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Can Churches Contribute to Post-Violence Reconciliation and Reconstruction? Insights and Applications from Northern Ireland¹

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In Northern Ireland, the churches could be judged to be hopelessly implicated in a violent, sectarian system. However, some have argued that religiously informed reconciliation could or *should* be part of Northern Ireland's uneasy - and sporadically still violent - post-conflict transition.² Their arguments are based on the assumption that while the conflict in Northern Ireland cannot be considered strictly religious, it has had religious dimensions.³ Accordingly, this chapter focuses on the Northern Ireland case while asking how its churches might contribute to post-violence reconciliation and reconstruction.

Much of the research on the role of religion in Northern Ireland has emphasized reconciliation. But as Maria Power observes, "The terms "reconcile" and "reconciliation" are incredibly problematic within the Northern Irish context and a definitive definition has yet to emerge".⁴ Similarly, John Brewer, Gareth Higgins and Francis Teeney argue that reconciliatory discourses have been divisive in Northern Ireland because reconciliation means different things to people, and because reconciliation's advocates have focused on personal relationships at the expense of socio-structural forms of reconciliation.⁵ Despite these misgivings about reconciliation, I argue that a *return* to reconciliation could provide a focus for Christian activists to contribute to Northern Ireland's transition. Drawing on the work of three prominent organizations - Corrymeela, the Irish School of Ecumenics (ISE) and Evangelical

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Contribution on Northern Ireland (ECONI) -1 identify two main themes in their approaches to reconciliation: reconciliation is relationship- centred, and includes addressing socio-structural aspects of sectarianism. ECONI adds a valuable emphasis on critical self-reflection and repentance. In recent years, discourses of reconciliation have slipped somewhat from Northern Ireland's public agenda, and the emphasis on relationship-building has been lost along with other socio-structural aspects. Joram Tarusarira and I have identified this tendency also in Zimbabwe, although here Christian activists have emphasized relationships at the expense of structures. Accordingly, we 'advocate incorporating the term reconstruction as a companion to reconciliation, seeing this as an effective way to encourage the intentional reform of social structures'.⁶ That is why the title of this chapter includes both terms.

Transforming relationships and structures are difficult tasks, particularly in a context where Christian activists have limited political power and diminished influence. In this Northern Ireland is not unique, as churches and Christian activists also have limited political power and diminished influence elsewhere due to secularization (i.e., in the West) or oppressive states (i.e., some African nations). In their relatively powerless positions, Christian activists could adopt some of the tactics of new social movements. By that I mean grass-roots-focused tactics that attempt to transcend the structures of Northern Ireland's sectarian system, deliberately working outside that system in an attempt to subvert it. These tactics include educational programmes, adopting the principles of 'neo-monastic' living, and liturgical reforms. Such seemingly small actions can demonstrate to others that there are ways to transcend the sectarian system. If Northern Irish Christians consistently employed these tactics, they might begin to regain some moral authority. This would make them better placed to contribute to a wider, secular, civil-society-based movement that could challenge politicians and policymakers to make political decisions that could dismantle and reconstruct Northern Ireland's sectarian system. Religiously motivated activists in other contexts could learn much from the ways these groups have drawn on and continue to develop the religious resources of their own traditions in their work for peace.

Analysing reconciliation

The case for Christian activists to *return* to reconciliation must be grounded in the approaches to reconciliation already developed in Northern Ireland. Previous research has emphasized that it was

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Christian individuals and organizations, *not* the 'institutional' or denominational churches, which have made the most significant contributions to peace.⁷ I see this largely as a sociological phenomenon: Christians' ability to act in the social and political world has been constrained by social structures. For example, I argued previously that religious special-interest groups were the most significant actors in the peace process because they were *groups* that operated outside the constraints of bureaucratized institutional churches. As such, they had more freedom and flexibility to develop radical ideas, and could move more quickly to respond to immediate needs. They were most effective when working in networks with like-minded groups, congregations, and individuals.⁸ This is not to question the moral worth of the people working within these organizations or within institutional churches (even the most well-intentioned 'saint' within an institutional church structure may be hampered by bureaucracy) but shows that it is often the more flexible 'outsider' group which can develop the most creative or effective projects and ideas. Consequently there is much richness in the thought of people who have worked for Corrymeela, ISE and ECONI, which should be revived - not forgotten - during the present period. The accumulated wisdom in the religious resources produced by these groups still has much to offer when it comes to speaking about and acting out reconciliation, even to those who are not Christian or motivated by religious faith.⁹

Corrymeela

Corrymeela's conceptions of reconciliation are drawn primarily from the work of former leaders Ray Davey, John Morrow and David Stevens. In this section I will emphasize their analysis of human relationships, the pervasiveness of sacred violence in human cultures, and the importance of reconciliation occurring at different levels (interpersonal, communal, social, political, etc.).

