

The seven-page 'Twinning Guidelines' are available [online here](#) - or they can be obtained in printed form from the [Mission Office Office](#).

Why not have a look at them and consider if your congregation could begin a partnership with a church overseas?

For help finding a congregation with whom to twin, or for more information, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Christmas Workshop for Singers of Church Music

The 12th annual Christmas workshop for singers of church music will take place on Saturday 15th November 2014 at 10am in Drumalis Conference Centre, Larne. It is directed by Loreto McAuley and David Stewart. For more information and booking visit www.drumalis.co.uk or telephone 028 2827 2196.

St Patrick's, Broughshane, Christmas Tree Festival

The Theme of the Christmas Tree Festival, which runs from November 27-29, is 'The Word of the Lord.' Opening hours are 12 noon -8pm on November 27; 12

Choral singing
for Christmas!
12th annual
Christmas Workshop
For singers of church music
Sat Nov 15th 2014 10am
Drumalis, Larne
with Loreto McAuley
& David Stewart
information & booking:
www.drumalis.co.uk
to book:
call Drumalis on
02828-272196

Sacred
services

noon – 9.30pm on November 28 and 12 noon – 8pm on November 29. There will be refreshments and a Christmas Market in the Parish Hall. A Christingle Service will take place on Sunday November 30 at 6pm.

Events this week

On Tuesday a new series of lunchtime lectures begins in Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, Supported by the Friends of Christ Church, 'Introducing Christ Church 2' will begin with a lecture on cathedral architecture by architectural historian, Dr Michael O'Neill, and in the following weeks there will be lectures on monuments, portraits and liturgy. The lectures begin at 1.05pm, end at 1.35pm and are followed by tea, coffee and discussion until 2pm.

On Wednesday Peter Barley will give a lunchtime organ recital in [St Mary's cathedral, Limerick](#), with music by Vierne, Sweeney, Elgar and Wiedermann. Admission is free but there will be a retiring collection in aid of the Companions of St Mary's Cathedral Music.

On Thursday evening at 7pm in [Christ Church cathedral, Dublin](#), there will be a service of remembrance for those who suffered during World War I. Then Cathedral Choir, with the Christ Church Chamber Orchestra will sing Duruflé's Requiem and World War I poetry will be read by Michael Lee. The act of remembrance will be led by the Dean, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, and the music will be directed by Ian Keatley.

In [St Fin Barre's cathedral, Cork](#), on Friday the centenary of World War I will be marked by the Western Front Association who will host 'An Evening of Remembrance in Music, Song and Story'.

See CNI Forward Look - on this web site for review of coming events

Dysart-Enos church at The Rock of Dunamaise defies The Big Wind

Leinster Express - Night of the Big Wind on January 6, 1839---and a function in The Holy Trinity Church at The Rock of Dunamaise 175 years later. The connection?

Well, the Big Wind, with hurricane gusts of up to 100 knots, badly damaged the Dysart-Enos Church near Ratheniska--so much so that that the Church of Ireland authorities decreed its abandonment.

Build a new structure, they ordered. And so arose The Holy Trinity Church at The Rock. Designed by Joseph Welland, architect to the delightfully named Board of First Fruits, it was completed in 1844.



Members of the Dysart Enos Conservation Committee , Laois Heritage Society and local residents , pictured with Minister for Arts , Heritage & the Gaeltacht - Heather Humphreys , T.D. at the Launch of the Dysart Enos Conservation Report in the Church of the Holy Trinity , Dunamase .

Interestingly, a memorial plaque to Captain William Perceval of Stradbally, who died aged 38 in September 1793,

was transferred from the old church to the new and is still in pristine condition. He was in His Majesty's 103rd Regiment of Foot.

The function in The Holy Trinity Church took place last Tuesday night (October 21). Its purpose was the launch of a conservation report on the Dysart-Enos Church. Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Minister Heather Humphreys did the honours.

Yes, the old Dysart-Enos Church and graveyard are still there, in a spectacular setting atop a hill, complete with mausoleum, burial vaults and headstones dating back centuries.

Though, surprisingly, still largely intact, the building is slowly but surely disintegrating as masonry tumbles from the tower and nave walls.

To the rescue has come the Dysart-Enos Old Church and Graveyard Conservation Committee, largely made up of Ratheniska people and chaired by former Co Councillor and heritage activist James Deegan.

It was they who commissioned the conservation report. Laois Partnership, headed by CEO Anne Goodwin, footed the bill. Conservation Architect Richard McLoughlin prepared the comprehensive report.

Next step is to use the report to seek European Rural Development Programme funds, due to be announced in early 2015, for the preservation of Dysart-Enos.

