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**CNI**  
CHURCH  
NEWS  
IRELAND



## **Methodist representatives to attend Plenary Meeting in Dublin Castle**

On July 4th in Dublin Castle, the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, has invited representatives from a wide range of Churches, Faith Communities and Non Confessional Organisations to join in a Plenary Meeting which he will chair.

This Meeting will serve as a platform to discuss a wide range of important issues, which are fundamental to

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achieving diversity and effective integration.

This structured dialogue process arose from the Government's commitment to seek wide-ranging consultation on public policy and from the provision in an Article of the Lisbon Treaty for State dialogue with churches, faith communities and other non-confessional bodies.

This Article would appear to imply a permanent sustained on-going structured dialogue with the Churches and the bodies mentioned.

When Pope Francis was in Ireland, the Taoiseach spoke of A New Covenant between Church and State - this proposed dialogue represents a platform to consider how this might evolve.

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Each of the participants were asked to submit up to three questions to be considered for the dialogue.

The 3 questions chosen for discussion were:

- (a) Effective Structured Dialogue
- (b) Inclusive and Diverse Communities
- (c) Education.

The Methodist Church in Ireland will be represented by Dr, Fergus O'Ferrall, a former Lay Leader of the Methodist Conference and Ms. Liz Parkin, Lay Secretary of the Council on Social Responsibility (Southern Executive)

## **Irish papers apology and damages to seminarians**

Leading Irish newspapers The Irish Times, The Irish Examiner were due to issue formal printed apologies to one of the two young seminarians falsely accused last year in a fake seminarian sex scandal story emanating from the Irish College in Rome. Large damages are also believed to be part of the deal signed days before a hearing was to begin in the High Court.

Last May 2018 when the story (<https://www.irishcatholic.com/only-the-irish-catholic-stood-up-for-the-wrongly-accused-rome-seminarians/>)

broke, The Irish Catholic was the only newspaper that uncovered the truth of the story, finding that claims that the two seminarians were dismissed from the Irish College in Rome to be false, that claims of a sexual nature were false

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**Bon Voyage agus go n-eiri an bothar libh ! Swiss Guard Captain Cyril Duruz, his Belfast-born wife Brenda and their three boys leave Rome tomorrow after five years to return to Switzerland. The Irish Embassy to the Holy See was represented at the home of the Swiss Guards in the Vatican.**

and that claims it happened after a conference were untrue as the conference never happened. While some media outlets took down the story soon after it was shown to be false, The Irish Times stood over the story until now.

A source close to one of the men said he was delighted with the outcome and to be able to finally clear his name. However the source also said that it could have easily been sorted out a year ago by the Irish College authorities in Rome or by the Archbishop of Dublin. "All he wanted was a

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simple correction of the record, that he left the Irish College in Rome of his own accord and was not kicked out or found to have been involved in some sexual activity with another seminarian. But the rector Msgr Ciaran O'Carroll refused." The source also said that the young former seminarian believes that the Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin did nothing to help clear the young men's names despite pleading from the young man and others. "Archbishop Martin talks about fostering vocations and looking after seminarians and his priests. This young man gave four years of his life to the seminary and was hung out to dry, the Archbishop did a Pontius Pilate," claimed the source. Both the Archbishop of Dublin and Msgr Ciaran O'Carroll, Rector of The Irish College, refused to comment when contacted by The Irish Catholic last year.

It is believed that lawyers for one of the seminarians has previously criticised media outlets for reporting the allegations without trying to contact the young men involved or seek independent confirmation of the story. Ironically, last year days after the articles appeared, Pope Francis for his World Communications Day message called on journalists to stand up for those with no voice, and in this case, especially when the national media ignore their voice and those with a duty of care for them refuse to come to their aid.

## **Presbyterian Church mission link with Myanmar**

On 10 July 1840 the newly formed Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) met in General Assembly for the first time. The

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**The General Assembly Building of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar in the city of Tahan, Kalaymyo District, Myanmar**

third piece of business sanctioned the sending of two ministers to India as missionaries, it then resolved to establish the Assembly's Board of Directors for Home and Foreign Mission. Nearly 180 years on PCI's commitment to global mission remains undiminished, as Pip Florit, the denomination's Mission Support Officer for Partnerships, spends 10 days with PCI's latest Global Mission Partner, the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar (PCM).

