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CHURCH FORA NEWSLETTER

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RENEWED HOPE BEYOND SECTARIANISM

Advent renews hope in God's future. The future reign of God, already present, is characterised by compassion, social solidarity, social justice and peace. During Advent we hear Bible readings with those themes and we enter into the longing and desire for a different society and world. We renew our hope in God's future.

We may feel at present that such hope is deferred. Dissident activity is on the increase, encouraged no doubt by a political vacuum, but without community support. Sectarianism has been described as the root of our historical problems and some of those who were involved in past violence say that 8-9 year olds are more sectarian now than they were at their age. The root problem remains in attitudes and behavioural patterns. The Executive has failed by a long shot to produce an anti-sectarian strategy for Northern Ireland. There is an inability to resolve a number of outstanding issues such as policing and justice and education. Many may even feel that children are pawns in sectarian politics. Where is hope? Where is the desired future?

At the same time there are citizens in civic society building bridges of understanding, enhancing relationships across sectarian, racial, ethnic and gender divides. There are acts of social solidarity, shared prayer and reflection not possible a few years ago, and imaginative thinking and action which point to a different future. Inter-church fora and other inter-church and inter-faith groups are often signs of hope and keep hope alive in the face of disappointment and despair. Living as advent people towards a desired future is what faith or living faithfully is about.

To overcome sectarianism is also an imperative since sectarianism has always had religious roots, even when self-righteousness and superiority translate into secular and political practice. The faith community has particular responsibility to address and overcome sectarianism. There are theological strategies which point beyond sectarianism and its religious content.

- Revisioning God – holding together the biblical paradox of particularly and universality, as well as openness to God as incomprehensible mystery.
- Re-reading the Bible as a socio-political text – rescuing the Bible from religion and discovering it as a book of resistance to all religious and political domination systems.
- The practice of reconciliation which embraces the political, economic, psychological and spiritual – Psalm 85 is a model of reconciliation in which mercy, truth, justice and peace are interdependent and interrelated prerequisites for reconciliation.
- Creative engagement with the paradigm shift from belief to faith, from belief as assent to doctrines and propositions to faith as openness to the mystery of God and God's future of justice and peace.

There are other theological strategies to help overcome sectarianism but these four are starters. Advent is a radically subversive season when renewed hope undermines society and the world as it is. We renew our hope in God's future, God's alternative to our sectarian past and present.

Dr Johnston McMaster • Advent 2009

CHRISTIANITY IN DIALOGUE



Members of Enniskillen and Cavan groups pictured at a residential conference in September which was a follow-up to the course 'Christianity in Dialogue'. Participants had an opportunity for dialogue about Hinduism and Baha'i Faith. Anita Mukerjee from Enniskillen gave a presentation about Hinduism and Maurice and Alla Pickett, from Cavan, spoke about Baha'i faith. The theme of the conference was 'Citizenship Tolerance and Respect'

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the sixth issue of the Church Fora Newsletter. I hope you will garner encouragement, hope and inspiration from the accounts of practical actions for reconciliation and peace-building detailed in this issue of the Newsletter.

At our recent autumn CONNECT meeting inter-church groups came together to reflect again on the issue of sectarianism and in his address at that meeting Dr. Johnston McMaster provided new insights on theological strategies to overcome this insidious problem. Some of these insights are reflected in his article in this Newsletter. This month's Copenhagen climate change conference has raised issues which compel us to reflect on our 'stewardship' of the ecological community. Already some of the inter-church groups are raising awareness about our responsibility for God's household - 'oikumene', the household of all of life. A failure to take seriously our lifestyles' contribution to climate change poses threats to survival and raises issues of justice as the poorest of the world are most affected - a predicted 70 million in Bangladesh

will lose their homes through flooding as a result of a further rise in temperature.

In the midst of these challenges we are called again in Advent 2009 to live in Advent hope consoled by Advent promise.

