



Ugandan children's choir Northern Ireland tour

The Abaana New Life Choir has arrived in Northern Ireland to begin their four month tour. These children are “ambassadors” for the many still living in poverty in their communities. The choir will perform their Ugandan and English gospel songs in schools and churches across the UK and Ireland. Through this tour, we hope to be able to sponsor another 200–300 children and rescue more children from the streets. This will be an incredible experience for the children

in the choir and an amazing opportunity for them to help transform their own communities.'

During the concerts, there will be a freewill offering when you will have the opportunity to contribute towards the work of Abaana.

Abaana, (which is the Luganda word for 'children') is a local Christian charity set up in 1998. The vision is 'to see children in Africa have their needs met, their rights upheld, and their dreams fulfilled, through raising awareness and motivating people to give sacrificially, so that lives are transformed and the love of God is shown in a practical way.'

Down & Dromore Concert Dates : [St Mary's, Ballybeen – Sunday 12th February](#) [St John's Parish, Moira – Wednesday 1st March](#)

For more information on the choir concert dates see www.abaana.org/choirdates

4 Corners: Free screening of 'I am Belfast' film this Thursday

If you have not seen it yet, 'I am Belfast' is a visually wonderful and unique film. Mark Cousins' tribute to his home city is both a treat

for the eyes and thought-provoking, Brian O'Neill writes on Suggest O'Toole.

The basic concept is to imagine Belfast as a 10,000 year old woman. We follow her as she travels through Belfast and reflects on the history of the locations she visits. What I liked about the film was that it made you see Belfast in a whole different light. Locations I am familiar with took on a new life when viewed through the outside eyes of Cinematographer [Christopher Doyle](#). It does sound a bit arty, but really the film is very accessible and enjoyable. For more details of the film [Alan has a good write up on his blog...](#)

The film is being screened this Thursday as part of the [4 Corners Festival](#). The film's producer, Lisa Barros D'Sa, will do a Q+A after the screening.

The location is the very appropriate First Presbyterian Church on Rosemary Street. This is one of Belfast's oldest churches with the Congregation founded in 1644, and the present building being completed in 1783.

[You can register for the free screening on Facebook...](#)

4 Corners: Caring for Carers banquet

“From the moment we walked up those stairs it was amazing,” said one of our carers, giggling with some friends as they had their photo taken with the Lord Mayor, writes our 4Corners’ correspondent.

And to be fair Belfast City Hall has as fine a set of Marble Stairs as you’ll find anywhere in the country. As our guests arrived into the Rotunda they were greeted by live music and a drinks reception. Behind the scenes the lovely people from Root Soup were preparing a fabulous meal and the atmosphere was amazing.

Every year as part of the festival we organise a banquet at City Hall in honour of the people who are on the margins and often overlooked. Previously we have honoured the homeless and refugees and asylum seekers. This year we wanted to take a moment to appreciate those who spend their time caring for others. Caring for Carers was entirely funded by the generosity of dozens of small donors and Cliftonville FC who raised £1000 through a shirt auction and matching gift.



At the heart of the 4 Corners festival is the belief that everyone in our city is made in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We also enjoy bringing people out of their comfort zones to meet others from across the city. Tonight, was a perfect example of us all meeting each other and seeing each other as human across our inevitable differences. In the interests of privacy, we won't name any names



but the stories heard tonight at different tables were both heart breaking and beautiful. Two older carers from opposite ends of the city found comfort in each other, as they shared their fears about what would happen to their children with disabilities, when they themselves died.

Another lady spoke of the strain of looking after a child with severe epilepsy and a man who looked after his elderly parents admitted he had not been on a night out like this for almost a year.

At tables, all around the room, there were small moments of Grace, as carers looked at each other and recognised they were with friends who truly understood. We were humbled and

privileged to watch those encounters and to see people visibly relax and enjoy each other and the fabulous food.

Root Soup grew out of the L'Arche community in Belfast, and they work with people with learning disabilities and those transitioning out of homelessness. They cooked up an amazing three course feast last night and with the help of volunteers from Clonard and beyond, served the tables with grace and humour.

