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Key positions at Methodist Church conference



Rev Sam McGuffin with Lay Leader, Lynda Neilands

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At the Methodist Church annual conference in Cork the Rev Sam McGuffin was installed as President. His theme for the year is 'God is our Adventure' which is apt as the church begins a season of structural change.

The MCI's Lay Leader, is Lynda Neilands.

Conference also elected Rev Dr Heather Morris (above) as Secretary of Conference which is a pivotal post in the daily life of the church.

You can read the Presidential Address to Conference here - <https://www.irishmethodist.org/presidential-address-2019>

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New Presbyterian church opens in centre of Belfast

One of the major success stories coming out of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's General Assembly has been the planting of a new church in Belfast city centre.

Father and son John and David Dickinson have

been instrumental in establishing the vibrant Central Church at the location of once-mighty May Street Presbyterian Church.

The old May Street Church congregation was "closed down" (to use the official term) in December due to dwindling numbers. It has now been reborn under the new name.

John, 65, minister at Carnmoney Presbyterian, said: "There was a Presbyterian Church in May Street since 1829. It was built to bring (Irish Presbyterian leader) Henry Cooke to Belfast. Over the years it declined, people moved out of the city, numbers fell.

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“Meanwhile in Carnmoney we’d started to think how we could reach a new generation through our Alpha courses.”

His son David had been working for Alpha UK, leading a course at various locations in the Cathedral Quarter.

With the remit of planting a church in Belfast, the 34-year-old came to the church full time and the journey began with Wednesday evening worship in the MAC.

David said: “We first gathered in the MAC in October 2016, then my wife had our first child in November 2016 which is just about the world’s biggest disaster when it comes to doing anything new.

“None of us have ever planted a church before, there hasn’t been a great deal of church planting in established denominations in Northern Ireland. We were feeling this out as we went.

“One of the statements about Belfast is people are moving away from God. Over that five years running Alpha there were around 350 people who came on the course, mostly young, from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds. About 60% expressed no faith or nominal faith. We knew people were interested.”

In April 2017 David and his team started to talk about finding a permanent venue. At first they found a home at the renovated mall of Assembly buildings before being offered the chance to move into May Street Church as the congregation was going to close.

John said: “Initially we were really reluctant. It’s £1 million grade A listed building in the centre of Belfast, we thought, ‘this could sink us’.”

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David said: “I was more optimistic about it than dad. I knew the building was an incredible space but it needed extensive renovation.”

He continued: “The biggest group in our church are young families, but you couldn’t cross aisles because of the box pews. The pews are gone, we carpeted

the place to make it a bit softer. It’s a much more open and inviting space now, with flexible seating, sofas at the back, a coffee machine.

“We’ve installed a top quality audio visual system. We think it has the potential to become a real hub of life and host more than just worship.”

Central – which had its first service at the beginning of April – could be viewed as a devolved church of Carnmoney Presbyterian.

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John said: “We had to give away some of our best people to make it happen, but it’s proved to be an incredible encouragement for us and we’re now looking at the possibility of doing something similar in Ballyduff which is a large loyalist estate just beside us in Newtownabbey. We’ve already established a pop-up church in the community centre there.”

David said: “My generation can’t understand why the churches seems to be ‘vacating the premises’ from Belfast – the place which is the centre of life in Northern Ireland.

“We started with nine people. We’ve now got between 60 and 100 people, lots of young families with their children.

