



C of E General Synod schedule amended to allow members to watch England World Cup game

The Church of England has amended the schedule of its General Synod so members can watch England's quarter final



FIFA World Cup clash against Sweden.

Premier learned yesterday, Friday, how one member of the Church's governing body - General Synod - intended to table a motion calling for a pause in proceedings, hours before kick-off at the Samara Stadium in Russia.

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Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford said he suspected General Synod seminars coinciding with the match on Saturday afternoon would be "very lightly attended".

Nearly 480 members - including bishops, clergy and lay people - are attending the five-day summit in York.

The minister in charge of Bury St Edmunds Christ Church said he planned to ask leaders, "could we have a variation of business to allow us to participate in this historic and significant spiritual event?"

Pressed on why the game was a "spiritual event", he answered that there was a "sad" phenomena of the outcome of World Cup matches impacting people's "wellbeing".

Manager Gareth Southgate has been preparing his squad for the most important World Cup fixture for England since the 2006 World Cup.

Items on the agenda for the General Synod meeting include how the Church has responded to abuse allegations made against clergy, and how relationships between the Church and black-majority churches might be strengthened.

Meanwhile, the Swedish Church in London is urging members of its congregation to bring friends to a screening of Saturday's knock out clash.

Rector, Rev Gunnar Ledwon said "That's the good thing... to have this occasion where we meet people who don't

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regularly go to church every Sunday but they are feeling somehow connected to the Swedish Church here.

"These and other cultural happenings they are great bridge-builders... we like to work that way."

England progressed to the quarter finals after beating Colombia on penalties in the last-16 stage.

Streetreach in Crumlin and Glenavy

Streetreach 2018 got underway on Tuesday evening, with Connor young people partnering with a group of 24



Americans

from Christ in Youth to bring mission alive in Glenavy and Crumlin.

As well as worship as worship, discussion and prayer time, the young folk will be running a kids' club, a car wash, a treasure hunt and will be out and about clearing litter in places like Crumlin Glen. On Wednesday there was a real treat for residents of a local care home when one of the teams called in to say hello.



Streetreach continues until Friday evening – but a big finale will be a carnival and barbecue at Crumlin Leisure Centre on Friday afternoon.

Church to the fore in Dunmanaway tourism launch

Hot on the heels of the opening of the innovative Sam Maguire Community Bells which were installed in St. Mary's Church in Dunmanway in 2017 to remember Dunmanway's most famous son (Sam Maguire), on Wednesday, 20th June, the official launch of a new Dunmanway Tourism Brochure, Website, and Tourist Information Point took place in the recreational area of Dunmanway Swimming Pool.

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Brendan Hayes (Sam Maguire Documentary Producer), the Rev. Cliff Jeffers (Church of Ireland Rector, Dunmanway).

The launch included the Discover Dunmanway tourism brochure, the opening of a Fáilte Ireland Tourist Information point in EuroSpar, Dunmanway, the new <http://www.visitdunmanway.ie> website, and the unveiling of the Sam Maguire Story Board Exhibition at Dunmanway Swimming Pool.

This project was initiated by the Rev. Cliff Jeffers of St.Mary's Church of Ireland, Dunmanway (where Sam Maguire is buried) in partnership with the Dunmanway Chamber of Commerce. In September 2017 they approached Cork Institute of Technology's school of marketing to be involved in their extended campus program for placing of interns in industry and community projects.

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Ten of the fifteen attractions highlighted in the Dunmanway area are free to visit. The attractions which were selected including a Windfarm walk, Funmanway, West Cork Biscuit Factory, St. Mary's Church and the Sam Maguire Community bells, guided and self-guided historic walking tour, Sam Maguire's Homestead, Dunmanway Swimming Pool, (and 8 more).

John Power, a third year marketing student from Clonmel in Co. Tipperary was selected, and his internship started on the 1st February 2018. This launch is the outcome of the objectives that he has been developing for the promotion of tourism in Dunmanway with the focus on good value for money and telling the story of Sam Maguire. Funding for this initiative has been provided by Cork County Council through the Towns and Village Renewal Scheme from the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, *Rural* and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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C of I Priorities Fund now open for applications

The Church of Ireland Priorities Fund is now open for applications. The fund provides resources for growth within the Church of Ireland and the wider community.

Church of Ireland



Priorities Fund

Contributions to the fund come directly from parishes and since its establishment in 1980 over €17 million (£14 million) has been distributed in grants.

Four categories are currently supported by the fund:

- Training – lay and ordained;
- Christian education;
- Outreach initiatives; and
- Innovative ministry in a rural context.

Application forms for grants to parishes or organisations within the Church are available from the Administrator, Clare McEnaney, who may be contacted via priorities@ireland.anglican.org, on 00 353 (0) 1 412 5607, or through the Priorities Fund Office, Church of Ireland House, churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 CF47. Please note that the fund is not open to applications from individuals. Forms can also be downloaded from www.priorities.ireland.anglican.org

The closing date for the receipt of completed application forms is Monday, 31st October 2018.

GB Methodists to ‘re-examine’ sexuality stance – but choose not to vote on marriage

The GB Methodist Conference has welcomed proposals to “re-examine” and redraft its official position on marriage before the 2019 Conference to include a more “adequate” position on both same-sex and heterosexual couples in the 21st century.