The evening was hosted by Lord Mayor Brian Kingston who admitted to being outshone by his 84-year-old mother who was his guest at the dinner. He spoke passionately about the city of Belfast, pointing out that at the minute there are 19 Cranes in the city centre working on various developments, that tourism is growing and the economy is healthy.

“But we also want to be a caring city – we have to go beyond being friendly and make sure that we care for each other.”

He then went on to share his own experience of watching his parents getting older, his father having dementia and eventually moving in to sheltered accommodation. And the reason he brought his mother was to recognise her role as

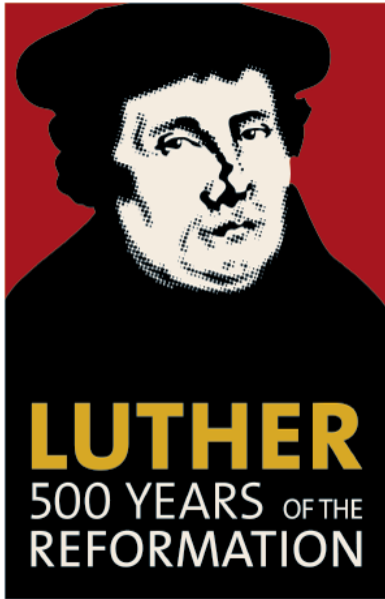
a carer. Even though she was 84 she was still the main point of care for his father, and that took a daily toll on her.

The Lord Mayor's story very obviously struck a chord with many in the room who shared similar experiences.

Ed Petersen from Clonard was the main organiser from the 4 Corners Committee and he ended the evening by thanking the long list of people who had made the night possible including the Lord Mayors Office, various Carers organisations, Root Soup and of course the many donors and Cliftonville FC who paid for the evening. Thank you for bringing together and honouring the unsung heroes who spend their life caring for others.

Reformation 500 TCD Symposium

A Theological Symposium marking the quincentenary of the Reformation takes place in Trinity College Dublin on February 17 and 18. The symposium is a collaborative initiative which involves: The Lutheran Church in Ireland and the School of Religions, Peace Studies & Theology,



the School of Histories & Humanities, the
Department of Physics, Trinity College Dublin.

Archbishop Michael Jackson will give an address at the opening ceremony which takes place in Trinity College Chapel and the Front Square at 4.00 pm on Friday February 17. This includes the opening of the Reformation Installation – a travelling exhibition which is visiting 67 European cities offering the opportunity to explore Reformation stories and share thoughts and stories about the Reformation to travel on to Wittenberg.

The full programme is:

Friday 17 February

16.00 Chapel and Front Square: ?Opening of the
“Reformation Installation”

17.00–19.00 Arts Building, Synge Theatre,
Symposium, Part I: “It is for freedom that Christ
has set us free” (Gal 5:1)

Prof. Dr. Volker Leppin, Church History, Faculty
of Protestant Theology, University of Tuebingen/
Germany: ‘Mysticism, the Reformation and the
Freedom of a Christian’

Prof. Dr. Gunda Werner, Dogmatic Theology,
Faculty of Catholic Theology, University of
Tuebingen/Germany: ‘Love, Freedom and Guilt –
Differences between Christian Traditions in
Thinking the Relationship between Divine and
Human Freedom’

Prof. Dr. Kajsa Ahlstrand, Department of
Theology, Church and Mission, University of
Uppsala/Sweden: ‘Is it all about Freedom? How
Disobedience Became a Virtue (even) for
Lutherans’

Chair: Prof. Graeme Murdoch, School of
Histories and Humanities, TCD



19.00 Reception hosted by the German Embassy (Dining Hall)

20.00–20.30 Choral Music of the Reformation
Goethe Institute Choir (Dining Hall)

Saturday 18 February

10.00–13.00 Arts Building, Synge Theatre,
Symposium, Part II:

“The Legacy of the Reformation”

Prof. Dr. Martin Meiser, New Testament, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Saarbrücken/Germany: ‘Luther’s Legacy for Pauline Studies in Modern Debate’

Prof. Ruth Whelan, DEA, Ph.D., MRIA, Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques,

Professor of French, Dept. of French, School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Maynooth University: 'Challenging Memories: the Reformation in France and the Huguenots in Ireland'

Prof. Salvador Ryan, Church History, St. Patrick's College Maynooth:

'What did Luther ever do for the Reformations in Ireland?'