James Deegan stressed: "Time, however, is not on its side and if we are to conserve this ancient landmark we need to be successful in our quest for funding in the not too distant future." He added: "I am very hopeful we will not be disappointed."

When Dysart-Enos Church was vacated in 1839 or the early 1840s, it brought an end to a millennium of worship on the site.

According to architect Richard McLoughlin, St Aengus established a hermitage at Dysart-Enos. Believed to have been born at Clonenagh near Mountrath, he died in 830.

More at -

<http://www.leinsterexpress.ie/what-s-on/arts-culture-entertainment/dysart-enos-defies-the-big-wind-1-6382545>



Rev Steve Chalke

**Steve Chalke:
churches
can't criticise
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Christian Today -
The Oasis charity
headed by Rev
Steve Chalke is
to host a two-day
conference dealing

with the issue of same-sex relationships next April.

Organised by the Mesa Partnership, Open Church 2015 will include contributions both from people who do not believe that same-sex relationships are permissible for Christians and from those who do.

Among the confirmed speakers so far are Andrew Marin, president and founder of the Marin Foundation in Chicago; the Bishop of Buckingham, Rt

Rev Alan Wilson, who said at Wednesday's PinkNews Awards that he "ashamed" at the way gay people have been treated by the Church of England; and theologian Tony Campolo, who says he is "conservative on the issue of the Bible and same-sex relationships". Another speaker is Christian recording artist and theologian Vicky Beeching, who recently came out as gay.

The conference will include stories of Christians who have been affected by the issues, including those who have adopted a celibate lifestyle, explorations of wider issues around transsexuality and bisexuality and discussions of the psychological issues that can arise from growing up gay and Christian.

It will seek to address issues of how people who disagree within the Church can still work together, and how it is possible to build inclusive churches.

At an event for journalists last night Chalke said that the Open Church event was "not about changing views, it is about encouraging dialogue, creating a forum that makes dialogue possible".

However, he said that his own position was clear: "Gay people don't find evangelical churches to be an environment in which they feel welcome or can thrive. It isn't possible to believe that gay relationships are sinful and still be truly welcoming. However nicely you say that desire for someone of the same sex is sinful, you're still saying it."

Rejecting the validity of same-sex relationships, he said, "denies a fundamental principle that God is love".

The issue is one which has caused deep divisions within the evangelical movement. [Oasis was removed from membership](#) by the Evangelical Alliance following [an article Chalke wrote for Christianity magazine](#) in January last year in which he called for "an open and generous acceptance of people with sexualities other than heterosexual". At last night's meeting he said that he had written the article to begin a "gracious conversation" and to make it clear to the Oasis staff – around 5,000 in the UK – and the 25,000 children in its schools and projects that they were valued whatever their sexuality.

Questions were raised about whether the Open Church conference would adequately represent the conservative viewpoint of most evangelical Christians. Chalke said that the list of speakers had yet to be finalised and that he was committed to encouraging dialogue.

The conference will take place on Friday and Saturday, April 10-11 at Oasis' Waterloo headquarters. Early bird and group tickets can be booked [here](#).

http://www.christiantoday.com/article/same_sex_relationships_steve_chalkes_oasis_charity_announces_major_conference/42422.htm

Clergy are 'more like Old Labour than New' - C of E survey



Church Times - A survey commissioned to support debates on the future of the C of E yields some interesting results, says Linda Woodhead

The clergy of the Church of England are a unique tribe. Having lived and worked among them for extended periods, I long suspected this might be true. Now, thanks to a new survey designed with YouGov, I know just how true it is.

The survey was commissioned to support our new series of debates on the future of the Church of England. In order to avoid any bias, it was informed by a reference group drawn from across the Church. It was completed by 1509 Church of England clergy aged 70 and under.

The results indicate that it is representative of all churchmanships. When asked where they fall on a spectrum from Evangelical to Catholic, roughly a third of clergy say they are at the Evangelical end, a third at the Catholic end, and a third in the middle.

On a theologically liberal-to-conservative scale, 43 per cent place themselves at the liberal end, 32 per cent in the middle, and 24 per cent at

the conservative end. About a third of respondents are female, and about third are under 55.

Two things unite this tribe. First, faith in a personal God. Second, faith in the parish system ([News, 10 October](#)).

The tribe is also marked by distinctive ethical and political attitudes. One of the most surprising, given that it is not official church teaching, is opposition to the current abortion law: 16 per cent support an outright ban on abortion, and 43 per cent would like to see a reduction in the 24-week time limit. By contrast, only six per cent of all Anglicans, and the same proportion of the general population, want a ban.