In reflecting on the season of Advent Joyce Rupp describes it as a season of opening doors. It is a time to deepen and strengthen our relationship with the Holy One so that more of the divine presence within us shines through and offers a welcome to others. It is a season to open the doors of our hearts so that we can both give and receive this love. One of the ways we can do this is by seeing ourselves and others as doors through which the divine presence continually seeks an entrance - therein lies a key to transformation in individual lives and in the life of the community.

Once again I thank all those who contributed to this Newsletter and wish the blessings of this Advent and Christmas season to all our readers.

Eileen Gallagher

REPORT ON TRIP TO COLMCILLE BY COOKSTOWN AND DISTRICT INTER-CHURCH FORUM

On Saturday, 5th September, 2009, Cookstown Churches' Forum made a trip to the Colmcille Heritage Centre in Co. Donegal. Columba or St Colmcille (the Dove of the Church) has his roots firmly planted in Donegal, of course, and in the whole of the North-west of Ireland. On our way to the heritage centre, we stopped in Londonderry, or Doire Colmcille, where we made a visit to the Tower Museum. Richard Magowan (Risteard Mac Gabhann) Chairman of Colmcille gave us a talk on St Columba and his significance in Ireland, Scotland, Northumbria and farther afield in Northern Europe. We had a tour of the Museum which told the story of Derry from the foundation of Columba's Monastery until the present.

From the Tower Museum we travelled to Colmcille Heritage Centre near Gartan, Co Donegal where we had lunch. Sadly, the weather was typical, so we did not get a walk in the grounds, but we were given an interesting talk on the saint by Martin Egan, an organiser of the centre.

On our way home, we visited Glenveagh National Park, which gave us a short respite from the intellectual pursuits of the earlier part of the day.

Last year, 2008, we paid a visit to Lindisfarne (Holy Island), settled by members of the community at Iona. Our group has been following St Colmcille, Columba, over the past few years, and this trip was in preparation for our annual trip, which next spring is to Iona where Columba established his Monastery. The trip will be over 5 days, stopping in Glasgow, with visits to the Museum of Religious Life and also Rangers and Celtic Football grounds.

Anyone who is interested in going along with us would be very welcome; our contact is Des Hunter, whose e-mail address is deshunt@aol.com. We would be glad to open our trip to members of other groups, to make more personal contacts throughout the province, and across the border.



Members of Cookstown Church Forum pictured with Mike Nesbitt, speaker at the AGM in May



Des Hunter Cookstown Church Forum at the Colmcille Heritage Centre in September



Robin Scott CE Prison Fellowship NI who was the guest speaker at Cookstown Church Forum October meeting. He is pictured with members of the Forum.

CHURCHES' FORUM CELEBRATE TEN YEARS

The Coleraine Borough Churches Forum held a celebratory dinner on Wednesday 28 October to mark their tenth anniversary.

The occasion was attended by 130 people including family and friends of Forum members as well as other representatives from the churches in the area who have supported them through the years. Guests were welcomed to the Lodge Hotel by Mr Derek J Ewing MBE, a professional Toastmaster and MC, in whose expert hands the smooth running of the whole event was assured. The relaxed and pleasant tone of the evening was further enhanced by some charming and atmospheric harp playing by Miss Aoibheann Kelly, daughter of vice-chairman Mrs Eileen Kelly.

Following a very pleasant meal, the chairman, Mrs Isobel McDonagh welcomed everyone and emphasised that they were gathered to celebrate the life of the Forum. She talked of the journey they had made and the new relationships which had been formed. Forum members were reminded that, since through Christ humanity had been made holy, so Forum members, by recognising and respecting each other's humanity, had acquired a 'community holiness'.

Mrs McDonagh then introduced the two other key people who had been heavily involved in setting up the Forum. First, Mr Tony McGonigle who had been Community Officer at the Borough Council ten years ago, and whose idea it was to create a churches' forum.



Rev. Bert Ritchie and Derek Ewing Master of Ceremonies at Coleraine Borough Church Forum celebratory dinner.

