

# A half century of LGBTQIA+ Christian activism in Northern Ireland

RICHARD O'LEARY



**Dr Richard O'Leary is the creator and performer of storytelling solo shows including 'There's a Bishop in my Bedroom' (2017) and 'Border Fairies' (2021) both of which premièred at the MAC theatre, Belfast.**

Richard previously he worked as a Lecturer in Sociology at Queen's University Belfast and as a Research Fellow at Oxford University with a specialism in the Sociology of Religion. In 2007 he co-founded the Church of Ireland (Anglican) pro-LGBT campaign group Changing Attitude Ireland. Richard gave this live 'performance lecture' in Belfast in October 2022. It charts the lived history and experiences of LGBTQIA+ people in NI from the first unofficial same-sex Christian ceremony over 40 years ago, before the decriminalisation of male same sex relationships. He tells of the journey, challenges, progress and steps along the way towards LGBTQIA+ affirmation within the political, cultural and Christian spheres in NI.

## Suggested Questions

1. Did you hear anything in Richard's talk that surprised you?
2. How involved do you feel that Christians should be in public / political life?
3. What issues relating to the LGBTQIA+ community do you think Christians should be involved in today?