Based in PCM's headquarters in the city of Tahan in the north-west of the country near the Indian border, Pip explained that along with other Presbyterian churches from

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New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore and others from Europe, they will learn about the work of PCM's Mission Department, Women's Department and Theological Education Board. Pip will also see some of this work first hand on visits to Tahan Theological College and Agape Hospital, which is run by the Church.

“Our goal for the trip is to discover how we can best partner with the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar going forwards, looking at what support they may need, what potential future co-operation we could engage in and just as important, what we can learn from each other,” she said.

“We have previously given grants to PCM, mostly as scholarships for students in a variety of disciplines from PhDs and Masters degrees in theology to music, so the visit will also be an opportunity to see how these grants have been used and the benefit they've had for the Church.”

Due to the political situation in Myanmar from the late 1960s, it wasn't possible to develop a strong relationship with PCM. Initial contact began in the early 1980s and with the political and economic reforms that led to the ending of more than five decades of military dictatorship in 2016, PCM's General Secretary, Rev Ling Zaw, was able to attend the General Assembly in Belfast that year. Today the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar is recognised as one of PCI's Global Mission Partners.

Rev Uel Marrs, Secretary to PCI's Council for Global Mission, explained that previously it had been difficult for the Irish Presbyterian church to relate to the Presbyterian Church in Myanmar on the ground. “As a result we

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supported PCM through grants and scholarships, which enabled church leaders to train elsewhere in the region.

“We were able to maintain the relationship at a distance and as political changes led to Myanmar’s first civilian government in nearly 50 years, the first official PCI visit to Myanmar in a long time took place in 2017. The Church is a small denomination in a majority non-Christian country and we are committed to building our relationship with them, and with our other Global Mission Partners around the world, supporting them to build God’s Kingdom,” he said.

The [\*\*Council for Global Mission\*\*](#), which is responsible for overseas mission, sending personnel and developing global mission partnerships, has partnership links with indigenous churches, united mission agencies and Christian institutions in more than 20 countries around the world. PCM is one of 15 denominations recognised by the General Assembly as a PCI Global Mission Partner, and one of 6 churches in Asia.

Explaining how the relationship with PCM, and others, aims to be mutually beneficial, Uel said, “From the foundation of PCI, proclaiming the gospel in word and deed has been at the heart of who we are and a part of our DNA. While our commitment to sending personnel and developing mission overseas remains undiminished, new opportunities to engage in global mission continue to appear. Pip’s visit to Myanmar is the most recent example of this,” Uel said.

“In Asia, for example, as the 20th century unfolded, China and India closed their doors to western missionaries. The last PCI mission worker left China in 1950. As a result, the concept of working in partnership with like-minded churches,



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united mission agencies and Christian institutions has developed over time.

“When we talk about partnership, it is primarily with a view to mission. Partnership for us is not just about a business relationship, but has a richer meaning. As we build up relationships and friendships it speaks of ever deepening fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

“It is not just about what we can give, it is about what we can learn. It is a well-known saying, but the hand that is open to give, is the hand that is best placed to receive. Our relationships, therefore, ought to be reciprocal, interdependent and utterly dependent on God. We very much look forward to this partnership bearing fruit.” Uel said.

## **July 01 - Today in Christian history**

**July 1, 1643:** The Westminster Assembly convenes for the first time in the Henry VII Chapel of Westminster Abbey. Five years later it published the Westminster longer and shorter catechisms, which the Anglican church rejected, but the Presbyterians accepted.

**July 1, 1824:** The Presbyterian church ordains Charles Grandison Finney, the father of modern revivalism.

**July 1, 1899:** Three traveling businessmen meet in a YMCA building and decide to form an organization to distribute Bibles. The Christian Commercial Men's Association of America, later renamed the Gideons, placed their first Bibles in a hotel nine years later.

**July 1, 1896:** Abolitionist writer Harriet Beecher Stowe dies. She averaged nearly a book a year, but Uncle Tom's Cabin remains her legacy. Even one of her harshest critics

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acknowledged that it was "perhaps the most influential novel ever published . . . a verbal earthquake, an ink-and-paper tidal wave".

## July 01 - News briefs

### **+++ Bursary will mark Churchwoman's service as Lord**

**Lieutenant** - Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for the County of Antrim Mrs Joan Christie CVO OBE stepped down from her role last week after nearly 11 years of service. To create a legacy in her honour Antrim and Newtownabbey Council have established a Bursary Scheme which will support young people to achieve their potential.