Corrymeela was begun in 1965 by Davey, then chaplain at Queen's University Belfast, and his students. Its founding was pre-Troubles and can be understood in part as a response to wider European trends that emphasized the breaking down of denominational barriers. Davey had been an army chaplain, a witness to the fire-bomb destruction of Dresden, and a prisoner of war in Italy during the Second World War. He was disturbed by the churches' inability to prevent or even speak out against the ravages of the world wars, seeing the churches as deeply implicated in the destructive political projects of the nation-state. Davey

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was influenced by the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whose opposition to Nazism earned him a martyr's death, and pastor Tullio Vinay, a founder of the Agape community in the Italian Alps, which Davey visited. Davey describes his time at Agape as a 'healing of memory' of his own wounds of war.¹⁰

The community at Corrymeela was influenced in their understanding of the roots of violence by Rene Girard.¹¹ Girard's theory of the 'mimesis of desire' was used to explain how conflict between humans escalates as relationships break down due to rivalry, where each desires what the other has, unless a 'scapegoat' is found. For Girard, religions have been a primary means by which human cultures locate and then turn against scapegoats - those who are deemed different. Thus, in Jesus' death on the cross, God became the ultimate scapegoat. Girard's influence helps us to understand Corrymeela's focus on the relational aspects of reconciliation, which includes living together in a way that transcends the violence on which human cultures are built. This of course resonates with the approach to community which Corrymeela had already been developing, influenced by the communities in Agape, Taize in France, and Iona in Scotland.¹² Corrymeela conceives of its members as belonging to a 'dispersed' community, rather than living together in one location. This means they commit to live out ideals such as nonviolence, social justice and boundary-crossing in their everyday lives, returning to the base at Corrymeela several times per year for fellowship, as well as supporting the project work of paid staff.

Stevens' books reflect Corrymeela's identification of levels of reconciliation and its emphasis on social aspects of reconciliation.¹³ For example, Stevens uses six different approaches to develop reconciliation's 'meaning' more fully:¹⁴

6 Seeing reconciliation as creating and sustaining conversation.

These approaches encompass both personal and social or communal levels of reconciliation. At least in the *writings* of people from Corrymeela, social transformation is prioritized along with personal transformation.

The Irish School of Ecumenics (ISE)

ISE is an academic institution, integrated into Trinity College Dublin. It offers graduate programmes in Dublin and Belfast, continuing education, and support for grass-roots church fora throughout Northern Ireland. ISE's educational nature has meant that it has developed theoretical and conceptual approaches to reconciliation. But for ISE, 'theory' has been linked to 'action research' approaches meant to ground intellectualizing in the 'real world.' The aspects of ISE's conceptions of reconciliation identified here are drawn primarily from the written work of the theologians and social scientists which the school has employed. Of importance are ISE's emphases on reconciliation occurring at different levels, the priority of sociopolitical aspects of reconciliation, and the effectiveness of education *for* reconciliation.

ISE was founded in 1970 by Fr Michael Hurley, a Jesuit serving in Dublin. Hurley was motivated by the 'ecumenical spring' encouraged by the Second Vatican Council and driven by a conviction that Ireland needed better ecumenical education. ISE first offered graduate education in ecumenical theology as an independent institute and was later incorporated into Trinity. ISE also developed an international peace studies strand. Hurley was concerned with the conflict in Northern Ireland, and its religious dimensions, leading to his involvement in the establishment of the Columbanus Community of Reconciliation in Belfast in 1983.¹⁵ On his seventieth birthday and retirement, the Festschrift for Hurley was simply titled *Reconciliation*.¹⁶

The ideals of 'action research' approaches - that research should be devised along with and communicated with people at the grass roots - led to the development of ISE's 'Reconciliation in Religion and Society' project, overseen by Hurley in the early 1990s, and its 'Moving Beyond Sectarianism' (MBS) project (1995-2000), directed by Cecelia Clegg and Joseph Liechty. MBS was designed in the action research tradition, and included grass-roots workshops on sectarianism, the publication of resources for adult and youth groups, and a book.¹⁷

The work carried out in MBS was extended through a 'Partners in Transformation' (PIT) programme, led by Clegg and Doug Baker in co-operation with a secular organization, Mediation Northern Ireland.