Coffee Break

Discussion with the speakers from Friday and Saturday and the participants

Chair: Dr Gesa Thiessen, St Finian's Lutheran Church/Dept. of Religions & Theology, TCD

19.30 Concert with the Resurgam Choir in College Chapel

'Don't be afraid to be people of love,' Presiding Bishop tells Pittsburgh revival

Three-day event kicks off US Episcopal Church plan to claim new life, change the world

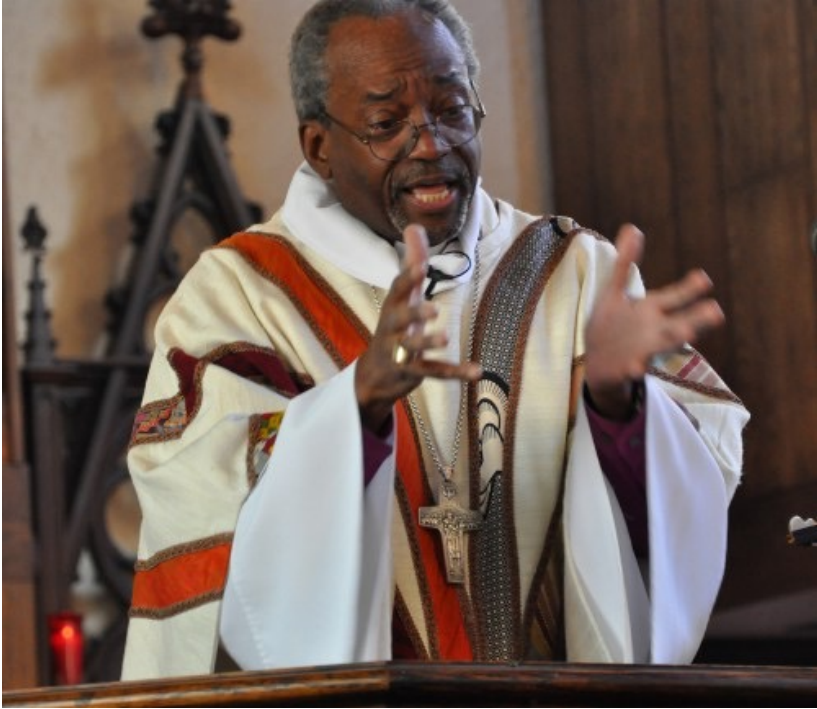
The old church tradition of the revival received new life in the [Diocese of Pittsburgh](#) Feb. 3-5 with a distinctly Episcopal feel.

The emphasis was on both sparking individuals' faith lives and a commitment to show the love of Jesus beyond the four walls of their churches. Anchoring Episcopal revivals in the needs of the world was a constant theme of the weekend.

"Episcopal Church, we need you to follow Jesus. We need you to be the countercultural people of God who would love one another, who would care when others could care less, who would give, not take," Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said during his Feb. 5 sermon at [Calvary Episcopal Church](#) in the Shadyside neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

For those who think the words Episcopal and revival don't go together, the size of the crowds, the depth of their emotion and Curry's insistence begged to differ.

His prayer for this and subsequent revivals, he said during one of his four sermons, is that they will be the beginning of "a way of new life for us as this wonderful Episcopal Church, bearing witness to the love of God in Jesus in this culture and in this particular time in our national history."



“Don’t be afraid to be people of love. Don’t be afraid to stand up for the name of Jesus. Don’t be afraid to reclaim this faith again. And don’t you be ashamed to be an Episcopalian,” Presiding Bishop Michael Curry tells the congregation Feb. 4 during an Absalom Jones Day Eucharist at Church of the Holy Cross in Pittsburgh.

Curry’s [Pilgrimage for Reconciliation](#), Healing and Evangelism in Southwestern Pennsylvania is the first of six revivals being planned with

diocesan teams in different cities around the country and the world this year and in 2018.

