

CHRIST CHURCH RATHGAR



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Welcome to *Cornerstone*

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Happy New Year!

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Let us hope and pray that 2020 will be a peaceful and prosperous year —here in Dublin, in Ireland, and throughout the world.

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It will be an exciting and challenging year for us in Christ Church Rathgar. All being well we will finally see The Renaissance Project taking shape.

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You will have heard the expression *20/20 Vision*. It refers to visual acuity. This, literally, is the sharpness of your vision.

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However, you may be more familiar with the term when used colloquially to mean seeing clearly or seeing something perfectly. For example, *hindsight is 20/20 vision*, or *how would I know what I will be doing this time next year? I don't have 20/20 vision!*

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In CCR we will be using the expression slightly differently, and for the months of January you are all asked to have *2020 Vision* for the Renaissance Project. For us 2020 means this year, and vision means taking a wide and imaginative view of what it means for the future. What exactly will we do with the buildings? What are the strengths/weakness of various options? And what is Renaissance of congregational life? Read on! I have several suggestions!

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Purvis

Come, Holy Spirit, Come.

We begin by focussing on what it means to be a church. The people of God. The Body of Christ, where we live and are guided by the mind of Christ in the power of the Spirit. This is what makes us distinctive. I invite everyone to engage specifically in prayer for the life and witness of CCR, and particularly for the Renaissance Project.

At the outset let us be realistic. Not everyone will have everything they want. Not everyone will agree with what is done. Let us resolve to live as St Paul encouraged the Christians in Romans 12:9-18:

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour.

Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.

If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

For the months of January and February let us all engage in prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon us that we may have clear vision and deep insight into the implications of *The Renaissance Project*.





*Holy Spirit, Giver of life,
you guide and make holy the church you create;
you give gifts:
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and fortitude,
the spirit of knowledge and piety,
the spirit of the fear of the Lord,
that the whole creation may become what you want it to be.
Come, Holy Spirit!*

*True and only Light,
from whom comes every good gift.*

*Send your Spirit into our lives
with the power of a mighty wind.
Open the horizons of our minds
by the flame of your wisdom.*

*Loosen our tongues to show your praise,
for only in your Spirit can we voice your words of peace
and acclaim Jesus as Lord.*

*God of power,
may the boldness of your Spirit transform us,
may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us,
and may the gifts of your Spirit equip us
to serve and worship you now and always. Amen.*



Ministry Among Children

The Renaissance is not only about buildings. It is about the renewal of the life of the congregation. Please pray specifically for this dimension of Renaissance during January and February. In particular, please remember the **Ministry Among Children**.

For the past 18 months Kyungeun and Changhyun have done sterling ministry among the children in the second half of the service. Since the arrival of little Narin, Kyungeun has been otherwise occupied, and Haku has been brilliant in what she has done.

However, now that there are more children it is time to take a step in a new direction. With this in mind, I invite parents and grandparents, and anyone interested in children's ministry, to meet after the service on Sunday January 19th. We will put on a movie for the kids!

Here are some indications as to the points for discussion:

- ◆ Sunday School was started by Robert Raikes (1736-1811). It was not specifically for Christian education, but for general education for children who worked during the week and had Sundays off. Hence Sunday Schools which were the precursors of the state school education system. The reason they used the Bible was that it was the only book to which the children had access. How times have changed!
- ◆ While a chaplain in the RAF I learned one of my foundational values: *children will recall how they felt long after they have forgotten most of what they learned*. I concentrate on how children feel in church—not on what they learn. Within this, the aim is to give them a broad knowledge of what the Bible says—in both the Old and New Testaments.
- ◆ The first half of the service, as it currently is, will develop further along the lines of inclusion of children in everything we do: welcoming teams, operating the sound desk, playing musical instruments, reading, leading prayers and lifting the offering. It is evident how much they enjoy the involvement in lifting the offering.
- ◆ The second half of the service becomes a **Kids' Club**. Let's forget about teaching them as in school—they are in a classroom all week—and let us put our effort into developing an atmosphere which they will enjoy. Why not a game in the Orwell Hall? (I can hear our forefathers and foremothers revolving in their graves!!). And what about a Minecraft Club in the vestry using the big screen? And what about periodically having a movie which continues after church—providing lunch for them, allowing the parents/grandparents to have a break and have coffee and chat?
- ◆ **Kids' Club** does not only function on a Sunday—but includes the Saturday or Wednesday (in half term holidays) movie afternoons which have already been successful. And what about taking the kids out to the cinema or to visit a farm?
- ◆ This is not about teaching children, but about facilitating the environment in which they are safe and enjoy being in CCR. Anyone can be a leader—mums, dads, grandparents—to create the atmosphere of what John Bell calls *being at your granny's!*