The Legacy Bursary schemes which open for applications on 1 July at 10am are available across three categories which reflect the commitment Mrs Christie has for young people and her passion for music, volunteers, special education and gardening. There are eight bursaries of £1.000 each including;

- Two Bursaries for talented young musicians
- Two Bursaries for young volunteers and two bursaries for the groups the young volunteers belong to
- Two for schools promoting the education of children with learning and /or physical disabilities.

For more information or to apply for one of the Legacy Bursary schemes please

visit this website: [antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/grants](http://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/grants)

**+++Four Cork principals retire** - School term has ended for Primary Schools. In Cork, Cloyne and Ross, following cumulative service of over 160 years, four primary school principals are retiring: Sinead Solleveld (South Abbey

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**With the Reverend Cliff Jeffers in Fanlobbus Union, the Bishop made a presentation to Sharon Hosford, The Model School, Dunmanway. The children had also made prayer 'leaves' (written prayers for people who have asked to pray for them), to bring to the prayer tree at the Chapel of Christ the Healer, Cork University Hospital.**

National School, Youghal), Harriet Pritchard (Bandonbridge National School), Sharon Hosford (The Model School, Dunmanway), and Heather Smith (Adair National School, Fermoy).

In recent weeks, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, visited each of those schools and, at gatherings of pupils and teachers, staff and chairpersons, thanked each of the principals for their faithful work and for making each of the schools even better places of learning for the children.

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### **+++Moderator to attend Somme commemoration -**

Today, Monday 1 July, the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr William Henry, will attend a commemorative ceremony marking the Battle of the Somme, taking place at Belfast City Hall. Tomorrow he attends the Ulster University Gala Dinner. Recently The Moderator and David Maxwell (BBC Gardener's Corner) opened the sensory garden at Aaron House. Aaron house in Dundonald is a residential care home for people with a profound learning disability.

**+++ Limavady in Kenya -** After nearly 24 hours of travelling, a team from Limavady Grammar School finally arrived in Kajiado, Kenya. They report via CMSI, "We received a very warm welcome from the staff at ACK Guesthouse, who have helped us to settle in. We are all looking forward to our dinner this evening, followed by an early night. Tomorrow, we have been invited to perform at the local Cathedral, so we have been rehearsing today by singing songs around the pepper tree." The link between the school and Kajiado is in its twentieth year. The group attended a commissioning service with Rev Harold Given in Ballykelly Parish Church before leaving for Africa. Mr Given welcomed the congregation of students, teachers, parents and friends. Brian Purcell (Team leader) outlined the purpose of the visit to Kenya, handing over to Paul Ferguson (founder member of the LGS/Kajiado link) who gave an overview of the 20 year partnership with the Diocese of Kajiado and the Oloosuyian Girls Secondary School, supported by CMSI. The Team choir then sang 2 uplifting worship songs, 3 students performed a lively sketch of the biblical story of Jonah and Roger gave a talk highlighting how life-changing this visit could be. He then went on to teach a popular Kenyan song (Jambo Bwana!)

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handing out Kenyan fabrics and shirts for the students to try on. They rose to the challenge - clapping, moving and even dancing in the aisles. Rev Harold commented it was the first time he'd witnessed singing in tongues and dancing in the Spirit in Ballykelly!

**+++Music appointment at Christ Church, Dublin** - Jack Oades is to be Organist and Assistant Director of Music starting this September. Originally hailing from Exeter, UK Jack is a prize-winning composer whose works have been presented in Paris, Westminster, Cambridge, and on BBC Radio 3. He is an Associate of the Royal College of Organists and has held prestigious positions at several cathedrals including the neighbouring St Patrick's Cathedral.

**+++Opportunities for organists** - There are just under 3 weeks to apply for this year's NIIOC's competition, offering over £3,000 in monetary awards, recitals in prestigious venues such as Westminster Abbey, King's College, Cambridge, Stockholm Cathedral and St. Thomas Church - New York City ... plus opportunities to take part in masterclasses and workshops with Martin Baker - Chair of this year's jury and Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral. See [www.niio.com](http://www.niio.com) for full information or contact [info@niio.com](mailto:info@niio.com)

**+++Independence Day at St Patrick's** - Thursday is American Independence Day which will be celebrated in St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, with a 'Stars and Stripes Forever' concert at 6.15pm featuring music from *Star Wars*, *Superman* and *The Simpsons*. Admission is free with a retiring collection for the Children's Medical and Research Foundation, Crumlin.