“I want to suggest this morning that we need a revival inside the church and out – not just in the Episcopal Church. For there is much that seeks to articulate itself as Christianity that doesn’t look anything like Jesus,” Curry said in his Feb. 4 sermon during an [Absalom Jones](#) Day Eucharist at the [Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross](#). “And if it doesn’t walk and talk and look and smell like Jesus, it’s not Christian ... and if it’s going to look like Jesus, it’s got to look like love.”

Curry said the revival of the church, centered in God’s love, is not about a church rejuvenated for its own sake. The church’s revival must spill God’s love out into the world “until justice rolls down like a mighty stream,” he said, echoing Micah.

To do that, a revival must channel the emotions of the moment toward something bigger and lasting, Curry said during a news conference. “It is about claiming new and authentic and genuine life. That’s true for our nation, true for our world. We must find better ways to live together, to care for each other, to care for our society and to care for our global communities,” he said.

“We who are followers of Jesus believe that the way of love and the way of Jesus is the key to doing that. But, we join hands with people of other faiths and people of goodwill – anyone who wants to help us end what so often is a nightmare of poverty and injustice and bigotry and wrong and violence, and realize God’s dream of true harmony and peace and justice for everybody.”

The six revivals will vary in design, [according to a recent press release](#), but most will be multiday events that feature dynamic worship and preaching, offerings from local artists and musicians, personal testimony and storytelling, speakers, invitations to local social action, engagement with young leaders, and intentional outreach with people who aren’t active in a faith community. Pittsburgh Episcopalians were encouraged to bring with them neighbors who were not part of a faith community.

The next five revivals are:

May 5-7: Diocese of West Missouri

Sept. 23-24: Diocese of Georgia

Nov. 17-19: Diocese of San Joaquin (California)

April 6-8, 2018: Diocese of Honduras

July 2018: Joint Evangelism Mission with the Church of England

South Sudan Bishop calls for urgent food and medical supplies

Bishop Emmanuel Murye Modi of the diocese of Kajo-Keji has made an appeal for practical assistance amid ongoing security concerns.

Bishop Modi says that the situation locally has calmed after a recent spate of violence, but over 90 percent of people in several districts had fled to Uganda for refuge. Over 70 percent of the people in other local districts had sought safety within internally displaced camps: “The church is encouraging people to stay, even if it means gathering into churches for security and other services” he said. Bishop Modi appealed to the international community for food and medical supplies for the internally displaced and the “remnants” of Kajo-Kehi as well as logistical support to help the Diocese be mobile around Kajo-Keji and to assist in refugee camps in Uganda.

The Diocese of Kajo-Keji is one of the 43 Dioceses of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan.

CMS Northern Ireland at Yei, Sudan centenary

Meanwhile, despite the ongoing insecurity, a neighbouring Diocese, the Diocese of Yei has celebrated its centenary anniversary, marking 100 years since it was founded as a mission station by the CMS missionary, Rev Paul Gibson.

Many Christians from Juba travelled to Yei to witness the historic occasion, officiated by the President of the Republic of South Sudan. The Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan, the Rt Rev Daniel Deng Bul and many other Bishops in the country were in attendance, as well as visitors from CMS Northern Ireland, CMS England, Sudan, DR Congo and Uganda.

Pope Francis' message for Lent 2017

Pope Francis' message commences, "Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ's victory over death. This season urgently calls us to conversion. Christians are asked to return to God "with all their hearts" (*Joel 2:12*), to refuse to settle for