Mr McGonigle spoke of the feelings of many following the Omagh bombing outrage and his vision of 'creating a space' in order to be able to 'eyeball' other people from different perspectives across the room. He remembered how, over the ensuing years, there had been 'many a loud voice – but never an angry word'. He also reflected on how much courage had often been shown in terms of the choice of invited speakers, and he pointed out that the large turnout for this evening's celebration was testimony to the work which had gone on over the years. This work had resulted in representation from twenty-four church groups across the area.

The Chairman then introduced the second speaker, the Rev Bert Ritchie, whom she described as having an ear for this community which had always amazed her. Mr Ritchie paid tribute to Mrs McDonagh and the enthusiasm and commitment which she had brought to this work over the years. He spoke of the problem of Christians 'hiding behind the walls of our churches, thinking we were strengthening our faith –when in fact we were weakening it', and he issued an invitation to all those not yet involved, saying 'we would encourage you to join us in our journey of discovery'.

The two guest speakers of the evening were both clergy who had been in Coleraine at the time of the Forum's beginnings and had played an important role in supporting it in those early days. The Rt Rev Ken Clarke, now Church of Ireland Bishop of Kilmore was previously rector of St Patrick's Parish Church, Coleraine, and

the Rev Father Eugene Boland, currently of Cappagh Parish, Omagh, was previously Parish Priest of St John's RC Church, Coleraine.

Bishop Clarke spoke first and expressed his 'genuine joy' at being with the Forum at this time. He told how Cavan is famous for its story-telling evenings, and he went on to note that Jesus had been the greatest story-teller ever. He then went on to relate three modern parables which highlighted the negative way in which the world often sees the church, the need for us to be prepared to move our boundaries and the way in which Jesus is often more honoured in some of the Third world countries who have so much less than ourselves. The Bishop commented on the appropriateness of the new logo of the Forum which shows different people kneeling in prayer at the foot of the cross, and he ended his talk by thanking God for the last ten years and wishing the Forum a very happy birthday.

During an interval between the two main speakers, guests were entertained by the Causeway Chorale, a group of singers drawn from different denominations, who gave an excellent rendition of three songs.

The second guest speaker, Father Eugene Boland, told his audience that he had spent six years in Coleraine which were not always easy, but it had always seemed significant to him that he had both arrived and left during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. He had many good memories of

the Churches Forum including all the visits to other churches brought about by the Bridge-Builder Groups. These visits were of great interest and had helped him discover more about the traditions of other denominations which enabled his understanding of them. He emphasised that unity in prayer was vital... 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it'

Father Boland identified the need to realise the pettiness of our differences, especially when compared to the real



Bishop Ken Clarke, Chairperson Isobel McDonagh and Father Eugene Boland

suffering of millions of people who have no home and nothing to eat, and he pointed out that peace-making was not a passive thing but rather involved hard work and sacrifice. He praised the Churches' Forum for their many sacrifices for peace and hoped that God would continue to bless it for many years to come.

The proceedings were brought to an end by the Vice-Chairman, Mrs Eileen Kelly who thanked both speakers as well as the Lodge Hotel for all their excellent arrangements. She also paid tribute to the Chairman, Mrs McDonagh. A presentation was made to each of the two speakers, and Bishop Ken Clarke pronounced the benediction.



Vera McBride and Eileen Kelly cutting the 10th Anniversary Cake.



Some of the 130 guests from different churches who attended the celebratory anniversary event hosted at the Lodge Hotel in Coleraine

FCF WALKING ROUND THE CHURCHES IN TEMPO

Packing ourselves into the Presbyterian Church

Our walk round the Tempo churches on Sunday, 28th June, was a great success, whether measured in numbers – approaching 100 – the expressions of appreciation of many participants, or the lovely weather the Lord blessed us with.

We were warmly welcomed at the start by Kay Cromie to the Methodist church on the outskirts of Tempo, then drove and walked to the Catholic church in the heart of the town. There Father John Halton enlightened us on the significance of the many church furnishings, as they reveal different aspects of our Christian faith.

Back then to the Presbyterian church where Rev. Charles

Clements welcomed us and led us in prayer and praise, and finally just next door to the Church of Ireland where Rev. Maurice Armstrong welcomed us, and after an explanation of their commemorative plaques there, asked a blessing on us as we shared in very enjoyable tea, sandwiches and cakes in the Church of Ireland halls across the main street.