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**+++US Choir at lunchtime today** - The Columbia Choirs from Seattle, Washington, USA, will sing today (Monday) at lunchtime in Christ Church cathedral, Dublin.

**+++Summer Music at Sandford** - continues on Friday at 1.10pm when there will be a recital by Marian Creely (soprano), Shane Kenrick (clarinet) and the Hanneville String Quartet. John Daly Goodwin, conductor and great grand nephew of Percy French, brings the 'A Viva Voce Festival Chorus of New York' to St John's Church, Sandymount, at 8pm with a programme that includes folksongs and spirituals, old American songs and songs by Percy French: tickets (€20) from Eventbrite and at door.

**+++Food for thought** - "If you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him...Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you."  
CS Lewis

## July 01 News Links

[Irish Protestants live longer than Catholics, new research shows](#)

Irish Times

... the traditional Protestant tray bake. "They may have made them but not ate them," said Dr Milne, who is a member of the **Church of Ireland**.

[A la Carte Catholicism has to be built on says Cork's Bishop-elect](#)  
[BreakingNews.ie](#)

Speaking prior to his ordination yesterday, Fr Gavin emphasised that he believes in keeping the doors of the Catholic **church** open to everyone.

['Having endured Right-wing Presbyterian sermons after the Anglo-Irish agreement, I decided I ...](#)

Belfast Telegraph

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I was then appointed the diocesan secretary of the two **Church of Ireland** dioceses of Connor and Down and Dromore, and served in that role until I ...

"We were condemned by the **Church**, condemned by the State, condemned by society." David ...

RSVP Live

That came from the **Church**, they effectively put a lid on it and described homosexuality ... It was really difficult to be gay in **Ireland** in decades gone by.

[Tipperary reminded of EMBRACE Farm service of remembrance](#)  
[TipperaryLive.ie](#)

The Service will be led by local clergy from the **Church of Ireland**, Canon Harvey and Roman Catholic, Fr. Ahern. This year Fr. Cummins who presided ...

[EDUCATION: Schools out for summer, and four principals are retiring](#)  
[TheCork.ie](#)

In the **Church of Ireland** Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, following cumulative service of over 160 years, four primary school principals are retiring: ...

[An academic society whose time has come](#)

Religion News Service

**Religion News** Service photo by Adelle M. Banks ... CORK, **Ireland** (RNS) — What brought me to **Ireland's** second city was "Religion, Water ... Where once the academic study of religion and nature was a sideshow, it's now ... Among religious communities in the U.S., those most likely to question climate ...

[Bringing St Doulagh's back to life](#)

Fingal Independent

The 1150AD **Church of Ireland** building holds features that one would believe unbecoming of a Christian place of worship, making it perfect fodder for ...

[Heavy prices to pay for failure to combat climate change](#)

The Times

Ireland's impact on the global environment is so insignificant as to be ... This has been happening in the **Church of Ireland** for years, and would ...

[GAA and Pride: Next step on sport's march to acceptance of LGBTQ](#)

[RTE.ie](#)

The three pillars of the Irish state for most of its existence were the Catholic **church**, Fianna Fáil and the GAA. The **church's** power in **Ireland** is ...

[Evangelical pastors apologise for alleged 'spiritual abuse' by London vicar](#)

Premier

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Church leaders who knew and worked with Rev Jonathan Fletcher are ... A spokesperson said: "The Church takes all safeguarding issues very ... feel they no longer want to be under the authority of the **Church of England**, ... mission is to provide the Church with the most up to date and relevant **news**, ..

[Jonathan Fletcher responds to allegations of 'physical discipline'](#)

ChristianToday

A retired **Church of England** minister has responded to allegations that he engaged in forms of "physical discipline" that amounted to spiritual abuse..

[New wedding laws mean couples will be able to get married in their own front room](#)

[Mirror.co.uk](#)

Religious chiefs insists a church is still "the best place" for a wedding. ... But the **Church of England** said research shows being "married in a place that ...

[Conservative Christians challenge 'Queering the Church' event at Newcastle Cathedral](#)

ChristianToday

Conservative Christians challenge 'Queering the Church' event at ... The panel brings together **Church of England** curate Rev Bingo Allison, who ... in the diversity of humanity — by proclaiming the joyful **news** of eternal life for every ...

## **AN INVITATION**

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