



A number of clergy and parishioners from the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross took part in the recent Silent Walk marking World

Refugee Day. People brought along old shoes and at the end of the walk left them at the gates of the park on Grand Parade as a visible witness to the journeys on foot of many refugees.

## **Irish-born Bishop of Dallas has appealed for an end to violence**

The Irish-born Bishop of Dallas has appealed for an end to violence following Thursday night's shootings in his city which left five police officers dead and another seven policemen injured as well as wounding two civilians.

In a statement, Bishop Kevin Farrell of Dallas prayed for dialogue and reconciliation and warned "Violence cannot be overcome with violence. Violence is overcome with peace."

The Texan-based bishop described the magnitude of the violence in Dallas city centre on Thursday night as "staggering."

"Our first concern is for the families who have lost loved ones in this tragic attack," Bishop Farrell stated and added "all lives matter, whether they be black, white, Muslim, Christian, Hindu. We are all children of God and all human life is precious."



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The five police officers were killed and seven other officers and two civilians were wounded in a deadly spate of gunfire at the conclusion of a peaceful march protesting recent killings of two African American men by police in Baton Rouge and Minneapolis.

The sniper, 25 year old Micah Xavier Johnson, was killed by police on Thursday. He had served in the army reserve for six years before he was discharged over allegations of sexual harassment of another female member of the army while on tour in Afghanistan in 2014.

“We pray for consolation and healing for both the families and those killed and wounded. We are reminded of the ever-present danger to those who are dedicated to protecting us,” Bishop Farrell said.

He also emphasised, “We have been swept up in the escalating cycle of violence that has now touched us intimately as it has others throughout our country and the world. All lives matter: black, white, Muslim, Christian, Hindu. We are all children of God and all human life is precious.”

Elsewhere in his statement, Bishop Farrell said, “We cannot lose respect for each other and we call upon all of our civic leaders to speak to one another and work together to come to a sensible resolution to this escalating violence. Let us implore God our Heavenly Father to touch the minds and hearts of all people to work together for peace and understanding.”

“Let us recall the words of Pope Francis, ‘May the God of peace arouse in all an authentic desire for dialogue and reconciliation. Violence cannot be overcome with violence. Violence is overcome with peace.’”

## **Methodist President welcomes government decision on additional refugees**

The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev Bill Mullally, has congratulated the Irish Government on its decision to resettle an extra 260 refugees from Lebanon who have been displaced by the Syrian conflict.

Mr Mullally, who himself settled in Ireland having left his homeland of Zimbabwe via South Africa, said:

‘Ireland is a nation that prides itself as the home of the *céad mile fáilte*. These “hundred thousand welcomes” must be extended unconditionally to those who are about to make Ireland their home having made long and dangerous journeys in search of safety from war-torn Syria.

‘Many of those who will arrive in Ireland will have been forced to make the agonising decision to leave loved ones behind and all will require the love and support of new neighbours and friends as they begin to rebuild their lives and make Ireland their home.

‘It is also important to remember that it is incumbent on each and every citizen in Ireland to continue to challenge racism, discrimination and victimisation so that we, as a nation, can offer safe refuge and real hope for the future to those who most need it.

‘One of the mottoes of the Methodist Church is “Friends of all, enemies of none”. As a Church, we will open our hearts, our minds and our doors to help support the resettlement process in whatever way we can.’

## **Summer edition of the Presbyterian Herald now available**

The summer edition of the Presbyterian *Herald* – a double issue - is now available and there is plenty to read while relaxing over the July and August holidays.

This issue includes the annual General Assembly supplement. Mark Smith reports on the Opening Night, where the new Moderator, Dr. Frank Sellar, encouraged the Church to be a community of global concern. Also included are reports from each of the Councils, as well as images taken throughout the week, offering a flavour of this year’s Assembly.



As already mentioned, the Fit for Purpose theme for 2016/17 is 'a community of global concern'. In 'God's heart for the nations', Rev. Dr. Mark Welsh helps us to understand what this actually means. And continuing the global theme, Rev. Karen Campbell looks at why it is important to sing global songs in our churches in 'Worshipping with global concern in mind'.

The 'listening to the global church' theme is highlighted in the article 'Greek hospitality', where Rev. Kathryn Viner and Rev. Dimitris Boukis share their experiences of how the church in Greece has been responding to the refugee crisis.

Reflecting on those she encountered, Kathryn said, "I was greatly encouraged by the effort and commitment of the Christians from different denominations in Thessaloniki. They are giving of their time...to work together tirelessly to meet every person who arrives in Greece from a place of war or conflict...and to show them compassion."