Many folk said they would like this experience repeated, and we hope that the local churches will give due thought to arranging something similar in future years to continue building up the goodwill so evident in the Tempo community.

John Phillips

PENTECOST ECUMENICAL SERVICE

Members of Fermanagh Churches Forum once again helped to organise and participated in a Pentecost ecumenical service.

This year's Clogher ecumenical service was in Errigal Truagh graveyard in Mullinacross on a sunny spring last afternoon of May. Errigal is from the Irish Airegeal, an oratory or sacred house, and the site includes the ruins of a mediaeval church, a holy well and the present Church of Ireland church.

Bishop Joseph Duffy opened by reflecting on the ancient site, once part of the same parish as Donagh, last year's site. Errigal is traditionally linked to Saint Muadhan and Bishop Duffy gave a most interesting account of him, probably a convert to Christianity at the time of Saint Patrick. His name is from an Irish word meaning 'noble,' After the opening hymn, led by the excellent Blackwater inter-church choir and musicians, Bishop Michael Jackson spoke on readings from Numbers and John 15 and 16, taking as his central text the words

of Jesus, about the Holy Spirit, "And when He comes He will prove the world wrong." Bishop Jackson said Christianity and the churches appear irrelevant in the modern world and we, with often negative attitudes, must bear some responsibility. However, God is greater, and the Holy Spirit will indeed 'prove the world wrong,' if we follow His leading, not standing apart from the world but with those in need, those we have hurt and those who have hurt us. Following the readings and Psalm, two young people from St. Macartan's College and Monaghan Collegiate Secondary School spoke movingly of their own responses to the readings and their Christian lives in the world today.

To end, a delicious tea at the Blackwater Learning Centre, provided by Church of Ireland ladies, let us meet and share with new and old friends.

The afternoon was beautiful in every way and gave us all hope, and a renewed sense of community and vision.

Tanya Jones

HANDS ACROSS THE BORDER

Canon Swann Sligo in conversation with Rev. Kevin Mullan in the Tara Centre Omagh

On Sat. June 6th members of Dungannon churches Forum met with members of the Riverbrooke group in Omagh. This is part of the 'Hands across the border' the initiative to make existing Fora more sustainable by establishing closer links with inter-church groups in the ROI. The groups visited the Garden of Remembrance in Omagh and Ms Kim McLaughlin, staff member of Omagh District Council, explained how the garden was developed and its symbolic features. The groups then went to the Tara Centre where, after lunch, they listened to a talk by Rev. Kevin Mullan who was based in Omagh at

the time of the Omagh bomb. A question and answer session followed and Kevin Mullan was

joined by Canon Swann COI who had accompanied the Sligo group to Omagh.



Members of Dungannon Area Churches Forum pictured with members of the Riverbrooke Group in the Garden of Remembrance Omagh in June.

CARRICKFERGUS BOROUGH CHURCH FORUM

Guest speaker at CBCF AGM was Jeremy Gardiner



Jeremy's role in Youthlink was to help support people from differing church or community backgrounds, engage with community relations, active citizenship and peace building. He has been involved in significant on the ground inter-community dialogue and conflict resolution work in Ballymena and beyond.

A DAY OF PRIVATE REFLECTION ON 'THE TROUBLES'

Carrickfergus Borough Church Forum responded to the invitation to provide space for private reflection on the conflict in and about Northern Ireland, euphemistically referred to as 'the Troubles'. This now annual event, takes place on 21st June each year.

The 'Day of Private Reflection' is set aside to acknowledge the deep hurt and pain caused by the conflict, and to allow time for reflection on personal attitudes, by asking "what more might I have done or might still do, to make sure that such loss should never be allowed to happen again?"

The event locally takes the form of a 15 minute audio-visual presentation running on a continual basis and members of the public are invited to avail of it on a drop-in basis.

There are no talks given and there are group activities, so its a case of come, see and reflect.

