



***The Rev Canon Jim Carson and Mrs Heather Carson.
The young painters tuck into lunch behind them.***

Habitat for Humanity helps Shankill Road parish create community space

Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland is working in partnership with St Michael's Parish Church, off the Shankill Road, on a new community

building project which will serve people across west Belfast.

Habitat volunteers of all backgrounds are helping to refurbish St Michael's parish hall in Craven Street. To date, volunteers have included young people taking part in Habitat's cross-community ChangeMakers Programme which explores social justice and active citizenship with 16 -18 year olds.

Carrickfergus Grammar School and St Dominic's Grammar School for Girls are just two of the schools who have worked together onsite. Work is closely supervised by trained professionals and includes cleaning, sanding, painting and basic construction.

Jenny Williams, Chief Executive of Habitat NI, said: "Since our founding in 1994, breaking down barriers between divided communities has been at the heart of our work. Thousands of volunteers have worked on Habitat community-building projects, in Northern Ireland and around the world. In our experience, when volunteers from different backgrounds engage in practical projects, like this one, meaningful relationships are developed based on understanding.



Students from Carrick Grammar School and St Dominic's who are taking part in the Habitat for Humanity project at St Michael's, Belfast.

“We are very excited about this partnership with St Michael's Parish. When the leadership of the church committed to invest in improving their hall they focused not only on the building but on what could be achieved through the project. It is about much more than four walls and a roof; it is bringing people together to help build a strong, inclusive community,” Mrs Williams continued.

Social action projects, advertised across west Belfast, will be hosted in the newly refurbished halls. These will include activities such as a Christians Against Poverty job club and support churchnewsireland@gmail.com

with free debt counselling services; budgeting and money management courses, a life-skills course; a 'Dinner Time Drama' group for primary aged children; and a social and sports group for older people.

The Rev Canon James Carson, Minister-in-Charge of St Michael's said: "Our church's vision is to serve the local community. Our hope is that this project will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of people of all ages; actively demonstrating God's love by bringing people together to build relationships and trust, and restore hope."

St Michael's parish halls were built around 1980. Over the years they have become dated, and one of the largest rooms, the Moore Room, had become something of a 'dumping ground' according to Heather Carson, Parish Development Officer.

Now it is painted and tidied up, the Moore Room will have something of a re-birth, and will be used for many of the activities outlined above. "Having this space is key to our community outreach," said Heather.

Pupils from a total of nine schools will have taken part in the project at St Michael's by the time it is complete.

To learn more about Habitat's work visit habitatni.co.uk.

Presbyterians asked to pray for US election

Church leaders in the USA have called on Scots to pray for the country amid growing tensions over the presidential election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton.

The Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), The Church of Scotland's American partner organisation, has issued a call to the faithful to pray for peace and a "non-violent transition from one president to the next".

The Right Rev Dr Russell Barr, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland who is currently in the USA on official business, said he was "quite taken aback" by the mood in the country and has backed the call.

He added that people in Scotland would “understand something of the anxieties and concerns” of their American neighbours due to the impact of the Scottish Independence referendum in 2014 and the European Union membership referendum in June this year.

A letter signed by key officials within the Presbyterian Mission Agency, which has been sent to partner churches across the world, states: “On November 8, 2016, we will hold a national election for many government offices, including the presidency of the United States.

“Tensions and animosity are increasing here, and people are divided bitterly.

“Families have been torn apart, communities are at odds with each other and in some places, violence is threatened.

“In these remaining days leading up to our election and the transition of power that will occur thereafter, we ask your prayers for our nation and our church.

“We urge you to pray for peace and a non-violent transition from one president to the next, and one Congress to the next .”

Anglicans and Orthodox agree on resolution of key doctrinal difference

The official dialogue between the Anglican Communion and the Oriental Orthodox Churches have reached further agreement on the theological understanding of the Holy Spirit. The Anglican Oriental Orthodox International Commission met last week in Lebanon, Beirut, to consider their consideration of the Holy Spirit, which began last year in Wales.

Last year, the AOOIC communiqué recommended the omission of the Filioque clause – the words “and the son” which western churches added to “...which proceeds from the Father” in the Nicene Creed without international consensus. The Anglican co-chair of the Commission, Bishop Gregory Cameron from St Asaph in Wales, said at the time that it had “long been a source of contention between Western and Eastern Christians.”

In their communiqué issued at the end of last week’s talks, the members of the AOOIC said that “having completed its work on the

Procession of the Holy Spirit at its 2015 meeting, the Commission continued its reflection on the second part of its Agreed Statement on pneumatology, ‘The Sending of the Holy Spirit in Time (Economia).’

