



January 21, 2022

Overview

+Image of the day

Front page - Durham Cathedral

+People and places

Warm welcome for Archbishop McDowell at Belfast Islamic Centre

Election for Presbyterian Moderator: Shortlist to succeed Dr Bruce unveiled

Big thank you to the Alexandra Presbyterian Church ladies group from Mencap NI

Methodist Centre Rome peacekeeping

Catholic Schools Week 2022 Living Life to the Full

Magi challenge to take new paths from Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Archbishop Francis Duffy welcomes Right Reverend Michael Burrows to the west

+Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Credible Catholic religious education programme

Understanding Adolescence videos for parents

Bishop Burrows on his new role

LiveLent 2022 church resources: Embracing Justice

Life and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland

+Poem for today

The Fisherman by William Butler Yeats

People and places

Warm welcome for Archbishop McDowell at Belfast Islamic Centre

Archbishop John McDowell received a warm welcome to the Belfast Islamic Centre (BIC), on Wellington Park, on the morning of Monday 17th January, a crisp and sunny winter day.

The welcoming party included the present Chairman of the Centre, Mohamed Arshed; former Chairman, Dr Wasif Naeem; and Administrator Pashmina (all pictured); along with other senior members of the Belfast Islamic community.

The group enjoyed friendly conversation over refreshments in the multi-purpose building.

A Powerpoint presentation was given by Dr Wasif on behalf of BIC, the largest institution of the Muslim community in Northern Ireland, outlining the work of the centre and some of the practical challenges faced in particular since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, alongside those resulting from Brexit.

Following the visit, Archbishop John commented: “The language and practice of inter-faith dialogue and engagement has evolved and changed considerably over the last 50 or more years. Dialogue between faith groups with the aim of seeking to better understand one another’s

January 21, 2022



religion, culture and scriptures continues to be important in fostering mutual respect, combatting racism, discrimination and sectarianism and in promoting peaceful relations between faith groups and individuals. However, that form of engagement and understanding is no longer perceived as exhausting our scope for working together if indeed it was previously. Rather, there is a healthy movement towards compassionate action and active collaboration between faith groups in responding to human need and towards the common goals of addressing local and global social injustices, poverty and suffering.

“The work of the Belfast Islamic Centre in addressing the needs of people from forty–two countries, yet open to all from any community, is truly impressive. Their work with the

January 21, 2022

most needy and marginalised, particularly refugees and asylum seekers, is a remarkable example of love in action.

“For Anglicans everywhere and in the Church of Ireland this evolution is supported by the thrust of the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion, a statement which points to the variety and breadth of the Church’s mission while acknowledging that evangelism undergirds all Christian mission and engagement.

“We look forward to developing our on–the–ground friendships with our Muslim and other–faith brothers and sisters.”

Election for Presbyterian Moderator: Shortlist to succeed Dr Bruce unveiled

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has announced the names of four ministers that will go before the Church’s 19 regional presbyteries on 1 February, when they meet across Ireland to select the denomination’s next PCI Moderator:

Rev John Kirkpatrick, minister of Portrush

Presbyterian Church - John Kirkpatrick has been minister of Portrush Presbyterian Church since 1993. Born in 1956, John was ordained assistant minister of Megain/Mersey St Presbyterian Churches, Belfast in 1985, before being installed as minister of Garryduff Presbyterian in 1987.



Rev Dr Colin McClure, minister of First Larne Presbyterian Church - Colin McClure has been minister of First Larne Presbyterian Church since 2003. Born in 1962, he was ordained assistant minister of Fisherwick Presbyterian Church, Belfast in 1990 and installed as minister of Loughbrickland and Scarva Presbyterian Churches in 1993. Colin was convener of PCI's Personnel / Planning Committee (2000-2004) and State Education Committee (2010-2014). He has been Clerk of the Presbytery of Carrickfergus since 2014.

Rev Dr Trevor McCormick, minister of First Kilrea Presbyterian Church and Boveedy - Trevor McCormick was installed as minister of First Kilrea Presbyterian Church in 1986 and with Boveedy Presbyterian (Stated Supply) in

January 21, 2022

2009. Born in 1958, he was ordained assistant minister of First Carrickfergus Presbyterian Church in 1984. Trevor was convener of the Presbyterian Residential Trust Committee (1996-2003) and PCI's Council for Social Witness (2015-2020). He has been Clerk of the Presbytery of Coleraine & Limavady since 2016.

