



Welcome

Welcome to the second CC News. I'll start with a couple of highlights from the year so far.

In March Dr Johnston McMaster delivered the 2012 Catherwood lecture to an audience of 85 people. In an excellent lecture he challenged us to look forward from today while at the same time looking back at history, mirroring the twin directions of memory and hope that are also at the heart of Christian worship.

Our drama about events leading up to the signing of the Ulster Covenant "1912 - 100 years on" had a successful run in various venues (community and church) around the province over 2 weeks

Cluster Groups

Art and Faith.

The Faith and Arts Cluster Group held a very well attended exhibition of their work in the Centre in June. The exhibition - we hope the first of many - featured painting, photography, print, sculpture, ceramics, poetry and textiles. It involved a show and tell by each of the artists and was highly successful in stimulating further

Economics

The group is small but enthusiastic. Economic issues continue to dominate the news stories and have a profound effect on each of our lives. This autumn our 'In Conversation With ...' events will aim to help us to apply our faith to economic issues. While each evening will deal with important and complex issues we will also be seeking ways in which we can live faithfully as disciples in this economic world.

in March. Our aim was to bring together audiences from different sides of our politically divided society to hear and watch this story together. The performances were followed by a facilitated discussion, raising questions like - What did I learn about the period that I did not already know, or knew imperfectly? Reactions were very positive and the whole venture has been a credit to the authors Philip Orr and Alan McGuckian, to the actors and the Centenaries core group. A further run of the play will DV take place in late October/early November (see later).

As the centenary of the signing of the Ulster Covenant approaches we have also had prepared a liturgy/order of service for those

interest. The group's aims of encouraging Christian artists and addressing the sacred/secular divide in the art world and were clearly achieved and all who attended on the opening evening or came to view their work in the following week greatly enjoyed both what they saw and the conversations with the artists. They hope to exhibit again at the Belfast

communities of Christians who wish to commit themselves to a fair remembrance of the past and to work towards a better future, founded on the Kingdom values of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

CC aims to be a creative group providing for the voices that are missing or are on the margins of the church.....however young people's voices are missing and we recognise the need to connect with new generations of authors, artists and intellectuals. The current profile of CC is 'mature' and we are keen to recruit the younger generation to our events and hopefully in due course some of them to our Board.

Noel McCune, Chairperson.

Culture night in Calvary Christian Centre on 21st Sept.



On 18 Sept Esmond Birnie and Rev Alan Sleith will discuss 'Very High Top Salaries', on 16 Oct Philip McDonagh will facilitate a discussion on Michael Sandel's book 'What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets' and on 20 Nov Colin Neill will consider if supermarkets are a force for good or a force for bad when the title for the evening will be 'Where the Narrow Road Meets the High Street.'

Centenaries



1912 drama - We had over 40 enquiries/requests for the drama from groups throughout the north of Ireland and these requests are still coming to us. While this was a pleasing outcome, it was also a daunting one, given that Contemporary Christianity is currently staffed on a volunteer basis and given that the

In Conversation With...

In April we had good evening with Tony McAuley. Tony has worked in community development, youth work and peacebuilding for the past 30 years. He carries out research and evaluation to inform and shape government and agency policy and programmes and read engaging excerpts from his book "Paperboy" and discussed his recent work scoping faith based community work in NI.



Publications

One of our Board members Peter McDowell has written a booklet 'At home in exile' encouraging us to discover again the language of exile to help our understanding of what is emerging within the church and wider

Day Conference and Retreat

On 9 November along with Irish Baptist Networks we are jointly holding a day conference entitled 'PROPHETIC VOICES FROM THE MARGINS' with Roy Searle (Northumbria Community) and Stuart Murray Williams (Anabaptist

organisation is not a theatre company nor does it have access to the funds to implement an extensive or widespread 'run' of the play or respond to very interesting venues for one off performances! We have had to recognise that while intimate performances in small, local venues are an ideal way to interact with audiences, we have to choose venues that will allow the maximum number of people to attend the show, given the hunger to see it and given the fact that the few weeks in



In May during Community Relations week - 'No more them and us' - Ian Bothwell from Crossfire Trust spoke powerfully and movingly about his experiences with people from both sides of the community (including former paramilitary people) in South Armagh. He shared his Christian conviction that God's love can heal present fears and ancient wounds.

society which we plan to publish soon under the 'Soundings' logo and we also hope to publish our last 2 Catherwood lectures as 'Patmos' papers.

Previous publications in the (Networks). It will be held in Ballynahinch Baptist Church and information and links with which to apply is now on the website.

Roy Searle will also facilitate a retreat for leaders involved in any form of

October and November will possibly be the last time that it will be on the road. We are exploring the possibility of having a version recorded on DVD.

As the decade of centenaries progresses the challenge for the Centenaries group will be to work out what are the key anniversaries in 2013 and subsequent years and what should be the appropriate method of dealing with the issues which they raise.

The Economics cluster group has organised the autumn series of ICW's (see above) and we appreciate the thought that has gone into planning these.

Most of our 'In Conversation with...' talks and the Catherwood lectures for the past 3 years are available to listen to online. The transcript of the most recent Catherwood lectures are also downloadable in pdf form. Information on all our activities, upcoming events and our monthly PS...postings can be found on www.contemporarychristianity.net

Soundings and Patmos series are still available to download as resources via the archive link to the old website on our website.

Christian ministry in Glenada, Newcastle from 7-8 Nov - the last one we held with Roy in November 2010 was much appreciated by those who attended.