“This second part considers the action of the Holy Spirit in the life and mission of the Church making it one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The Co-Chairs signed the second part of Agreed Statement that will be sent to our churches for reflection and comment, after which the Commission will produce the full statement, ‘The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit,’ in its final form.”

Catholics and Lutherans must ‘move beyond controversies of the past’, says Pope Francis

Pope Francis urged Catholics and Lutherans to take decisive steps toward unity and “move beyond” the controversies that have divided western Christianity.

However, the Pope nevertheless offered no new openings to the idea of sharing Communion before full unity is achieved.



“We Christians will be credible witnesses of mercy to the extent that forgiveness, renewal and reconciliation are daily experienced in our midst,” the Pope said on October 31 during an ecumenical prayer service in the Lutherans’ Lund cathedral, which was built as a Catholic cathedral in the 11th century.

With the prayer service, Pope Francis and leaders of the Lutheran World Federation launched a year of activities to mark the 500th anniversary in 2017 of Martin Luther’s efforts to reform the Church.

For Pope Francis and the Vatican, Catholics are called to commemorate the event by focusing on churchnewsireland@gmail.com

concrete ways to express and strengthen the doctrinal agreements reached by Catholic and Lutheran theologians over the past 50 years. The most appropriate way to mark the anniversary, they said, was with common prayer and renewed commitments to working together to help the poor and promote justice.

The Lutherans agree, but many also saw the joint commemoration as a moment to recognize that the joint agreements on issues of faith over the past 50 years mean it is appropriate now to expand occasions when eucharistic sharing is possible.

The Catholic Church has insisted that regular sharing of the Eucharist will be possible only when divided Christians have attained full unity.

In his homily at the Lund cathedral, the Rev Martin Junge, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, expressed his hope for shared Communion sooner.

News briefs

+++ Irish Methodist diversity - The Methodist Church President on Sunday last shared in worship in Dublin West amongst its wonderfully

diverse multi-ethnic congregation. The minister is Rev Katherine Kehoe.

+++ Clogher diocesan Healing Service -

Sunday 6th November – Healing Service in Cleenish Parish Church at 7.30pm. Organised by the Ministry of Healing Committee.

+++ Monkstown Parish November Fair - takes

place on Saturday 19th November in the Knox Hall, Monkstown Village, Co. Dublin, from 10am to 2pm. Admission Free. Cakes, clothes, bric-a-brac, Christmas gifts and crafts. All welcome!

+++ Derry 'Day of Mercy' - At St Eugene's

Cathedral Saturday, 5th Nov, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available 11.30 am – 6pm, with visiting priests.

+++ Supporting Aleppo - An Evening of Music

& Reflection will be held at St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry on Fri 18th Nov 8pm. Retiring Collection in aid of the Suffering People of Aleppo, Syria

+++ Rector of the Bailieborough appointed -

The Revd Ian Horner has been appointed as

Rector of the Bailieborough Group of Parishes in the Diocese of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh. He has been the Curate of the Bailieborough Group since August 2014. Ian is originally from Greystones in Co. Wicklow. Having earned qualifications in Business Management and in Sound Engineering & Music Technology he went to work for The Leprosy Mission Ireland. Following that he spent 5 years as Youth and Children's Co-ordinator at Kill O' The Grange Parish in Dublin. Having felt God's call to ministry he started training in 2011, and was ordained as Presbyter in 2014 after completing placements in Christ Church Bray, Christ Church Wharton (Cheshire, UK), and the Parish of Powerscourt with Kilbride, and serving as Deacon in Greystones Parish. Ian is married to Jenny and they have two sons, Sam (3) and Leo (1). In his spare time he enjoys music and football. He and his family are looking forward to continuing to journey with the people of Bailieborough, Muallgh, Shercock and Knockbride, with God's Word lighting the way. *'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.'* Psalm 119:105. Ian's Institution will take place at in Bailieborough Parish Church on Sunday 27th November at 7pm.

+++ Connor Connections autumn edition -

The autumn edition of the diocesan magazine Connor Connections is now available, and can be picked up free in churches across the diocese. This issue features the latest news from Connor's partner Diocese of Yei in South Sudan, the new Connect Base run by the North Belfast Centre of Mission in the Shankill Road, a life-saving move by St Brigid's Parish, Mallusk, and a report on Connor Synod. There are special features on an Advent initiative by the Parish Piecemakers in Larne, and a new workplace ministry programme in Lisburn Cathedral. There are also reports on all the activities the Engage Connor Youth Council has been running for young people, and an insight into children's ministry in the diocese.