Rev Alastair McNeely, minister of Richhill

Presbyterian Church - Alastair McNeely was ordained assistant minister of Ebrington Presbyterian Church in 1991. He was called to Richhill Presbyterian Church in 1993, where he has served as minister for nearly 30 years. Alastair was born in 1962.

The name of the Moderator-Designate will announced on the evening of 1 February. They will then be formally proposed to the General Assembly as Moderator for the year 2022-2023, when it meets on Wednesday, 22 June 2022.

Big thank you to the Alexandra Presbyterian ladies group from Mencap NI

Rather than exchanging Christmas cards the ladies each made a donation and together raised £300 of money.

Mencap's Community Support Officer Emma Harte attended the groups meeting this week to thank the ladies and inform them of the amazing services Mencap provide for local people with a learning disability all across Northern Ireland.

January 21, 2022

Alexandra Presbyterian Church ladies group

If you are involved in a group, community or if your business would like more information on how you can support please email Mencap NI



Methodist Centre Rome

World Methodist Council vice president Ms. Gillian Kingston and Director Matthew Laferty met H.E. Ambassador ChrisTrott recently to discuss a wide range of issues including the role of Methodists in peacemaking



Catholic Schools Week 2022 Living Life to the Full

Catholic Schools Week 2022 will be celebrated in parishes across the island from Sunday 23 to Sunday 30 January. This year's theme is: 'Catholic Schools: Living Life to the Full'.

To formally open Catholic Schools Week, Bishop Tom Deenihan of Meath, Chair of the Catholic Education Service and a member of the Bishops' Council for Education, will celebrate Mass on Sunday 23 January from 11.00am. The liturgy will include musicians from Schola Cantorum at Saint Finian's Diocesan College. There will also be participation in the Mass from the Loreto Secondary School and Coláiste Mhuire, Mullingar.

Bishop Deenihan said, "Every year, Catholic Schools Week assumes a greater importance for our local school community and parish. Our Catholic schools prepare their students for this world but also try to convey a sense of the Kingdom of God and the world to come. Catholic schools are renowned for the academic education that they offer their students. Equally, such schools contribute to society by encouraging the full development of their student's talents. It is also true that many of these schools, particularly at post-primary level, are involved in social outreach projects that contribute to local communities.

"The past few years, have illustrated the potential that students have to influence public policy and debate and to

January 21, 2022

change the world for the better, making it a kinder, more inclusive and more welcoming place. That has been particularly true in relation to ecology and protecting the environment, a key message of Pope Francis and a theme of previous Catholic Schools Weeks. As we participate in Catholic Schools Week this year, we celebrate, in a special way, our following of Jesus' teaching by living life to the full through our thoughts, words and actions. In doing so, we follow the words of Jesus in John's Gospel: 'I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full,'" Bishop Deenihan said.

Resources for schools online

The full suite of CSW2022 resources for primary and post-primary are now available on www.catholicschools.ie. Each resource explores the five daily themes of Catholic Schools Week.

Daily themes of Catholic Schools Week:

Monday – Living Life to the Full with God

Tuesday – Living Life to the Full Together

Wednesday (Grandparents' Day) – Celebrating Being Together Again

Thursday – Living Life in Wonder and Awe

Friday – Living Life and Facing the Future

Mass on livestream

This Mass will be livestreamed on -

<https://www.mullingarparish.ie/livestream> from the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

Magi challenge to take new paths from Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Worshippers gathered in church and on line on Tuesday evening (January 18) to mark the start of the 2022 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Dublin Council of Churches held their annual opening service in St Anthony's Church in Clontarf.

The Church of Ireland was represented by Archbishop Michael Jackson who read the Gospel and Canon Lesley Robinson who was also representing the local ecumenical group. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Archbishop Dermot Farrell, was in attendance along with most of the leaders of the 14 Dublin Council of Churches member churches.

Their flocks tuned in via the parish webcam.

The theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022 is from the Epiphany story: "We have seen his star in the East". This theme was chosen by the members of the Middle East Council of Churches. Archbishop Dermot Farrell welcomed the congregation. He said that they had come together as baptised members of different churches in a common prayer centred on the word of God. He said that the search for unity is a major challenge for all Christians. He added that the Magi challenge us to take new paths and that in Christ we find the source of unity. He asked that like the Magi we fix our eyes on the star and as restless seekers remain open to God's surprises.

January 21, 2022



Church leaders at Dublin Council of Churches' opening service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022. Photo: Denis Poynton/Dublin Council of Churches.

The preacher was former Presbyterian Moderator the Very Revd Dr Trevor Morrow. He said the service's theme brought to mind the Nativity. He said the Magi did not seem to easily fit in to the Christmas story but to St Matthew they were of enormous importance. Most of the people in the Christmas story were Jewish but the Magi were gentiles, he pointed out. They came from the east – Iran/Persia.

Based on the prophecy from Isaiah Matthew felt that the hopes for the city of Jerusalem were realised in the birth of this child, Dr Morrow stated. It was also in Jerusalem that God's presence was most real. It was where he met his people, where the tabernacle was built. For Matthew this was fulfilled with the birth of Jesus –

January 21, 2022

he was the tabernacle and exercised God's authority, he said.

Dr Morrow said that the implications for those who gathered at the ecumenical event were twofold. One was in the understanding of mission and how people were drawn to God.

Those who had wisdom were brought to greater wisdom and those who had light were brought to the light of the world, he stated.

The second aspect was the hope that was before us. He stated that the description in Matthew's gospel of the coming of the wise men from the east was the precursor of the ultimate establishment of the city of God, the new Jerusalem where all the nations of the world would bring their economic and cultural inheritance. "It is the ultimate ecumenical jamboree because it will express such diversity in unity in this new creation. People from every background from every nation, tribe and tongue, where the city of God is ultimately realised," he said.

Thinking about what he, as an Irishman, would bring into the Holy City he suggested he would have Lambeg drum on his front, an Irish fiddle on his back, a pint of Guinness in his left hand and in his right the riches of the literature that this island has produced. He added that perhaps he would do the River Dance. "Whatever your background, you will bring your riches as we enter into harmony with Jesus Christ," he explained.

The service concluded in prayer, including prayers for Ashling Murphy, whose funeral had taken place in Tullamore
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January 21, 2022

earlier that day, and her family and friends. It closed with the ecumenical leaders gathering in the sanctuary for the final blessing.

The service is available to watch on the St Anthony's website: <https://stanthonysclontarf.ie/live-feed/>

Archbishop Francis Duffy welcomes Right Reverend Michael Burrows to the west

Archbishop Duffy said - I welcome the news of the appointment by the Church of Ireland of the Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe, and I warmly congratulate Bishop Michael Burrows on his election.

Based on my own personal experience, I am certain that Bishop Burrows will receive a very warm welcome to the West of Ireland.

Bishop Burrows begins his ministry here at an exciting and challenging time, given the recent amalgamation of dioceses. He brings to his new appointment, however, a wealth of valuable experience, and I look forward to collaborating with and working alongside him. I offer him the support of my prayers and the hand of friendship as he prepares to assume his new responsibilities. Together we will, please God, build on the personal friendship and very solid foundations put in place by our predecessors Right Reverend Patrick Rooke and Archbishop Michael Neary.

January 21, 2022

On this happy occasion, I also greet and congratulate Bishop Burrows' wife, Claire, and their family – Henry, Andrew, Gráinne and James.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books

Credible Catholic religious education programme

Webinar to launch *Credible Catholic* Religious Education Programme



You are invited to the launch of
Credible Catholic
a new religious education programme
made available by the
Council for Catechetics of
the Irish Bishops' Conference
on Wednesday 26 January 2022 at 7.00pm
online *via* Zoom

Webinar Speakers:

- Bishop Brendan Leahy, Chair of the Council for Catechetics. Bishop Leahy will formally launch the programme and will be joined by:
- Dr Alexander O' Hara, National Director for Catechetics
- Dr Tom Finnegan, Theology and Religious Studies, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Ms Kate Liffey, St Brendan's Community School, Birr, Co Offaly
- Father Conor Mc Donagh OP, Saint Saviour's, Dublin



Self-registration for the Zoom launch is open now at
<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwkd-2prTwiG9xUz8PyhHjqkrhpdn-C5caQ>
www.catholicschools.ie/crediblecatholic

January 21, 2022

Bishop Brendan Leahy will formally launch 'Credible Catholic' religious education programme on January 26

[<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2022/01/19/bishop-brendan-leahy-to-launch-credible-catholic-religious-education-programme/>]

Understanding Adolescence videos for parents

Over the next few months and in support of parents and guardians in terms of best parenting your teenager, a short series of 20 minute videos entitled "Understanding Adolescence" will be released and hosted on Armagh C of I Diocesan website and on its Facebook page.

