



## **The essential daily brief on the Irish churches**

### **Methodist Church Calls on Political Parties to consider Five Principles**

**The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Rev Dr Heather Morris, and members of the Church's Council on Social Responsibility have met all five main political parties recently.**



From those meetings the Council on Social Responsibility strongly believes that all parties:

1. are genuine in their determination to achieve agreement on the three contentious issues
2. are of the opinion that there is a small window of opportunity between now and the start of the marching season in July for further discussions
3. consider that as so much has been covered it is not necessary for any further external involvement
4. are of the opinion that the role of the two sovereign governments should be more than facilitation
5. see that even agreement on one of the issues before the summer would help confidence building and provide encouragement and a degree of momentum.

Dr Morris stated that she “wishes to commend the parties for their endeavours so far and to encourage them to resolve all outstanding areas of disagreement. I believe there is a small window for further progress to be made before the summer and I hope and pray that the parties will use this time constructively to work through their differences and work towards the common good.”

The Council on Social Responsibility will support these endeavours and over the next few weeks will seek engage again with party representatives and representatives of the two governments. It urges the parties and sovereign governments to consider the following five principles that formed the core of the submission to Dr Haass and Professor O'Sullivan:

- 1. Developing trust:** flags and parades, how we deal with the past are symptoms of cultural differences – which ultimately have got to deal with relationships and how we treat our neighbour. So respecting (without accepting or agreeing) the right of someone to see things differently is important, being sensitive to that right or difference and finding ways to develop trust. The challenge here is how to develop trust.
- 2. Offering generosity:** being prepared to acknowledge our own wrongdoing, by what we have not done or failed to be or do; being sensitive to others, not being triumphalist; being prepared to compromise.
- 3. Being accountable:** accepting responsibility for decisions made, not passing the buck or blaming others; being honest and not pointing the finger at others alone especially the politicians, PSNI, Parades Commission but looking critically at our own individual and collective behaviour as well. It is right to question and challenge others but only if we look honestly at ourselves also. The Churches and faith communities must look honestly at themselves as well. Leadership is not just about accepting the credit when things go well, it is also about taking the “flak” or accepting the blame when things go badly.
- 4. Acting responsibly:** having due regard and being sensitive to the rights of others, acting within the law, being aware that our words and actions can affect the behaviour of others. Freedom of speech is a fundamental human right and a very important tenet of democracy but so is freedom from fear. We need to learn to speak in a way that does not humiliate, frighten, denigrate, make people vulnerable, incite others.

**5. Seeking the common good:** Northern Ireland is increasingly a much more diverse society than hitherto and there are opportunities to develop a common identity. Legislation, policies, decisions, actions and words of politicians especially those in the Executive need to reflect a more inclusive, collaborative, cohesive approach.

## **We will remember them - Young Voices Festival commemorates World War 1**

**A complete service for young people commemorating the centenary of the beginning of the First World War has just been published by The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM).**

*We will remember them* is the latest service book in the RSCM's *Young Voices Festival* series, and comes complete with appropriate hymns, songs, readings and prayers. Choirs only need to purchase a single book with accompanying CD-ROM from which copies for singers and congregation can be printed.

*We will remember them* is a complete service, and begins appropriately with a medley of songs from World War I including *Pack up your troubles* and *It's a long way to Tipperary*. Through the service's readings and music, the realities of conflict and war are remembered, and the prayers are for those affected by war and those who have died, and give thanks for God's peace and love. The service *We will remember them* takes its title from lines by the poet Lawrence Binyon recited at Remembrance services. Binyon's poem appears in full as a reading, along with a choice of two musical settings of the text; a simple setting by John Madden, and a more challenging version by Mark Blatchly which was first performed at the annual Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall by the choristers of St Paul's Cathedral directed by Barry Rose.

The service contains a mix of musical styles, from the African-American spiritual *Joshua fit the battle of Jericho* to the traditional hymn *I vow to thee my country* sung to Holst's stirring tune *Thaxted*. There are also worship songs including Stuart Townend's popular *In Christ alone*. In the service book, there is some historical background such as the story of the 1914 Christmas Truce on the Western Front, when the carol *Silent night* was sung on both sides of 'no man's land' – our arrangement includes words in both English and German.

*We will remember them* is the latest in the RSCM's successful *Young Voices Festival* series, and provides a well-tried and tested framework for YVF events in schools and churches. Choirs only need to purchase one copy which includes a CD ROM containing photocopyable music for the singers, notes for choir trainers, an order of service, and demonstration and backing tracks.

*We will remember them* is the first of two RSCM publications commemorating the World War I centenary; *Lest we forget* will be published shortly. Both have been edited by the RSCM's Head of Publishing Tim Ruffer. "*We will remember them* will appeal to many choir trainers and young singers," he said. "The reality of conflict and war is placed in its historical context, and the combination of speech and music leads those who take part through to a message of hope and a commitment to peace."