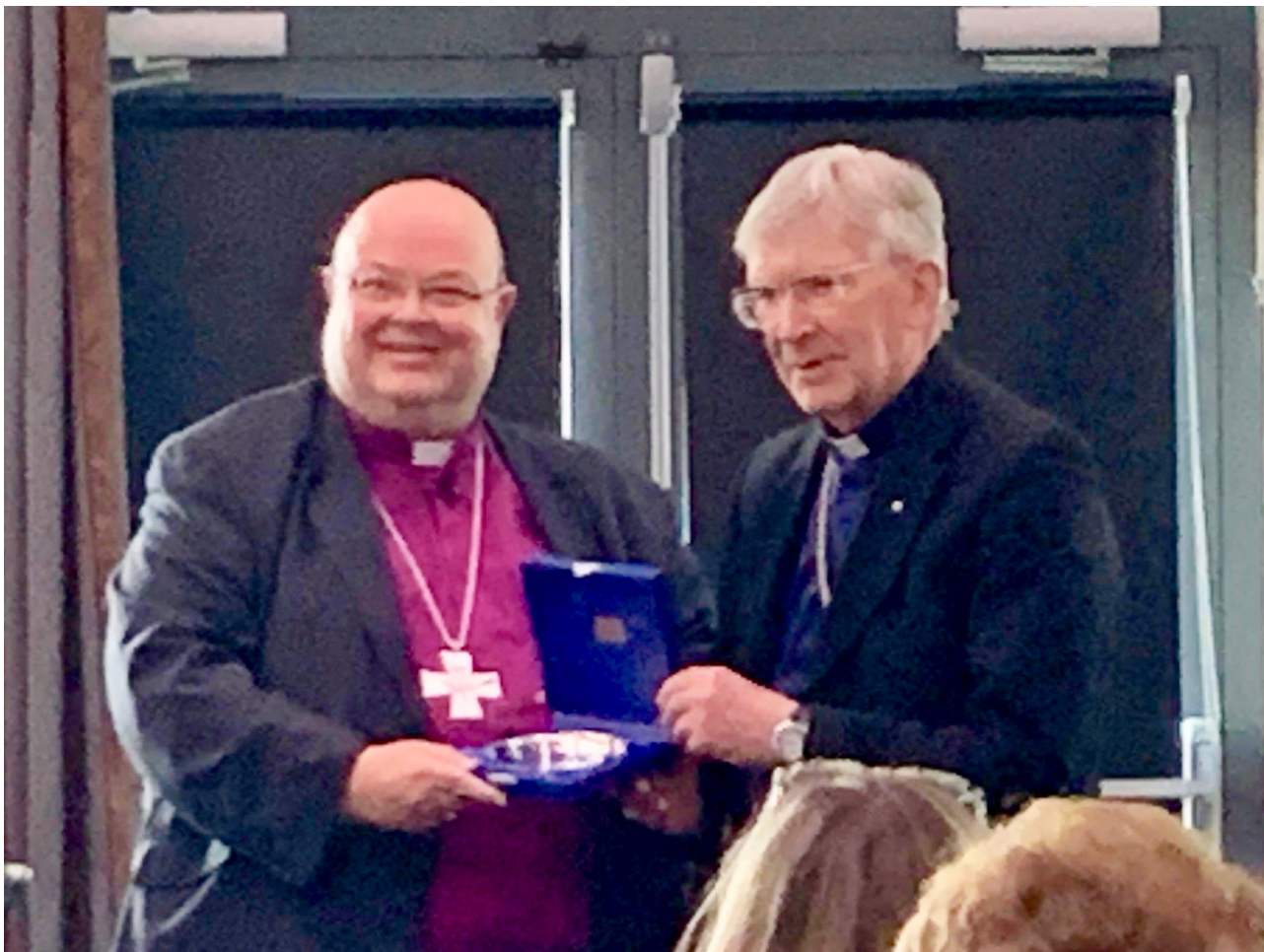
“For us it has represented confirmation that Jesus hasn’t given up on the city. There are people looking for a church in the heart of the city that will impact and engage.

“We have to be bold, make mistakes. At the end of the day we don’t really know what we’re doing but thankfully Jesus does.” Report courtesy the News Letter.

C of I in Cork pays tribute to departing Catholic bishop

The outgoing Bishop of Cork and Ross, Dr John Buckley, was invited by the Church of Ireland Bishop, Dr Paul Colton, to visit the annual Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan Synod on Saturday 8th June which was held at the Cork International Hotel. After lunch, hosted by the lay and clerical honorary secretaries of the Synod, attended also by

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Bishop Paul and Mrs Susan Colton, Bishop Buckley joined the meeting of the Synod.

Bishop Colton paid tribute to Bishop Buckley and thanked him for his personal friendship and ecumenical commitment, noting that many people from the Church of Ireland Diocese knew Bishop Buckley from his particular ministry within the local hospitals.

Bishop Colton then presented Bishop Buckley with a gift of a solid silver replica early Georgian Cork Silver strawberry dish engraved: 'Presented with affection and gratitude to the Most Reverend Dr John Buckley, Bishop of Cork and Ross, by the Bishop, Clergy and People of the Church of Ireland in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross on Saturday, 8th June 2019'

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Both bishops told humorous stories about their journey together as friends, as bishops and in civic life. Afterwards many commented on how they found the obvious personal friendship and esteem very encouraging.

Following Bishop Buckley's address to the Diocesan Synod, as a further mark of the regard in which he is held, he received a standing ovation. Later in the Synod, three ecumenical motions were passed unanimously:

1. A motion expressing gratitude and good wishes to Bishop Buckley;
2. A motion welcoming the new Bishop of Cork and Ross, Fintan Gavin, and assuring him of ecumenical partnership;
3. A motion extending congratulations and good wishes to the Bishop of Cloyne, the priests and people of that Diocese on the occasion of the forthcoming centenary of St Colman's Cathedral in Cobh.