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Its aim was 'to work with senior leadership within the churches to support them in enabling their traditions to become agents of transformation in society'.¹⁸ MBS also fed into ongoing work on ISE's continuing education programme, Education for Reconciliation (EFR). In the 2002 handbook *Communities of Reconciliation: Living Faith in the Public Place*, Johnston McMaster and Cathy Higgins presented outlines of five courses which could be offered to local congregations or inter-church groups. In this book, they defined reconciliation:

Reconciliation needs to be understood and developed as social reconciliation. We might then say that reconciliation is about taking initiatives and actions that make enemies into friends through give and take and by building new and different forms of community. This kind of reconciliation is about transforming relationships and structures through lengthy processes requiring courage, risk and commitment.¹⁹

Here we see once again the emphasis on *relationships* and on *levels* of reconciliation. These courses supported and helped give birth to at least 10 churches' fora, which have been facilitated by support officer Eileen Gallagher since 2007.²⁰ ISE sees the fora as 'models of Christians doing "relational" theology, finding a unity around social action projects and social ethics'.²¹ EFR and PIT relied on external sources of funding, with PIT ending in 2007 and EFR in 2012. The church fora work continues, though in a truncated form due to funding constraints.

Another development related to MBS was the establishment of a new Master's programme based in Belfast called Reconciliation Studies. The new programme was interdisciplinary, encompassing the social sciences and theology. The large residential house that had been the Columbanus Community was remodelled and became the Belfast campus of ISE. In 2010 the programme was revamped and renamed 'Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation'.²² Changes were aimed at better integrating academic and practical work through the establishment of a module in 'Community Based Learning and Reflective Practice' in which students undertook placements with local reconciliation groups; and through offering practical modules in partnership with the Glenree Centre for Reconciliation and TIDES (Transformation, Interdependence, Diversity, Equity and Sustainability) Training. Between 2009 and 2011 I worked for ISE on another major research project which incorporates elements of action research, 'Visioning 21st century Ecumenism', the themes of which are diversity, dialogue and reconciliation.²³ As with Corrymeela, in the *writings* of

people from ISE, social transformation is prioritized along with personal transformation.

Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland (ECONI)

The theme of reconciliation was not as prominent for ECONI as for Corrymeela or ISE. This does not mean that ECONI was not interested in reconciliation - indeed, this was one of its four basic tenets upon its founding in 1985.²⁴ But ECONI used the term reconciliation less frequently than words such as forgiveness, repentance, grace and mercy. When ECONI did emphasize reconciliation, it focused on self-examination, repentance and forgiveness. Like Corrymeela, ECONI developed a vision of the church as a model community: the test of Christianity would be in how people lived.

ECONI's origins can be traced to 1985 and to the actions of a group of evangelicals who had become increasingly distressed at the way the Revd Ian Paisley - a self-proclaimed evangelical - was mixing religion and politics. Their immediate catalyst was a rally at Belfast City Hall, where Paisley spoke against the Anglo-Irish Agreement.²⁵ So they organized a series of conferences, and in November 1985 published a statement in the *Belfast Telegraph*, 'For God and His Glory Alone', 'signed by twenty-four Presbyterian ministers holding evangelical beliefs'.²⁶ It included paragraphs on Loyalty, Rights, Reconciliation and Choice.²⁷ Patrick Mitchel summarized what they wrote about reconciliation: 'On "Reconciliation", the identification of the Kingdom of God with any one political ideology was described as an "Idolatry and affront to Almighty God. It is a perversion of the Gospel".'²⁸

This approach to reconciliation is different from that of Corrymeela and ISE. It is rooted in a critique of Northern Ireland's evangelical tradition, characterized here as complicit in an idolatrous political ideology. Conspicuously absent is any talk of relationships or levels of reconciliation. It is implied that people must *repent* in order for there to be reconciliation.