The Conference, the governing body of the [Methodist Church](#), meeting at Nottingham University this week, was presented with an interim report on marriage and relationships from a task group that was set up in 2016 to discuss the issues.

The [report](#) was discussed in small groups after a [presentation](#) from the chair, the Revd Kenneth G. Howcroft, on Monday, and received without debate on Wednesday afternoon. The plan was to have a new marriage statement by January 2021. A draft would be produced next year in consultation with the faith and order board followed by a two-year consultation period.

The vote to accept the report and this timetable was followed, however, by an emotional debate on a last-minute



Bishop of Aston, the Rt Revd Anne Hollinghurst, addresses the Methodist Conference

notice of motion to allow Methodist ministers to conduct same-sex marriage in churches.

The [notice of motion](#) was proposed by the Revd Mark Rowland, seconded by the Revd Delyth A Liddell, and signed by four members of the Conference. It expressed disappointment at the slip in the timetable from the task group.

The motion stated: “The Conference believes that the missional imperative of this question, and the need to give a clear message of continued affirmation and love to LGBT+ members of the Methodist Church, require that this question be clearly answered before 2020 or 2021.

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“It is already five years since legislation to allow Same-Sex Marriages was passed in England and Wales and legislation in Scotland was passed the following year. The Conference is aware that there are some ministers, members and probationers and churches who would gladly participate in the solemnisation of same-sex marriages as well as those who would not feel able in conscience to do so.

“The Conference believes we must try to honour the consciences of all in this area. This could be done by allowing those ministers and churches who feel so called by God to solemnise same-sex marriages, whilst protecting the right of those who do not wish to do so to refrain.”

It also included a resolution to allow nominated Methodist ministers to conduct same-sex marriages in churches. A point of order was raised requesting that the vote to accept the resolution be not put, however. This was narrowly accepted by a counted vote of the Conference, 170 to 110. This meant that the Conference was not required vote on the resolution on same-sex marriage.

The work of the task group will therefore continue as stated in their report. It states: “The task group recognises that many people, representing a wide spectrum of opinions, are concentrating their attention on the issue of same-sex marriage.

“There often appears to be an underlying assumption that the Conference already has an adequate definition of and statement about marriage from a Christian perspective as it applies to heterosexual couples in the 21st-century; and that the decision to be made is essentially one of policy as to whether that understanding can and should include the

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possibility of it being applied to same-sex couples, or must necessarily exclude them.”

The group had agreed that the current 1992 Statement, “while containing much that is still relevant and helpful, is no longer adequately guiding the thinking and practice of the Methodist people even in so far as it applies to heterosexual couples. . .

“The whole of the Methodist Church’s understanding and practice with regards to marriage and other significant personal relationships needs to be re-examined and, where necessary, restated.”

Listed in the report are questions on how gender, sex, sexuality, marriage, cohabiting, and other forms of relationship might be understood in a Methodist context, including sexual relations outside of marriage. It also explores “what God is doing” when two people are married, and whether Church statements on marriage have “any effect” on how people behave privately.

The group had been unable to produce a proper draft statement in time for the meeting this year, as previously agreed, the report says, due to the unforeseen disruption caused by a change of chair and “several bouts of significant ill-health” among its members.

RSCM says goodbye to Lord Gill

The Rt Hon Lord Brian Gill, who has been Chairman of the RSCM since 2010, retires this summer.

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Brian Gill has been incredibly active in church music since his school days. He served for more than 30 years as organist and choirmaster of St Columba's RC Church, Edinburgh. From 1997 to 2006, he was also a



governor and Chairman of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

With many years' experience of church choirs and congregational singing at 'grass roots level', Brian has significant knowledge, skills and understanding in how the RSCM operates. Combined with a legal career that took him to the highest level of the profession in Scotland, his unique blend of experience has influenced and driven areas of significant change for the RSCM over the last eight years.

Specifically, his vision of 'extending the RSCM's reach among the Christian denominations', 'collaborations with other bodies' and 'helping churches that have limited or no resources' has been successfully realised and achieved at the RSCM and continues to be a strategic priority.

During his Chairmanship, the roles of Head of Ministerial Training, Head of Congregational and Instrumental Music and Head of Choral Studies were created to lead the

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RSCM's three key areas of educational output to widen the breadth of its service delivery.

Lord Gill's significant contribution to the RSCM will be sorely missed, however, he looks forward to seeing the RSCM develop and flourish under new Director, Hugh Morris, who takes up his post in August 2018.

News briefs



+++Dún Laoghaire Organ Concert series

The next concert in the Dún Laoghaire Organ Concert series will feature David Leigh performing Bach, Hindemith, Dupré and Farrington. <http://ow.ly/jzZT30kOg5f>

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+++Honorary degree for former Dean

Former Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann, has described his honorary degree from Ulster University as a surprise and ‘a huge honour.’ He was presented with an Honorary Doctorate at a ceremony in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, on Wednesday July 4. That evening he gave an address at the Ulster University Post–Graduation Dinner held in Belfast Cathedral.



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