This summer Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention will celebrate its 80th anniversary. Rebecca McConnell takes a look at some of the highlights over the years since the first Convention in 1936.

Rebecca writes: "Whilst there have been many changes throughout its history, central to the work of the Convention is the comforting knowledge that it serves a God that does not change."

Many Somme commemorations will take place during the month of July. These battles signify a significant history to many Presbyterians – in



‘Ulster Presbyterians at the Somme’ Nigel Henderson outlines why this is the case.

For those who come into Assembly Buildings, they will undoubtedly have met Joyce Anderson who has worked in the General Secretary’s department for 43 years. Joyce will retire at the end of the summer, so before she leaves to enjoy her retirement, the *Herald* asked her to provide her ‘life lessons’, which can be read on page 11. This issue also includes reflections from Betsy Cameron, Arthur Clarke and Jonathan Rea, while Connie Hunter writes for the ‘As I see it...’ page.

## Cathedral and choral

On Wednesday the Choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge, will give a lunchtime recital in **St Mary’s cathedral, Limerick**, as part of a short Irish tour. The programme, ‘Resurgam: Commemorating 1916’, will reflect on the events 1916, both from the Irish perspective, and from that of the Battle of the Somme. The choir will sing works by Byrd, Tomkins, and Colin Mawby as well as Herbert Howells’ *Requiem*.

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‘**Summer Music at Sandford 2016**’ continues at lunchtime on Friday in Sandford parish church,

Ranelagh, where the recital this week will feature another part of the Irish tour by the choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge, directed by Sarah MacDonald.

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Next Saturday, 16 July, the **Royal School of Church Music Ireland** will hold two two-hour workshops in **St Brigid's cathedral, Kildare**, for organists and small church choirs. The workshops will be conducted by Nathan Barrett, Organist and Choir Director at St Paul's church, Glenageary, Co. Dublin. They have been organized to enthuse, support and encourage the work of organists and choirs in parish churches. There will be an organist workshop from 11am until 1pm and a choral workshop from 2 until 4pm. Booking is required and details may be had from Mark Bowyer at [mbowyer@rscm.com](mailto:mbowyer@rscm.com) or 085-166 1627.

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Reports that Lincoln Cathedral has announced it will start auditioning pupils from schools across the city, ending an exclusive, centuries-old tie with Lincoln Minster School. The cathedral's 40 choristers have been chosen from among the pupils at fee-paying Lincoln Minster School since the 13th Century. However, from September it has said it intends to work with

other schools. Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral, Mark Hocknull is quoted.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lincolnshire-36736677>

## News briefs

**The Youth Team of the Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2016** - These young people, all in Year 13, representing 14 schools and 31 parishes from the Diocese of Derry took part in the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes led by Bishop Donal McKeown from 1st - 6th July 2016. The Youth Team participated in a full pilgrimage programme whilst also assisting pilgrims in wheelchairs, singing as part of the choir or reading during the ceremonies.

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Yesterday in **St Lasarian's cathedral, Old Leighlin**, a specially commissioned processional cross was dedicated by the Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, the Rt Revd Michael Burrows. The cross is in memory of Wilma Agar-Lawlor and its commissioning has been made possible by a generous donation by her family. It has been designed and fashioned by Dr Richard Henderson, former Bishop of Tuam, and it was

dedicated during a special liturgy, devised by the Dean of Leighlin, the Very Revd Tom Gordon, on the Sunday before Wilma's anniversary.

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**Bishop Harold Miller of Down & Dromore**, has received an honorary **Doctor of Divinity degree** from.

[Nashotah House Theological Seminary](#) in Wisconsin, a recognised seminary for the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church in North America. The bishop also received *The Archbishop Ramsey Award* which is presented to an individual who distinguishes themselves in the areas of Ecclesiology, Ecumenism, Ascetic Spiritual Theology, or Priestly Formation and Liturgy. Bishop Harold gave the annual Arthur Michael Ramsey Lecture as a sermon at the Homecoming Day Evensong when he took Anglican–Methodist relations as his topic.

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**The Methodist Conference in Britain** has elected the Revd Loraine N Mellor to be President and Jill Baker to be Vice-President. Both will start their year of office when the Representative Session of the Methodist Conference meets in Birmingham on 24 June 2017. They will succeed the current President

and Vice-President, the Revd Dr Roger Walton and Rachel Lampard.