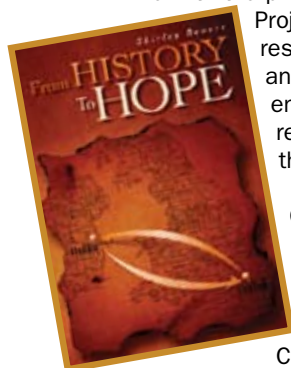
The venue this year was in two local churches who kindly agreed to host the event. In the afternoon from 2-30pm until 4-30pm members of the public were able to drop into the Gateway Church at Governors Place, Carrickfergus. In the evening from 7pm until 8-30pm the presentation was repeated in St Nicholas' Catholic Church, Minorca Place, Carrickfergus.

The Day of Private Reflection is an initiative of 'Healing Through Remembering', an extensive cross-community body, set up over the last six years to focus on the issue of dealing constructively with the past. It is totally independent of government, political parties, the churches, and other groups.

In line with the principles of the Healing through Remembering Project, the local presentation aimed to be respectful of differing views, political aspirations and perspectives on the conflict and to encourage a positive and respectful way of reflecting on the past, that will be healing for the future.

CBCF kicked off a new season of monthly meetings, by welcoming as guest speaker for September, Mrs. Shirley Bower from Huntingdon, England. Shirley is a founder leader of 'Arise Ministries', a small group of Christians of mixed denominations, dedicated

to prayer, healing and reconciliation. She is also author of a book entitled "From History to Hope" in which she recounts her story of retracing Oliver Cromwell's steps around Ireland; in her attempt to bring God's reconciliation and healing to bear, on what she found to be for many she met, still an open, unhealed, historical wound. CBCF were pleased to be able to offer Shirley a forum in which to tell her story and to consider what lessons there may be for us here today in Northern Ireland, as we struggle to cast off our own legacy of division and conflict.



Irish President Mary McAleese and her husband Martin, made an historic visit to Carrickfergus on Wednesday 30th September 2009. The president met with church and community leaders involved in community bridge building and reconciliation in the Borough, when she arrived at St Nicholas' Primary School for a lunchtime visit.

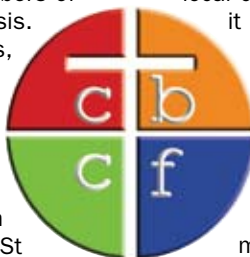
It would seem there is a growing awareness among Churches of the need to engage more positively and respectfully with the local communities of which they are a part. In light of this, it may be of interest to know that Carrickfergus Church Forum is an affiliated member of the Carrickfergus Community Forum and that membership is open to all the Churches in the Borough as a way of connecting and networking with community groups in the Borough.

For this reason and following feedback at an earlier monthly meeting, they were pleased to invite Billy Ashe, coordinator of the Carrickfergus Community Forum and member of Carrickfergus Borough Council to be a guest speaker at the November monthly meeting. In the first half of the evening Billy told spoke about the Community Forum; its structure and make-up; and the kind of things it has been doing and its plans and hopes for the future. This allowed those present to reflect on how they as individual Christians and as Churches, can play their part in making Carrickfergus a better place for all.

The second half of the evening focused on the Carrickfergus Town Centre Regeneration Plan which had been much in the news of late. Jack Creighton, chairman of the Carrickfergus Development Company, a driving force behind the regeneration plan, gave a short presentation on the main elements of the Masterplan, which was followed by discussion. Again those present were able to reflect on how Christians and churches, care about the future of the town in terms of it being a good place for the current and future generations to live and work, while also being a place of welcome for the stranger.



Jack Creighton, Chairman of the Carrickfergus Development Company and Billy Ashe, Coordinator of the Carrickfergus Community Forum



FERMANAGH CHURCHES FORUM ENVIRONMENTAL EVENT

This month a major international conference on global warming and climate change will take place in Copenhagen with the intention of reaching agreement on the measures that should be taken to limit the worst effects of these changes.