This month's video and presentation is entitled "Understanding Adolescence...brain changes, body changes, peer changes and other important stuff!"

Other topics will include...

"Communicating with your teenager, setting boundaries and understanding risk taking behaviour".

"Supporting your teenager through the up's, down's and in-between's of education".

[[] <http://armagh.anglican.org/>]

January 21, 2022

Bishop Burrows on his new role

On Friday, 14th January 2022, it was announced that the Rt Revd Michael Burrows, the present Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, had been elected as bishop of the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe. Bishop Michael spoke with Alan Morrissey, on Clare FM's Morning Focus yesterday (Tuesday, 18th January), about his new role.

Just click here to listen back to the full interview:

[<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/11165/bishop-michael-burrows-talks-about>]

LiveLent 2022 church resources: Embracing Justice

This year, the C of E in LiveLent 2022 is remembering the cry of the Prophet Isaiah: 'Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice?'

"This Lent we are called to reflect on the injustices of the world and ask what God is calling us to do about them. Over forty days, we step into God's work in the here and now – and in doing so we move from brokenness towards wholeness

#LiveLent: Embracing Justice is the Church of England's theme for Lent 2022. Both the Archbishop of Canterbury's 2022 Lent Book, Embracing Justice (SPCK), and the daily reflections booklet for adults (CHP) have been written by Isabelle Hamley.

January 21, 2022

It invites us to examine our own lives truthfully, to see the world more deeply and to pray – for the church and the world far and near – that ‘justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream’ (Amos 5.24). Each week we follow a different thread through the many stories of justice in the Bible to explore how God works with humanity to bring justice, wholeness and salvation to all. As in recent years, the weekly themes of the Archbishop’s Lent Book (supported by online resources for churches and groups) will also be explored in daily reflection from the Church of England.

#LiveLent: Embracing Justice will offer a daily Bible reading, a short reflection and a prayer, as well as a practical challenge linked to the week’s theme. An accompanying child’s version will also be available to help children and their families explore how we can live well together.

The book and booklets will be accompanied by daily social media posts from Ash Wednesday (2 March) to Easter Day (17 April), together with a wide range of free digital resources for individuals, groups and churches.

Life and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland

This course from Stranmillis will be delivered by Dr Simon Gallaher, BA MPhil PhD.

The course investigates this period in Irish history, looking at broad social and cultural themes. What was the experience

January 21, 2022

of famine, poverty, and disease? How was education and welfare provided? How did people engage in politics and interact with state and religious authorities? What impact did emigration have at home and abroad?

[] <https://eshop.stran.ac.uk/life-and-society-in-nineteenth-century-ireland-2886-p.asp>

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Poem for today

The Fisherman by William Butler Yeats

Although I can see him still—
The freckled man who goes
To a gray place on a hill
In gray Connemara clothes
At dawn to cast his flies—
It's long since I began
To call up to the eyes
This wise and simple man.
All day I'd looked in the face
What I had hoped it would be
To write for my own race
And the reality:
The living men that I hate,
The dead man that I loved,
The craven man in his seat,
The insolent unreproved—
And no knave brought to book
Who has won a drunken cheer—
The witty man and his joke
Aimed at the commonest ear,
The clever man who cries

January 21, 2022

The catch cries of the clown,
The beating down of the wise
And great Art beaten down.

Maybe a twelve-month since
Suddenly I began,
In scorn of this audience,
Imagining a man,
And his sun-freckled face
And gray Connemara cloth,
Climbing up to a place
Where stone is dark with froth,
And the down turn of his wrist
When the flies drop in the stream—
A man who does not exist,
A man who is but a dream;
And cried, “Before I am old
I shall have written him one
Poem maybe as cold
And passionate as the dawn.”

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