Think widely. Think creatively. Think imaginatively.

I will be interested in your thoughts and I hope you will find the time to be present on January 19th.

***And remember to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our children.
Renaissance of the congregation begins here!***

Think of it this way...

The plans for the buildings are large and complex. You may find it helpful to think of them in units as follows:

Unit 1: The roof.

The roof has been inspected and we await costings so that we may decide whether to replace it or repair it. Replacing it is expensive, but may be less costly than repairs now and regular essential maintenance in the long term.

Unit 2: The village end of the building.

Downstairs:

- Removal of the kitchen to provide an entrance lobby with a widened door and ramped access from the outside Rathgar Road side.
- A new lift installed at the end adjacent to the spire.

Upstairs:

- A new central entrance door in the outer vestibule, with the lift to the right hand side (facing in) in front of the stairs to the gallery, and toilet facilities on the left.

Unit 3: The Sanctuary.

- Installation of a glass screen under the front of the gallery to provide an inner vestibule with a kids play area at one end and a coffee dock at the other. This will provide an area for creche facilities on Sundays and other meetings during the week.
- The dais/[platform at the front will be extended to the pillars.
- Gas fired central heating, new lighting system, new sound system and redecoration.

Unit 4: The Lecture Hall

On entering the rear of the hall past the vestry and committee room:

- On the right, a new room (similar in size to the vestry) which will be the kitchen with a serving hatch into the hall.
- On the left, a new room which will be a walk in store, a flower arranging area, and possibly archive storage.
- The platform will be removed and the entrance door into the lobby will be central.
- A new door to the Highfield Road side, giving access to a garden area outside.
- A tiled floor with gas fired underfloor heating, and radiators around the sides.
- Pews removed from the sanctuary will be fitted in the Lecture Hall.
- A sound system will be fitted (including a loop for those with hearing aids).

Unit 5: Outside

- To the Highfield Road side it is planned to have a garden space and a reflective area.
- In the carparks the surfaces will be replaced with greener, grassy surfaces, providing a more welcoming appearance.
- There will be footpaths with hand rails which incorporate lighting for health and safety when walking in the grounds.

Unit 6: The Tenant Hall

It was the decision of both Session and Committee that the major efforts and resources should focus on the main building—the Sanctuary and the Lecture Hall. However, there is a need for a kitchen for **Meals on Wheels** during the renovations and it has been suggested that it should be in the Tenant Hall, under the Fletcher room, with a serving hatch into the hall. However, this takes up the current storage area, so additional storage has to be found elsewhere. At present this conundrum has not been solved and discussions continue!

It must be emphasised—no decisions have been taken as yet. We are waiting for costings from a quantity surveyor, after which decisions will have to be made regarding priorities. It is hoped that everyone will engage with this, Take a walk around and look at the areas—the ‘units’ as outlined above, asking questions about how this will meet the needs of the congregations now, and facilitate Christian life and witness in the future. January and February are 2020 Vision months when we will focus prayerfully on the Renaissance of the congregation and the provision of buildings to facilitate this.