Presiding Bishop offers special thanks to God for the strength of the LGBTQ community

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry offered the following statement earlier this week:

Jesus said: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

Presiding Bishop's Pride Month statement honors LGBTQ Episcopalians



PUBLIC
AFFAIRS

In my years of ministry, I have personally seen and been blessed by countless LGBTQ sisters, brothers and siblings. Dear friends, the church has in like manner been blessed by you. Together with many others you are faithful followers of Jesus of Nazareth and his way of love. You have helped the church to be truly catholic, universal, a house of prayer for all people. You have helped the church to truly be a reflection of the beloved community of God. You have helped the church to authentically be a branch of the Jesus movement in our time.

Your ministries to and with this church are innumerable. I could speak of how you often lead our vestries, and other leadership bodies in the church. I could speak of how many of you organize our liturgies of worship, lift our voices in song, manage church funds, teach and form our children as followers of Jesus, lead congregations, ministries and dioceses. But through it all and above it all, you faithfully follow Jesus and his way of love. And in so doing you help the church, not to build a bigger church for church's sake,

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but to build a better world for God's sake.

During June, Americans and people around the world



observe

Pride. Today, as we mourn the 49 people who were murdered at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando three years ago, I am mindful that Pride is both a celebration and a testament to sorrow and struggle that has not yet ended. Especially this month, I offer special thanks to God for the strength of the LGBTQ community and for all that you share with your spouses, partners and children, with your faith communities, and indeed with our entire nation.

June 14 - Today in Christian history

June 14, 847: Methodius, an Eastern church leader who fought vigorously for icons to be preserved and venerated, dies of dropsy. He had earlier survived seven years of imprisonment with a decaying corpse, as ordered by officials under iconoclastic Emperor Theophilus. Upon Theophilus's death his wife, Theodora, took Methodius's side, and he was named Patriarch of Constantinople.

June 14, 1811: Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of Uncle Tom's Cabin and daughter of Congregationalist minister

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Lyman Beecher, is born in Litchfield, Connecticut. When she met Abraham Lincoln in 1863, he reportedly said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war!".

June 14, 1936: English writer G.K. Chesterton dies at age 62. Authors from T.S. Eliot (who penned his obituary) to H.G. Wells, a longtime friend and debating opponent, expressed their grief. After the funeral, Pope Pius XI declared the rotund writer (a convert from Anglicanism to Catholicism) Defender of the Faith.

June 14, 1954: On flag day in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs a bill adding the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

June 14, 1966: The Vatican announces that its "Index of Prohibited Books" (created in 1557 by the Congregation of the Inquisition under Pope Paul IV) no longer carried the force of ecclesiastical law. But the announcement made clear that the Index retains moral force.

June 14 - News briefs

+++ Clogher MU hosts Indoor Members and friends - who enjoyed an afternoon Tea Party on Wednesday 5 June in Maguiresbridge Parish Hall. The afternoon commenced with a Holy Communion Service celebrated by the Bishop, assisted by the MU Chaplain, Rev Charles Eames. Samuel Watson sang accompanied by his guitar during HC. Tea was prepared by MU members of Maguiresbridge and Derrybrusk branch. The afternoon concluded with the usual hymn singing accompanied by Dr Margaret on piano. Mrs

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Norma Bell, All-Ireland Indoor Members Contact was present.

+++ Obit - former Archdeacon of Derry - The death has taken place of Venerable Samuel Simpson, a former Rector of Garvagh and Archdeacon of Derry. Archdeacon Simpson, who was 92, died peacefully in the Causeway Hospital in Coleraine earlier this week. He had been predeceased by his wife, Myrtle, and is survived by his son Peter and daughter-in-law Sharon. His home at 53 Magheramenagh Drive, Portrush is strictly private. Archdeacon Simpson's funeral service will take place in St Paul's Parish Church, Garvagh, on Saturday, June 15th, at 1 pm, with burial afterwards in the adjoining churchyard. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu, if desired, for St Paul's Parish Church Building Fund, payable to Garvin's Funeral Service (Donations A/c), 15 Ballyronan Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6BP.

+++ Derry Cathedral this Sunday - On Trinity Sunday the Sunday School Extravaganza will take place at 11.00am.

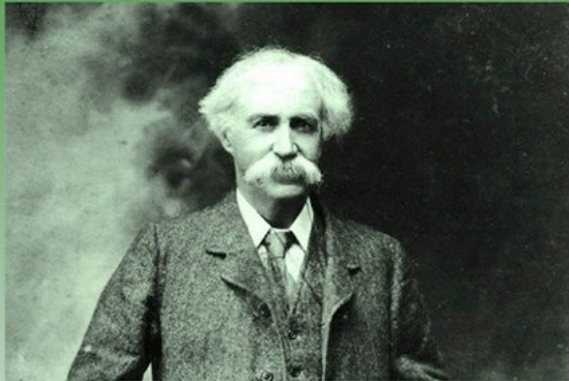
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The service features performances from the Sunday school and from the Boy Choristers (Henry Coleman's 'The King of Love'). At 4.00pm Choral Evensong with music by Tertius Noble (Evening Canticles in B minor) and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Hymn to the Trinity).