+++ Fire closed Exeter Cathedral - The Bishop of Exeter has praised the "heroic" efforts of firefighters who have spent the past few days fighting a major fire in a historic building on Exeter's Cathedral Green in the south-west of England. The cathedral was forced to move Sunday's services to the Chapter House as emergency services continued to fight the fire that has reduced the Royal Clarence Hotel – reputed to be England's oldest hotel – to rubble.

The cathedral remained closed on Monday as firefighters continue to damp down hotspots in the remains of the buildings. Famous visitors over the years include Admiral Nelson, Franz Liszt, Beatrix Potter, Thomas Hardy, Clark Gable and Gary Cooper. It was also a temporary resting place for the body of Queen Victoria's father, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent and Strathearn, on its journey from nearby Sidmouth, where he died, to Windsor where his funeral was held.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Are Protestants closer to the ideal of model citizen than are Catholics?

Irish Times

Another way was to emphasise the lineage of the **Church of Ireland** as predating the Reformation, retrofitting St Patrick into Irish history as a sort of ...
<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/are-protestants-closer-to-the-ideal-of-model-citizen-than-are-catholics-1.2847293>

NI Education Department seeks single transfer test by 2017

BBC News

The BBC understands the Department of Education aims to have a common test in place by November 2017.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-37818405>

Time to take a hard look at how we do education

Irish Examiner

On redeployment, primary teachers go into a clearing system run by the Catholic or **Church of Ireland** diocese, with the bishop's clerk acting as a ...

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/business/time-to-take-a-hard-look-at-how-we-do-education-428280.html>

Tom Kelly: More important issues than words on a cake

Irish News

"The way that both some Christians and some members of the LGBT made this a cause celebre for either side was frustrating"

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/10/29/news/tom-kelly-column-759856/>

Genesis II Church 'bishop' fined €4,000 for making and marketing 'autism cure'

The Journal.ie

Genesis II says it is a health and hearing church which does good deeds and enlightens others with the truth.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/genesis-ii-bishop-mms-autism-cure-3051148-Oct2016/>

Metro/Mail online

Reports that the final service has been held at the small Orthodox church in the Calais 'Jungle'

Camp where migrants with nowhere else to go, have observed their faith.

Even though the camp was shut down this week, many have stayed behind. The makeshift church is one of the few structures within the camp that has not yet been torn down. And dozens of young Eritreans and Ethiopians gathered there for the church's final service before it, like the rest of the camp, is bulldozed.

<http://metro.co.uk/2016/10/30/prayers-for-the-last-time-at-the-calais-jungles-makeshift-church-6224334/>

Mail on Sunday

Feature in the Mail on Sunday's You Magazine on inner city congregations attracting young professionals. Includes an interview with Josh Felstead, an associate youth pastor at St Stephen's Church, Twickenham and includes a link to the Church of England's Lord's Prayer advert, banned by cinema advertisers in 2015.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-3871686/Young-hip-holy-Britain-s-inner-city-churches-attracting-new-generation-cool-worshippers.html>

Mail

Report that the Bishop of Exeter has praised the "heroic" firefighters battling a blaze at "the country's oldest hotel" the Royal Clarence Hotel in Exeter, situated on the Cathedral Green. Robert Atwell said crews had worked "overboard" to protect buildings on Exeter's Cathedral Green where an "inferno" gutted the hotel. Bishop Robert said he was "pretty convinced that the whole frontage is going to collapse", but said he hoped the fascia would be rebuilt."

Tel

Profile of the cleric and broadcaster the Rev Richard Coles. The paper asks Richard, "What his younger self would think if he could see him today..."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/thinking-man/rev-richard-coles-its-not-unusual-for-christians-to-have-racy-pa/>

Tel

Feature on ethical investing which recalls that the Church Commissioners had been 'embarrassed' in 2013 over the discovery of an indirect stake in Wonga - later sold - after Church officials had been critical of the payday lender.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/investing/funds/so-you-think-youre-an-ethical-investor-do-you/>

Times

Reports that the Church of Scotland is to launch a clerical webchat service to offer spiritual guidance to those who are reluctant to come to church. As part of the initiative, people will get the chance to book a private chat with a minister online. They can expect to hear back within three hours under the trial project. The service will go live in the new year. A separate 24-hour chatline to discuss religious questions is also being set up.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/kirk-to-launch-webchat-for-online-spiritual-guidance-k8wfcgbzr>