'For God and His Glory Alone' was published as a booklet in 1988, signed by around 200 evangelical leaders.²⁹ This included 'ten biblical principles relevant to Christian witness in a divided community'.³⁰ For each principle, relevant Bible verses were listed along the side of the page and a series of study questions about the scripture were posed. The page devoted to Reconciliation read:

As Evangelicals, we must accept our share of the blame for any way in which we have contributed to the alienation felt by many of the

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minority community in Northern Ireland. We have allowed our differences to be turned into barriers, and at times we have been active in that process. Such humanly constructed barriers are caused by our arrogance and attitudes of superiority.³¹

Building on 'For God and His Glory Alone' by devising educational programmes in partnership with the YMCA, ECONI launched as an organization in 1994, with David Porter as director. ECONI's range of programmes, events and publications was extensive.³² At its height, ECONI was well-funded and influential, seeming to peak organizationally around 2004. It had regular full- and part-time employees, including David Porter, fieldworkers Lynda Gould and Derek Poole, and a research officer, Alwyn Thomson, who produced some of the sharpest theological critique of Northern Irish evangelicalism.³³ In 2005 ECONI became the Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland (CCCI) and in 2008, Porter moved to a position in Coventry Cathedral. CCCI, now simply called Contemporary Christianity, does not attract the level of funding that it once did. Rather than employing staff or publishing resources on a regular basis, it is now overseen by volunteers and organizes semi-regular events and projects.

In my previous research, I set ECONI's work in the context of a 'mediating evangelical network' that consisted of ECONI, Evangelical Alliance, Zero28 and Ikon, as well as other organizations with which they had links.³⁴ I saw them as mediating between ecumenical and evangelical Christians, liberal and conservative evangelicals, and evangelicals and state policymakers. I focused on the most significant ways in which ECONI 'reframed' evangelical sociopolitical projects. Reframing reconciliation was not among the themes I identified. Rather, I chose ECONI's critique of Calvinist models of church-state relationships, its critique of apathy, its emphasis on the effectiveness of single-identity and crosscommunity work, its focus on social justice, and its conception of church as a 'model community'. Thomson's work on the church as a 'model' drew on the Anabaptist and Mennonite traditions, including the writings of John Howard Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas. Similarly, Mitchel does not pick out reconciliation as one of ECONI's most prominent themes. Rather, he argues ECONI distanced itself from traditional, 'closed' forms of evangelicalism, such as Paisleyism or Orangeism, and sought to build an alternative, 'open' evangelical identity, though he questions its appeal and viability.³⁵

Ronald Wells sees ECONI's most 'important' work as its 'Embodying Forgiveness Project', a series of 15 papers published over two years,

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written by Christians from various traditions, including Catholicism.³⁶ This project was remarkable for the diversity of its contributors, who did not agree on how to approach forgiveness. Some authors also broached what has been a difficult question within Northern Irish Protestantism: is forgiveness possible before the offender has repented? Prominent evangelicals like Paisley had long preached that repentance was required before forgiveness could be offered, but some evangelicals in ECONI disagreed or were moving away from this teaching. For ECONI, it was you *yourself* who must repent - not necessarily the 'other'. The focus and content of the Embodying Forgiveness Project underlines Brewer, Higgins and Teeney's point that for ECONI, reconciliation was subsumed into other aspects of peace work. They conclude that ECONI's approach to reconciliation was lived-out activism, an embodiment of the reconciliation written about by Corrymeela and ISE.³⁷ I agree about ECONI's unique significance during the critical years in the peace process. But while ECONI may have acted while others merely talked about reconciliation, most of that activism was *identity-* and *relationship-* centred, rather than focused on the structural aspects of reconciliation, including the dismantling and reconstruction of Northern Ireland's sectarian system.

Contributing to reconciliation and reconstruction?

Northern Ireland has not had an official truth commission, or a joined-up process for dealing with the past. This has meant that the past continues to linger in the present, with periodic media stories and public debates about collusion, particular atrocities, the rights of victims/survivors, and so on. The churches and small networks of Christian activists lack the moral authority or the political power to advocate or organize a large-scale, joined-up process for dealing with the past. But Christian activists can contribute to the debate about dealing with the past by refocusing on *reconciliation*. This chapter has drawn on the work of Corrymeela, ISE and ECONI to excavate some of their best insights into reconciliation, concluding that their emphasis on *transforming relationships* at various levels could fruitfully be revived. However, the focus on relationships should be accompanied by an ECONI-inspired emphasis on repentance. Christian activists could more critically analyse their *own* churches' roles in perpetuating division, violence and Northern Ireland's sectarian system - and say 'sorry' for this.