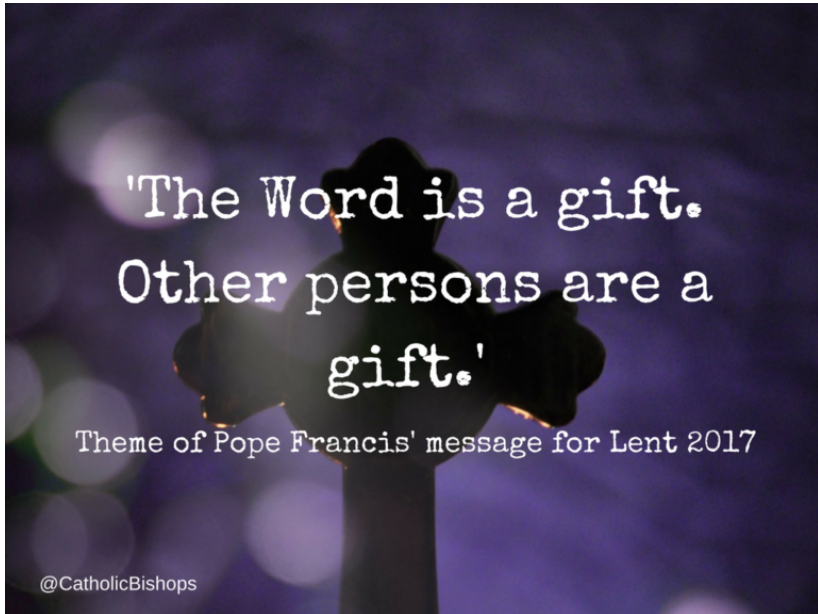
mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord. Jesus is the faithful friend who never abandons us. Even when we sin, he patiently awaits our return; by that patient expectation, he shows us his readiness to forgive (cf. [Homily, 8 January 2016](#)).

“Lent is a favourable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply. I would now like to consider the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (cf. *Lk* 16:19-31). Let us find inspiration in this meaningful story, for it provides a key to understanding what we need to do in order to attain true happiness and eternal life. It exhorts us to sincere conversion”

Pope Francis then develops his message under the following themes -

1. The other person is a gift
2. Sin blinds us
3. The Word is a gift

Pope Francis concludes his message thus - Dear friends, Lent is the favourable season for



renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbour. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need. I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and

thus to favour the culture of encounter in our one human family. Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter.

For the full text see - <http://www.catholicbishops.ie/2017/02/07/pope-francis-message-for-lent-2017/>

Christian Aid urges Prime Minister May to get tough with leaders of UK's Overseas Territories

Christian Aid is urging Prime Minister Theresa May to use the 'full weight' of her government's influence to persuade the UK's Overseas Territories to end the secrecy around the ownership of companies hosted on their shores.

This comes as press reports suggest that Theresa May is meeting leaders of the UK's Overseas Territories on Wednesday (8 February).

Christian Aid's UK Parliamentary and Political Adviser Simon Kirkland said: "Now is the moment for Theresa May to demonstrate her clear commitment to transparency and making an economy that works for everyone, including the world's poorest people.

"For years now the UK's Overseas Territories have acted as some of the most secretive tax havens in the world, facilitating tax dodging and corruption in the UK's own back yard. It's time to get tough.

"The government has repeatedly instructed the Overseas Territories to introduce registers of the companies they host. While some have made limited progress, only one – the tiny island of Monserrat – has adopted the same level of transparency as the UK. This double standard is not in the interest of the UK and undermines global efforts to stop secrecy and corruption.

Mr Kirkland continued: "Offshore tax havens like the British Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands are part of a network of secrecy jurisdictions that cost developing countries at least \$100bn every year, according to the

United Nations. People in developing countries are losing out to UK-governed territories, and the Prime Minister needs to step in.

“The Prime Minister should heed the calls of nearly 90 MPs from eight parties who have signed an amendment to the Criminal Finances Bill, which would ensure that the Overseas Territories have these public registers by the time of the next general election.”

For more information about the work of Christian Aid, visit <http://www.christianaid.org.uk>

Upcoming events

+++ Senator Senator George Mitchell at QUB

- American Senator George Mitchell, the mediator in the talks that produced the Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement, will be in conversation with Monica McWilliams on Friday 10 February, 1-2 pm, in the Great Hall at Queen's University Belfast. The event is free and open to the public, but tickets must be reserved by contacting Mr Brett Walker (b.walker@qub.ac.uk / 028 9097 1346).