Evidence is building of significant changes that are already impacting on our climate and directly on the lives of people in more vulnerable places. For instance, the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere in 2005 was higher than ever in the past 650,000 years. Eleven of the twelve warmest years since 1850 occurred between 1995 and 2006. Locally we are very aware that we have had three poor summers in a row (although this cannot be tied directly to global warming). However, weather patterns around the world are already changing with heavier rain in some places and longer droughts in others. On the basis of current predictions we are set for a rise in global temperature of 2 degrees Centigrade or more and some scientists are reporting figures that suggest this is a conservative estimate. Such rises in temperature would have very serious impacts on water supplies, food supplies, movements of people and diseases related to temperature such as malaria. Future conflicts may be about water rather than land, beliefs or oil.

Already people living in low-lying areas in the Indian Ocean are suffering as a result of the rise in sea levels. A rise 3 degrees Centigrade in average world temperatures is predicted to result in 330 million people losing their homes through flooding including 70 million in Bangladesh, 22 million in Vietnam and six million in lower Egypt.

To prevent a rise of over 2 degrees scientists and politicians are saying that we need to cut carbon emissions by 40% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050, starting now. Such commitments will have major impacts on the way we live our lives and on the choices we make. Agreements on actions such as this will be debated at the Copenhagen Conference.

Fermanagh Churches Forum held a meeting in October on the issue of global warming and to consider how local Churches can respond to the environmental and human causes and consequences of climate change.

Two short films were shown after which there was discussion on how churches and individuals can respond with a view to protecting the environment, and minimising the impact of our lifestyles on ourselves, our families and on others.

The meeting was chaired by David Bolton and FCF management are now planning to take the report from the meeting to local clergy for their consideration.



David Bolton chairing the discussion on global warming in the Clinton Centre Enniskillen

LIMAVADY BOROUGH CHURCHES FORUM

On October 17th Limavady Churches Forum had a day of reflection in Drumalis Retreat Centre Larne.

After an opening reflection Dr. Johnston McMaster gave an address on the role of Church Fora focussing on identity as 'creative minorities' and drawing on the Jewish tradition to identify key dimensions of religious faith, including four key social virtues – righteousness, justice, loving kindness and compassion. Personal reflection time followed. In group reflection the aims and objectives of the Forum were reconsidered.

In the afternoon session attention was given to a proposed work plan including Advent Scriptural Reflections arranged for different churches in Limavady in December.

Members of the Forum laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day Service in Limavady.

righteousness



loving kindness



compassion



justice

FCF MEET FERMANAGH CLERGY

May 6th 2009 at the Killyhevin Hotel was the opportunity for members of FCF committee to have a working lunch with some local clergy.

Revs Arthur Barrett, David Cupples, Ken Robinson and Mgr Joseph McGuinness joined FCF committee members with apologies from the St Macartin's clergy, attending another function. This meeting was an opportunity to share thinking on the way forward for FCF, arising out of what

members learned from a day of reflection and discussion at the AGM. Clergy were asked for their perspective on how all best relate to the needs of the community and they were asked for suggestions for directions in which FCF could move. This led to a very interesting discussion with ideas emerging for the committee to consider and act upon. This meeting was very worthwhile and FCF members hope it will be the first in a series of meetings.

ISLAMIC COMMUNITY MEETING

Coleraine Town Hall was the venue for an Islamic Conference hosted by the local Muslim Community in the Borough. There were a number of distinguished guests from the Islamic church including Local Surgeon Dr. A. Wali, and the mayor Mr Sandy Gilkinson. The organiser of the event, Dr. Ahmed Sharief spoke of his delight in being able to hold a public meeting which he hoped would give local people an insight into the Islamic faith. Dr. Sharief also spoke of his delight in having Rev. Bert Ritchie from the church of Christ and Coleraine Borough Churches Forum address the conference. Mr Ritchie spoke on the "Christian Perspective of the



The Mayor of Coleraine with guest speakers at the Islamic Community Meeting

Abrahamic Covenant." When asked of his invitation to speak at the meeting, Mr Ritchie said "I regard it an honour to be invited as a guest speaker. I have known some of the Islamic Community for a number of years and worked on various community projects with them.

I think it is an indication of the mutual respect we have for each other to be trusted as part of this celebration. Of course the dialogue on faith issues continues long after meetings like this." Over one hundred guests attended.