The focus should also extend to reconstruction: efforts to dismantle and reconstruct Northern Ireland's sectarian system. While churches

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seem to lack the moral authority or political power to put pressure on politicians and policymakers to make significant structural reforms, there are some tentative signs that this could change. In late 2012 it was announced that the four largest denominations - Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland (Anglican), and Methodist - along with the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) had received £1.3 million through the European Union's Peace III programme (with additional support from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the Irish Government), for a two-year project with these aims:

- 1 to promote sustained and well-facilitated cross-community dialogue particularly focusing on the contentious issues that need to be addressed in order to develop good relations and promote reconciliation;
- 2 to support local inter-church/cross-community groups in their development of new grass-roots initiatives that will contribute to the lasting peace;
- 3 to facilitate a process by which the main denominations speak more frequently in the public sphere with a united voice on social and political issues, and through that to model positive cross-community co-operation and undermine the vestiges of sectarian politics.³⁸

This looks like a vote of confidence in the institutional churches' ability to contribute to peace building, especially since the funding of the groups discussed in this chapter has been cut back. Dubbed the 'Irish Churches Peace Project', this initiative is likely to be more effective if it operates like a para-church special interest group, rather than an 'arm' of the denominations, for the structural reasons discussed in this chapter. Further, it remains to be seen whether this initiative will employ the tactics of the relatively *powerless*, the type utilized by new social movements, which I argue could be most effective for Christian activists in Northern Ireland and similar contexts (i.e., where religious activists lack moral authority). One such strategy is to subvert what are deemed unjust or sectarian sociopolitical systems by ignoring them, deliberately creating spaces outside them in which other forms of work, life and leisure are possible. I suggest that such spaces can be created through three main tactics: educational programmes, adopting the principles of neo-monastic living, and liturgical reforms.

Educational programmes

Surveys of faith leaders and lay people conducted by ISE in 2009 revealed that most Christians in Northern Ireland think about reconciliation in individual terms (between individuals or between individuals and God), rather than in collective (between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland) terms.³⁹ It would seem then that the work by Corrymeela and ISE over the last generation of defining reconciliation in terms of relationships between groups and as having socio- structural aspects, has not trickled down to the Christian grass roots very effectively - at least among those who responded to the surveys. Given that some qualitative studies confirm that individuals have experienced transformative change in part through educational programmes like those offered by Corrymeela, ISE and ECONI, this is regrettable.⁴⁰ Such changes have included the deconstruction of oppositional identities and the ability to analyse how Northern Ireland's sectarian system mitigates against meaningful relationships with the 'other'. The educational resources developed by these groups over the years remain available, and the final EFR publication includes a list of areas for further development.⁴¹ It is feasible that congregations or small groups could utilize and develop these resources, preferably in ecumenical or 'cross community' settings. Education in and of itself does not automatically motivate people to strive to dismantle Northern Ireland's sectarian sociopolitical structures or live outside them, but it could be a first step.

Principles of neo-monastic living

Neo-monasticism is a movement within Western Christianity that is characterized by commitment to the immediate members of an 'intentional community' and serving in the local context.⁴² Neo-monastics may live together in a single house, in houses near each other, or in 'dispersed' communities. Examples in Northern Ireland include Corrymeela and the now defunct Columbanus Community.⁴³ For them, serving in their local context meant recognizing religion's role in contributing to division, and living together as a witness to counter those divisions. By modelling ecumenical living in a divided society, they sought to transcend or operate outside sectarian structures.

Most Christians in Northern Ireland would not feel ready or able to commit to an intentional ecumenical neo-monastic community, even a dispersed one, but other churches and Christian groups could borrow from their principles by seeking to transcend sectarianism through

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creating opportunities to pray and worship together. For example, ISE founder Fr Michael Hurley advocated 'ecumenical tithing', a commitment for Christians to spend a significant percentage of their time in worship and service with Christians from a tradition other than their own.⁴⁴ While individual Christians could pledge to do this, it would have a greater impact if there were congregational initiatives to support it. This is where the neo-monastic principle of committing to, and receiving support from, other like-minded 'pilgrims' could be applied. The Unity Pilgrims of Clonard Monastery in Belfast could be considered good practice in communal ecumenical tithing. Each week, they join a different Protestant congregation for worship on a Sunday morning, sharing the experience and building relationships over time. Perhaps local clergy and church fora could agree to do far more together than they currently do, including sharing baptismal services.⁴⁵ The effectiveness of such initiatives would be enhanced if, on set occasions, churches closed for a particular service and encouraged their members to attend a service at another church, preferably of another denomination. Doing this would communicate to their own members, and the surrounding community, that it is possible to transcend some of the perceived *structural* barriers to joint Christian fellowship.