+++ Percy French in Sandymount - Distinguished conductor John Daly Goodwin, a Great Grand Nephew of

much-loved songwriter and artist Percy French, will bring the A Viva Voce Festival Chorus of New York to Dublin for a performance of Songs Across the Sea on Friday 5th July at 8.00pm at St John the Evangelist Church, Park Avenue, Sandymount, Dublin 4. Tickets (€20) are available from

Direct from the US
A Viva Voce
Festival Chorus of New York



Conductor: John Daly Goodwin

Assistant Conductor: Christopher Wasko

Piano: David Ralph

Performing

Songs Across the Sea

A programme of Folksongs and Spirituals, Old American Songs
and Songs by Percy French

On Friday 5th July at 8.00pm
At St John the Evangelist Church
Park Avenue, Sandymount, Dublin 4

Tickets: €20 available from www.eventbrite.ie and at door

Seating unreserved

www.Eventbrite.ie and at door. Seating is unreserved so come early!

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The programme will include Folk Songs and Spirituals arranged by Robert De Cormier; Old American Songs arranged by Aaron Copland; and the conductor's own arrangements of songs by Percy French including such favourites as The Mountains of Mourne and Are Ye Right There, Michael. For more details see: <https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2019/06/12/conductor-john-daly-goodwin-performs>

+++ Ecclesiastical awards to charities - 25 charities from Ireland and Northern Ireland have been chosen as winners of a award worth over €1000 – a huge thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate! See ecclesiastical.ie for the full list of winners.

+++ Queen's Award nominations - Nominations now open for Queens Award for Voluntary Service 2020, closing on 13 Sept. Will your outstanding volunteers join the 6 successful 2019 Belfast groups? Let's celebrate another great year for volunteering in Belfast! belfastlieutenancy.org.uk or qavs.culture.gov.uk.

+++ Please pray for - and give thanks for the work & witness of PCI's partners in the 3 Church of Central Africa Presbyterian CCAP Synods in Malawi – Blantyre, Livingstonia & Nkhoma. Pray especially for their contribution to education, healthcare and development. bit.ly/2cgVbSa

+++ Food for thought - None of us “have already reached the goal”. We are supposed to “walk humbly with our God”. “To walk” must be understood in its fullest meaning: sometimes we run, sometimes we plod, and sometimes we

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walk along gingerly. Ultimately, what matters is to persevere, to keep on going. - Benedictine Monks, Rostrevor

June 14 News Links

[Health budget in Northern Ireland 'not sustainable'](#)

BBC News

N. **Ireland** Politics · Local **News** ... Northern **Ireland** is not alone in running on a deficit; the only areas of the UK that have a ... devised a few scenarios on how you might spend Northern **Ireland's** budget allocation. ... includes state, **religious** and integrated schools - is both hard to justify and unsustainable.

[Sex education in Catholic schools covers facts and values, bishops say](#)

Irish Times

Ireland's Catholic bishops have defended the manner in which sex ... Similar views were repeated by **Church** of **Ireland** Archbishop of Dublin Michael ...

[A new urban quarter on Bull Island? Time to learn from the Dutch](#)

Irish Times

In some countries, though, like Germany and France, **Ireland** sometimes also ... backward and marginal country, dominated by the Catholic **Church**.

[On re-writing the Lord's Prayer: does God really lead us to temptation?](#)

Belfast Newsletter

The **Church of Ireland** prayer book has the traditional and a modern ... the tradition which I have learnt that no church service is complete without it. Canon Ian Ellis.

[Baptism is Very Church-y](#)

Patheos (blog)

... with Mary McAleese, an attorney and the former president of **Ireland**. McAleese assailed her Catholic **Church** for its practice of baptizing infants ...

[Encouraging courageous Mothers of the Church](#)

The Irish Catholic

The subject of women's role in the **Church** has been a hot topic in recent years, ... Although born in Chicago, Kathryn has strong links with **Ireland**.

[Tributes to former Larne High music teacher](#)

Larne Times

Archy had also been choirmaster/organist in St. Cedma's **Church** in Larne. He was also well-known as a member of the concert group 'Gaslight'.

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[Bishop welcomes Government's commitment to 'net zero' emissions by 2050](#)

Premier

... welcomed by the **Church of England's** lead bishop on the environment. ... Speaking on Premier **News** Hour, he said: "That sets a really important ...

[Puritans—Exceptional Protestants or Prejudiced Moralizers?](#)

The Gospel Coalition

Separatists believed that the **Church of England** was so corrupt that true believers should “separate” from it and form their own congregations.

AN INVITATION

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the CNI home page

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