DUNGANNON AREA CHURCHES' FORUM

Since our last report we met with our link group Riverbrooke. Together, we visited the Garden of Light Memorial in Omagh which is in remembrance of all those who suffered as a consequence of the Omagh bomb on 15th August 1998. The "Garden of Light" memorial is based on the themes of light and reflection. Its central focus is sunlight as the light which unites us all in that it makes all life possible. Our annual Festival of Praise in Dungannon Park was held on a Sunday afternoon in June. The theme, this year, was "The Love of the Lord Jesus Christ". The music, co-ordinated by Gerry Cunningham, was wonderful and we actually had thunder to accompany our voices as we sang "I hear the mighty thunder" from the closing hymn.

As there are a great many people from other countries in Dungannon we organized a reception for them one Sunday afternoon in June. This was our way of reaching out to our ethnic community but unfortunately only eleven people from other communities came to meet Forum members.

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Dungannon has been undergoing extensive refurbishment and repair over the last two years. In mid September there was an interchurch service to mark the reopening of the church and as a thanksgiving for it. It was an inspiring service with people from the Church of Ireland, Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church participating with their Catholic friends in the readings and intercessions. The large number, attending, appreciated the opportunity to admire the beauty of the church.

Rev. Ruth Patterson was our speaker at our AGM in November.

Isobel T. Holmes - Chairman

FCF VISIT TO DUBLIN MOSQUE AND CATHEDRALS

On Saturday, 24 May, members of Fermagh Churches Forum and friends went to Dublin on an inter-faith journey.

At the Islamic Centre Clonskeagh the group were met by Malek who acted as guide and gave an overview of Islam. The group continued from there to St Patrick's Church of Ireland cathedral. Here the group enjoyed a talk on the history of the Cathedral and a tour around the main items of historical interest housed there.

Some members of the group also visited Christchurch Cathedral



Members of FCF outside the mosque in Clonskeagh



FCF members inside the mosque at Clonskeagh Dublin





Anita Mukerjee, (left) who spoke on Hinduism at the inter-faith conference in Cavan in discussion with participants

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FERMANAGH CHURCHES FORUM

Saturday 12th December Candlelit vigil in support of Copenhagen Climate Change Conference Time: 4.30pm-5.30pm at The Diamond Enniskillen

Thursday 21st January Christian Unity Week Service at 8pm in the Methodist church, Darling Street Enniskillen

CARRICKFERGUS BOROUGH CHURCH FORUM

8th December CBCF Monthly Meeting, Dobbs Room, Carrickfergus Town Hall, 7-30pm. Theme : "The Advent Conspiracy"

12th December CBCF Monthly Inter-church Prayer Meeting, Venue Gateway Church, 9am - 10am.

COLERAINE BOROUGH CHURCHES FORUM

December 21st Carol Singing 7pm at the crossover of Long Commons and Kingsgate Street Service at the Christmas Tree refreshments in the Town Hall (Mayor's Parlour)

January 18th Service in the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 8pm in the West Bann Community Centre Theme : "You are Witnesses"

COOKSTOWN & DISTRICT INTER-CHURCH FORUM

Monday 7 December Christmas Concert in the Ulster Hall with RTE Concert Orchestra and Hayley Westenra singing Christmas Classics.

Thursday 17 December Carol Service at Town Centre Christmas Tree at 7.30pm

Sunday 20 December We are invited to Carols by Candlelight 7.00pm First Cookstown Presbyterian Church with Festive Refreshments afterwards Meeting - Details TBA

Monday 11 January Clergy Forum Prayer Walk

Sunday 17 January Meeting- Details TBA

Monday 8 February Forum Annual Dinner – At Desertcreat Women's Institute further details will be advised when arrangements are completed

Friday 19 February Women's World Day of Prayer-Derryloran Parish Church Meeting - Details TBA

Friday 5 March Attend St Patrick's Day Service – Details TBA

Monday 8 March

Wednesday 17 March



Project part financed by the Community Relations Council.

CONTACT DETAILS

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