Liturgical reforms

The liturgical and ritual practices of Christian churches are loaded with symbolism. In Northern Ireland, the liturgies of both Catholic and Protestant churches often convey the message that there is one true faith. It follows that those outside that faith are radically 'other' or, in some cases, not even Christians.⁴⁶ But the churches could re-form their liturgies, even in subtle ways, so that they communicate that the people from the 'other' tradition are also in fact *Christians*, not enemies. This can be illustrated by the liturgical practices implemented in places like the Holy Cross Benedictine Monastery in Rostrevor. The monks name, in their prayers, Ireland's Protestant churches and leaders at the same time as they pray for the leaders of the Catholic Church.⁴⁷ This communicates to those present that all are Christian and equal. 'In Joyful Hope', a programme of Eucharistic sharing among some Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches in the Belfast area, also models reconciliation at a liturgical level.⁴⁸ The 2013 Four Corners Festival included a number of ritualistic events designed to encourage people to cross religious and geographical boundaries in Belfast.⁴⁹ Siobhan Garrigan's book, *The Real Peace Process*, is a further source of

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ideas about how liturgies could be adapted to transcend sectarianism. She suggests:⁵⁰

- 1 Every Christian, when planning, leading or participating in worship, should try to imagine what it would be like if a person from a different tradition from their own were present. She says, 'What this visualization does is to lessen the chance of you saying or doing something sectarian in that service or else having a mechanism to challenge yourself when you do.'⁵¹
- 2 All Christians 'must ask ourselves how our worship should be performed to foster faithful living of faith tradition in our time'. Garrigan is convinced that 'growing out of sectarianism might mean growing deeper in love with our own confessional tradition'. She says this to emphasize that it is not only in joint worship or in 'mixed marriages' that Christians can transcend sectarianism.⁵²
- 3 Christians can 'create, foster and participate in new encounters with other Christians across the denominational divide'.⁵³ Garrigan also discusses the witness of the Clonard Monastery-Fitzroy Presbyterian fellowship and the Unity Pilgrims.
- 4 Christians should participate in ecumenical Bible study, but 'not as "study" in the sense of debate or discussion or education, but rather as prayer'.⁵⁴

Churches also could devise special inter-denominational liturgies to promote repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation and healing. Such services could be places where suffering is publically and mutually acknowledged and space is created for people to contemplate reconciliation. In this, remembering ECONI's emphasis on self-critical repentance is important, as illustrated by a service entitled 'The Gospel According to Christy Moore', performed in 2012 by Fitzroy Presbyterian at St Oliver Plunkett's Catholic Church in Belfast and again in 2013 at the Four Corners Festival at Clonard Monastery. Revd Steve Stockman of Fitzroy asked the Catholics in the audience for forgiveness for what he called his forebears' oppression of their forebears. Stockman explained that he saw the Fitzroy musicians' performance of Christy Moore - in a Catholic church - as a type of repentance and identification with the oppressed.⁵⁵

Conclusions

A generation's worth of work on reconciliation and reconstruction by organizations like Corrymeela, ISE and ECONI has a lot to offer

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Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland's Christian activists could draw on those resources - and employ the tactics discussed above - as they attempt to transcend the sectarian structures created in part by their own churches. Even seemingly small actions model to those around them, whether they are regular church attendees or not, that there are ways to transcend sectarianism. The tactics of new social movements may be limited, but they are probably the most effective ones open to Christian activists in Northern Ireland and in other contexts where religion has limited influence due to secularization or oppressive states. If Northern Irish Christians consistently employed these tactics, they might regain some moral authority. This would make them better placed to contribute to a wider, secular, civil society-based movement that could challenge politicians and policymakers to make political decisions to deal with the past, by changing the structure of social and political life in the present.