The Building of the Temple: 1st Kings 6&7

Sundays in January

5th	<i>Living in the Spirit</i> Morning Communion Morning Worship	9.30 am 11.00 am
12th	Quarterly Communion Revd Dr Ruth Patterson <i>Meet & Greet</i> to follow	11.00 am
19th	<i>The Vision of Solomon</i> Morning Communion Morning Worship	9.30 am 11.00 am
26th	<i>The Support of Neighbours</i> Morning Communion Morning Worship	9.30 am 11.00 am

Sundays in February

2nd	<i>Nothing worth having comes easy</i> Morning Communion Morning Worship	9.30 am 11.00 am
9th	<i>Attention to Detail</i> Morning Worship Fellowship Lunch	11.00 am 12.15.pm
16th	<i>Strength and Beauty</i> Morning Communion Morning Worship	9.30 am 11.00 am
23rd	Morning Communion Morning Worship Revd Dr Celia Kenny	9.30 am 11.00 am

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is still facing controversy over the issue of sexuality. So—what does the Bible actually say about homosexuality? In January, February and March these issues will be considered, challenging our preconceptions with a book by Daniel A Helminiak.

Wednesday Mornings

10.30 am

January

15th *The Sin of Sodom—inhospitality?*

22nd *The Abomination of Leviticus*

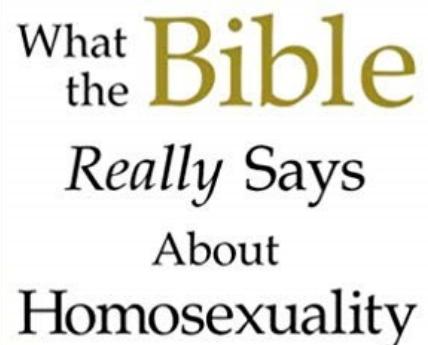
29th Morning Coffee in Bijou

February

5th *Purity Concerns in the New Testament*

12th *The Unnatural in Romans*

26th Morning Coffee in Bijou



Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Wednesday, January 29th at 8.00 pm in the Lecture Hall. It is doubtful that we will be in a position to make a decision regarding the Renaissance Project on that date, but it will give us all an opportunity to listen, to learn, to reflect deeply and prayerfully, and to be in a position to make an informed decision at a Congregational Meeting later in the year. (Hopefully February!)

Extraordinary General Meeting

Presbyterians are prone to a suspicion that something is going on in the background of which they are unaware. Let me assure you that no decisions have been taken and that there is no hidden agenda! Creative ideas often occur when we are prepared to live with the tension and discomfort of uncertainty.

Before anything is done we require approval by a Congregational Meeting, approval by Dublin and Munster Presbytery, and approval by The Architectural Committee of the General Assembly. Have no fear!

Kirk Session

Ruling elders are elected by the congregation, ordained by Presbytery, and are responsible to Presbytery for the leadership and spiritual wellbeing of Christ Church Rathgar. The next meeting is on Wednesday, January 8th at 8.00.

Congregational Committee

Members of the Congregational Committee are elected by the congregation and are accountable to them for the financial wellbeing of the congregation, for the upkeep of property and for the day to day management of the practical aspects of CCR. Each year the Committee reports to the congregation at the Annual General Meeting.

Members of Session and Committee give of their time and energy for the spiritual and practical aspects of everything in Christ Church. Please remember them regularly in your prayers.

Baptisms

Suffer the little children to come unto me

November 3rd
November 24th

Johanna Agnes Hickey-McAuley, daughter of Patrick and Jacqueline
Rory Peter Ivan Campbell, son of Richard and Sarah

In Memorium

I am the Resurrection and the Life

20th October
14th December

Jonathan David Thomas Mitchell
Professor Barbara Wright

Hands for Life Course

**Saturday
1st February,
11.00 am, 1.00 pm and 2.30 pm.**



The Irish Heart Foundation is on a mission to save lives

Hands for Life: Community CPR Training is an Irish Heart Foundation programme, supported by Abbott and ESB Networks, providing FREE CPR training in communities across Ireland for adults aged 18 years and over.