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Events are finalised for the **National Novena to Our Lady of Knock** will take place from the 14th – 22nd August. The theme for this year is ‘Merciful like the Father’ in keeping with the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The Novena will open with Most Rev. Bishop Michael Smith and the Meath Diocesan Pilgrimage as well as guest speaker, Mr. Noel Smyth, Businessman and Solicitor who whose talk entitled ‘God and Mammon- doing the right thing’ will explore the topic of business and ethics. As in recent years, workshops will take place daily at 12 noon and 6pm on a range of interesting and contemporary issues.

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Details have been announced by the **Irish College of Preachers** of their forthcoming 2016 conference which will be held in the **Church of Ireland Theological Institute** from 14 to 16 September. The guest speaker will be the Ven. David Huss, Rector of the Donegal group of parishes and Archdeacon of Raphoe, who is an accomplished preacher and teacher. The conference is aimed at all aspiring preachers,

both lay and ordained. Details may be had from the Bishop of Kilmore, the Rt Revd Ferran Glenfield, at [bishop@kilmore.anglican.org](mailto:bishop@kilmore.anglican.org)

## **Bold vision for education launched at C of E General Synod**

The largest single provider of schools and academies in England this past weekend launched a bold and ambitious vision for education at General Synod. The Church of England educates 1 million pupils in 4700 schools and has plans to open another 125 schools in the next five years. Speaking at Synod, the lead Bishop for education, Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely, said the vision will equip the Church in the current wider education framework: 'With the opportunity to shape and enhance our provision and to influence the debate about what education is for; to open new schools and develop existing schools; and to provide radically new approaches to how we function as a movement for education and train teachers and leaders to share that vision.'

The Vision was developed by a theological reference group, chaired by Professor David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity Emeritus at

Cambridge University following widespread consultation.

The Church of England Vision for Education embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. It offers a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. This is worked out theologically and educationally through four basic elements which permeate the vision: wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

The Rev Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer for the Church of England said: 'The need to set out our stall in an increasingly fragmented educational scene and where wellbeing of young people is of national concern is clear. Through this vision pupils, parents, new and existing schools and teachers will know how aspiring we are for them and how we will best support them in future years.'

The vision, in line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, is for the common good of the whole community and its environment, whether national, regional or local.

The new Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership which opens in the Autumn will be underpinned by this vision and will provide networks, training and research to equip leaders to continue play a vital role in education in this new phase of the Church of England's involvement in education.

General Synod overwhelmingly welcomed the report following a debate in which Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, expressed his support, describing the vision as 'immensely exciting' and 'outward looking'.

## **United Reformed Church to allow same-sex couples to marry in churches**

This afternoon, Saturday 9 July 2016, the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church (URC) voted in favour of allowing its local churches to conduct and register marriages for same-sex couples. This means that the URC is now the largest UK denomination to freely permit the celebration and registration of marriages of same-sex couple in its churches.

A two-thirds majority was needed to allow the proposal to be confirmed as the denomination's final decision – Assembly voted in favour of the



resolution by 240 votes to 21 votes. United Reformed churches in England and Wales wishing to register their buildings for the marriage of same-sex couples are now able to start that process immediately. (In Scotland the legal framework is rather different, but the effects of the Church's decision will be broadly similar.)

The process which culminated in today's vote has been a lengthy one. The General Assembly has considered the proposal twice before – in 2014, and again in a special, single issue Assembly, which met in June 2015. It has long been clear that the denomination cannot express a single view on the issue of same-sex marriage and, at the 2015 Assembly it was ruled that that the decision on whether an individual United Reformed Church congregation can host marriages of same-sex couples lies wholly with each local church. This is the policy that was confirmed today as the Church's decision.

Speaking of the process and today's vote, the Revd John Proctor, General Secretary of the URC said: 'Today the URC has made an important decision – at which some will rejoice and with which others will be uncomfortable. Those of our churches who now wish to offer full marriage services to same-sex couples are free

to do just that – and those churches who do not wish to are not compelled to. All are part of this denomination. This has been a sensitive issue for many in our churches. It has been important to take our time over the decision process, and to listen as carefully as we can to one another along the way.’

- See more at: <http://www.urc.org.uk/latest-news/2084-the-united-reformed-church-votes-to-allow-the-marriage-of-same-sex-couples-in-its-churches.html#sthash.oU5MVhgX.dpuf>

## **News link - Theresa Villiers says moves on dealing with Troubles legacy closer than ever**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/theresa-villiers-says-moves-on-dealing-with-troubles-legacy-closer-than-ever-34871107.html>

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