On euthanasia, however, the clergy are the inverse of other Anglicans and the population as a whole. Whereas three-quarters of the latter groups favour a relaxation of the law, almost the same proportion of clergy (70 per cent) think that it should remain unchanged. There is also some variance on same-sex marriage: 51 per cent of clergy think it is wrong, compared with 47 per cent of all Anglicans, and 37 per cent of the population.

But whereas the clergy are to the right of the population in ethics, they are to the left in politics: Old Labour rather than New. "I thought I was looking at UKIP," said a friend of mine scanning the survey data, "until I got to the politics bit."

The left-lean is particularly evident in the clergy's overwhelming commitment to a generous welfare state. They are three times as likely as the general population to think that the welfare budget is too low and should be increased (44 per cent of clergy, 15 per cent of the population). Similarly, less than a third of clergy think that the current welfare system creates a culture of dependency, compared with three-fifths of the population, and more than two-thirds of Anglicans.

The clergy are also more positive - and completely opposed to UKIP - in their attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism. On the other hand, perhaps underlining their own sense of difference from wider society, a surprisingly high proportion of clerics (51 per cent) believe that Christians today are being discriminated against, by the Government and others, and by equality legislation.

Overall, then, Church of England clergy are distinguished from "the people" by slightly more conservative moral attitudes and, above all, by their strong commitment to God and to a generous system of universal welfare. They

uphold a vision of society in which all are housed and provided for, irrespective of their deserts - just as the clergy themselves are.

So far, so united. But, as well as these areas of convergence, there are divisions. The most important is between the third of clergy at the Evangelical end of the spectrum and the other two-thirds.

For example, a full 88 per cent of Evangelical clergy think that same-sex marriage is wrong; and they make up more than half of the 16 per cent of clergy who want an outright ban on abortion.

Most striking of all, however, is the way that male clergy at the Evangelical end of the spectrum differ about how to disagree. When asked what sort of unity they consider appropriate for the Church of England and the Anglican Communion (separate questions, but similar answers are given to both), most of the "middle" and Catholic clergy (73 per cent) agree that the goal is: "Maintaining unity by being more tolerant of diverse views", and 61 per cent of Evangelical women agree.

But most of the Evangelical clergy don't think this is a goal worth pursuing. One third think that the Communion should "separate amicably", and half think that greater uniformity should be imposed on everyone.

So much for facilitated conversations aimed at "disagreeing well". For the majority of Evangelical clergymen, the enterprise is misguided from the start.

Linda Woodhead is Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University, and organiser of the Westminster Faith Debate series on "The Future of the Church of England".

All the figures, unless otherwise stated, come from YouGov plc. Total sample size: 1509 Anglican clergy. Field-work undertaken between 14 August and 9 September 2014. The survey was carried out online. Figures for lay Anglicans and the general population come from a survey carried out by YouGov for Westminster Faith Debates in July 2013.

Christian Aid reached more than 290,000 people since Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines last year

A year since Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines, Christian Aid and its partner organisations continue to help affected communities and have reached more than 290,000 people with much-needed immediate food and shelter, as well as new means of earning an income.

On Friday 8th November 2013, Typhoon Haiyan – the strongest ever storm to make landfall – hit the Philippines, affecting more than 14 million people and forcing a further four million from their homes. An estimated 6,000 were killed.

Many faced an uncertain future after their ways of earning a living, namely coconut farming and fishing, were destroyed. In some areas, 95 per cent of coconut trees were demolished and the majority of boats were wrecked. It will take years for communities to fully recover.

Christian Aid and its partners are working with communities for the long-term, not only with income generation, such as vegetable growing, pig rearing, seaweed farming, and fishing, but also with schooling for children, community kitchens to provide nutritional meals, and psychosocial support for people who still struggle to come to terms with what happened. Communities and local governments are being encouraged to help themselves to build back better and stronger, and prepare for, and be more resilient against, future disasters.

Christian Aid's Head of Humanitarian, Nick Guttman, who travelled to the region days after Haiyan hit and recently revisited, said: "Last year, I witnessed utter devastation and immense personal suffering. Last week I returned to the same areas and saw massive changes - all the debris has been cleared away, electricity and telecommunications are back up and running, everyone had received some form of support and huge building and reconstruction work is taking place. It looked completely different.

"People are doing whatever they can to bring back normality but many don't have jobs, the coconut harvest is a mere 10 per cent of what it was before the typhoon. Millions still live in makeshift shelters as it takes years to rebuild over a million homes."



To date, Christian Aid's Typhoon Haiyan Appeal has raised more than £2.8 million, with thanks to the generosity of the British public.