Notes

1. The research on which this chapter is based has been supported by the Irish Research Council through the Irish School of Ecumenics' 'Visioning 21st Century Ecumenism' project (2009-2011). It has benefited from comments by participants at the Political Studies Association Conference in Belfast, 3-5 April 2012, and by David Tombs.
2. Joseph Liechty and Cecelia Clegg, *Moving Beyond Sectarianism* (Dublin: Columba, 2001); Gladys Ganiel, *Evangelicalism and Conflict in Northern Ireland* (New York: Palgrave, 2008); Gladys Ganiel and Peter Jones, 'Religion, Politics and Law' in Linda Woodhead and Rebecca Catto, eds, *Religion and Change in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 299-321.
3. John Bell, 'For God, Ulster or Ireland? Perceptions of Religion, Identity and Security in Contemporary Northern Ireland' (Belfast: Institute for Conflict Research, 2012); Gladys Ganiel and Paul Dixon, 'Religion in Northern Ireland: Rethinking Fundamentalism and the Possibilities for Conflict Transformation', *Journal of Peace Research* 45:3 (2008), 421-38; Claire Mitchell, *Religion, Identity and Politics in Northern Ireland* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).
4. Maria Power, 'Preparing Evangelical Protestants for Peace: the Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland (ECONI) and Peace Building 1987-2005', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 26:1 (2011), 57-72 (70).
5. John Brewer, Gareth Higgins and Francis Teeney, *Religion, Civil Society and Peace in Northern Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 185.
6. Gladys Ganiel and Joram Tarusarira, 'Religion, Reconciliation and Reconstruction in Zimbabwe' in Martin Leiner and Susan Flamig, eds, *Africa Between Conflict and Reconciliation* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, forthcoming).
7. Ganiel and Jones, 'Religion, Politics and Law'; Brewer, Higgins and Teeney, *Religion, Civil Society and Peace*; Ronald Wells, *Hope and Reconciliation in*

- Northern Ireland: the Role of Faith-Based Organization* (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2010).
8. Ganiel, *Evangelicalism and Conflict*, pp. 24-9.
 9. The policy document *A Shared Future* names Corrymeela and ISE as developers of 'best practice' in 'reconciliation' (Belfast, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Northern Ireland, 2005), available at: <<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/policy-strategic-framework-good-relations.pdf>>, p. 42, accessed 4 January 2013.
 10. Ray Davey, 'Agape', in John Morrow, ed., *Journey of Hope: Sources of the Corrymeela Vision* (Belfast: Corrymeela Press, 1995), p. 98.
 11. Wells, *Hope and Reconciliation*, pp. 80-1.
 12. Ray Davey, *Take Away This Hate: the Story of a Search for Community* (Belfast: Corrymeela Press, 1980); Davey, *An Unfinished Journey* (Belfast: Corrymeela Press, 1986); Davey, *A Channel of Peace: the Story of the Corrymeela Community* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1993); John Morrow, *Journey of Hope: Sources of the Corrymeela Vision* (Belfast: Corrymeela Press, 1995); Morrow, *On the Road of Reconciliation* (Dublin: Columba, 2003).
 13. David Stevens, *The Land of Unlikeness: Explorations into Reconciliation* (Dublin: Columba, 2004); Stevens, *The Place Called Reconciliation: Texts to Explore* (Belfast: The Corrymeela Press, 2008).
 14. Stevens, *The Land of Unlikeness*, pp. 22-43.
 15. Maria Power, *From Ecumenism to Community Relations* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007), pp. 153-9; Ronald Wells, *People Behind the Peace: Community and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 101-20; Michael Hurley, *Reconciliation in Religion and in Society* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1994); Hurley, *Christian Unity: An Ecumenical Second Spring?* (Dublin: Veritas, 1998).
 16. Oliver Rafferty, *Reconciliation: Essays in Honour of Michael Hurley* (Dublin: Columba, 1993).
 17. Liechty and Clegg, *Moving Beyond Sectarianism*.
 18. Kenneth Kearon, 'Five Fascinating Years (1999-2004)' in Michael Hurley, ed., *The Irish School of Ecumenics* (Dublin: Columba, 2008), p. 200.
 19. Johnston McMaster and Cathy Higgins, *Communities of Reconciliation: Living Faith in the Public Place* (Newtownards: Colourpoint Books, 2002), p. 9.
 20. Two of McMaster and Higgins' EFR courses are now available online: *The Bible in Dispute*, and *Where in the World is God?*, <<http://visioning.ecumenics.ie/>>, accessed 25 February 2012.
 21. 'Church Fora', Irish School of Ecumenics, TCD [website] <<http://www.tcd.ie/ise/research/church-fora/index.php>>, accessed 16 February 2012.
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