+++ Dublin Black Santa distribution - The 2016 Black Santa Sit Out raised significant funds for charities despite being almost cut off from passing pedestrians by the sea of Luas works on Dawson Street. The sum raised, at the time of writing, stood at €34,000. The funds will be distributed to charities at a special service in St Ann's on Sunday February 12 at 11.00 am where the preacher will be Dean of Belfast, the Very Revd John Mann.

+++ The Ballycarry Session Book 1704-68 - is the focus of a Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland lecture to be given by Rev Dr John Nelson on Thursday 16 February 2017 at 8 pm in The Old Presbyterian Church Templepatrick (Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church) Antrim Road, Templepatrick [BT39 0AH](#). Everyone Welcome - Refreshments Provided. For further research on the Ballycarry Congregation, see the Records held at PRONI - CR3/31/1 Session Minute Book of Ballycarry Presbyterian, CR3/31/2 Transcript of Session Minute Book of Ballycarry Presbyterian, CR4/18 Records of Ballycarry Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Co. Antrim

+++ Winnie and George - As part of Belfast City Council's ongoing Decade of Centenaries

Programme, we would like to let you know of our latest event which will be on the unlikely union between Winnifred Carney and George McBride. Author and Historian, Alison Murphy will give a talk on the lives of these two historical figures, documenting their backgrounds and how they came together in a common cause of fairness and the rights of the working class in Belfast. Event: Winnie and George. Where: Reception Hall, Belfast City Hall. When: 15th March 2017 Time: 6.30 – 8.30pm. The event is free, but booking is essential. Please RSVP to goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk or call 028 9027 0663.

+++ The Ballycarry Session Book 1704-68 - is the focus of a Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland lecture to be given by Rev Dr John Nelson on Thursday 16 February 2017 at 8 pm in The Old Presbyterian Church Templepatrick (Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church) Antrim Road, Templepatrick [BT39 0AH](#). Everyone Welcome - Refreshments Provided. For further research on the Ballycarry Congregation, see the Records held at PRONI - CR3/31/1 Session Minute Book of Ballycarry Presbyterian, CR3/31/2 Transcript of Session Minute Book of Ballycarry Presbyterian, CR4/18 Records of Ballycarry Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Co. Antrim

Vacancies

+++ RCB Property Officer, Trusts- The Representative Church Body (RCB) is seeking to recruit a Property Officer to work in its Property and Trusts Department.

Reporting to the Head of Property and Trusts, the position entails advising and supporting parishes and dioceses of the Church of Ireland concerning property and trusts related matters in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Based in Rathmines, Dublin, the RCB is the trustee body for the Church of Ireland and is responsible for the management and administration of a large number of properties, many of which are historic buildings.

The successful candidate will be self-motivated with good communication, organisational, numeracy and IT skills and will have at least 5 years' relevant work experience, ideally including facilities/property management, finance, company secretarial and reporting.

Further details available at www.ireland.anglican.org/vacancies or email

recruit@rcbdub.org. Closing deadline for applications Friday 24 February 2017.

+++ Operation manager Bangor Abbey - A permanent position of Operations Manager. To obtain an application form, job description and further details: download the application pack from www.bangorparishchurch.org.uk/jobs; or telephone 07801 490 737. Closing date for applications is: 4.00 pm on Friday 24 February 2017. Bangor Parish Church
1 Castle Street, Bangor, BT20 4SU

Rev Noble McNeely chosen as new Presbyterian moderator

A minister based in Holywood, County Down has been selected to take up the most senior role in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Rev Noble McNeely, of First Holywood Presbyterian Church, was chosen as the church's next moderator.

He was selected as Rev Frank Sellar's successor last night (Tuesday).

He was nominated by 10 of the church's 19th presbyteries, made up of senior church figures.



Rev McNeely will be officially installed as moderator at the start of the church's general assembly in June. He said he was "sincerely humbled" and that he "recognised the responsibility that has been entrusted" in him.

Rev McNeely was brought up in Crossgar, County Down, and has been in the ministry for more than 35 years. He will become the church's 178th moderator.

The other nominees for the post were Rev Brian Boyd of Kells and Eskylane, Rev Tony Davidson of First Armagh Presbyterian Church and Rev Charles McMullen of Bangor West.