### ***We will remember them***

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Price £25 (discounts are available for RSCM members)

Available from RSCM Music Direct:

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## **Mission emphasis at PCI's General Assembly in Belfast**

**Delegates from Presbyterian congregations meet in Belfast this week for their General Assembly from Monday 2nd June to Thursday 5th June.**

The assembly officially opened last night with the installation of the new moderator, the Reverend Dr Michael Barry.

Dr Barry, 63, is minister of Sandys Street Presbyterian Church in Newry. He is a former school teacher. He is taking over from Dr Rob Craig.



***Rev Michael Barry will serve as Moderator this year***

Over the course of the week, the assembly will discuss church matters and their positions on education and social policy.

The [Board of Mission Overseas](#)' (BMO) report is scheduled to be presented to the Assembly by Rev Uel Marrs (Overseas Secretary) and Rev Cheryl Meban (BMO Convener) at 9.30 am on Wednesday (4th).

This year the Board are bringing a direction paper to the Assembly, printed in the Supplementary Reports Booklet, outlining the Board's strategy for partnership and personnel looking forward to 2020. The report highlights the importance of bringing fresh focus to PCI's global partnership profile, giving particular attention to initiatives in the European context. It looks at the geographical spread of PCI's mission personnel around the world, and examines how we might take steps towards them working in teams, with some missionaries assigned to a regional liaison role.

The report highlights the importance, at every level of Church life, of listening to and learning from those from overseas currently settled in Ireland. This includes those who come from partner churches as 'Leaders in Training' to study in the UK and Ireland, and who bring much blessing to our congregations during their time with us.

There is also focus in the report placed on the importance of seizing opportunities to contribute to peace-building in the wider world, especially through PCI's partnerships in South Sudan and Central Asia, but recognising that PCI still has much to learn from this involvement, lessons that may be of great benefit in the local context.

Non-members of the Assembly are most welcome to the public gallery to hear the BMO's Report on Wednesday.

See - <http://www.presbyterianireland.org/getmedia/52db94a8-4209-47f7-b7e1-a8caa276d5dd/07-Mission-Overseas.pdf.aspx>

## **New Canons join St Patrick's Cathedral Chapter**

**The Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, welcomed two new members today (Sunday June 1). Canon Shane Forster and Canon Paul Houston were installed at a Service of Choral Evensong last Sunday afternoon.**

Canon Forster is Rector of Ballymore, Armagh. He has been Chaplain to successive Archbishops of Armagh and is now Special Advisor to the Archbishop of Armagh. He was elected as the Prebendary of Yagoe which



was vacant following the retirement of Canon Michael Kennedy.

Canon Paul Houston is Rector of Castleknock, Dublin. He has been a Minor Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral since 2000 and has shown great commitment to the cathedral. He was elected as the Prebendary of Castleknock.

In his sermon, Dean Victor Stacey said that outlined the role of the Cathedral Chapter. He said that the Canons come from various

parts of the country, from various different backgrounds and with various different skills.

Dean Stacey said that worship was the primary role of the cathedral. "A cathedral is a peculiar place... There are multiple activities happening and coexisting on a daily basis. This is a place of hospitality and welcome. We welcome all our visitors whether tourists or those who come to worship. However, our prime reason for being is for the worship of Almighty God and we hope to enable people relate to the Devine inside them as Christians," he said.

## Deacons ordained at Maynooth

**Fifteen seminarians were ordained deacons at St Patrick's College Maynooth marking a major milestone on their journey towards priesthood.**



*Canon Shane Forster, Dean Victor Stacey and Canon Paul Houston following the Service of Installation*

It is the largest number of deacons ordained in Ireland in recent years. Back row (left-right) Rev Michael Geraghty (Killaloe Diocese), Rev Sean O'Donnell (Derry Diocese), Rev Brian Griffin (Ossory Diocese), Rev Aidan McCann (Armagh Archdiocese), Rev Eamon Roche (Cloyne Diocese), Rev Brendan Ward (Raphoe Diocese), Rev Chris Derwin (Dublin Archdiocese), Rev Vincent Stapleton (Cashel & Emly Archdiocese), Rev Paul Glennon (Dublin Archdiocese), Rev Shane O'Neill (Waterford & Lismore Diocese), Rev Ciaran Clarke (Meath Diocese), Rev Brian Slater (Armagh Archdiocese), Rev Robert McGivney (Meath Diocese).



## **Derry Fan the Flame" Mass**

**An open-air Mass for all the children in Derry diocese who celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation this year will take place in Celtic Park, Lone Moor Road, Derry on Thursday 5th June at 11.20 am,**

**finishing around 1 pm.**

For more information, please contact the Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre at [ddcc@derrydiocese.org](mailto:ddcc@derrydiocese.org) or telephone 02871264087.

## **Victims of Armagh rail disaster to be remembered**

**The victims of Ireland's worst ever rail disaster will be commemorated ahead of the 125th anniversary.**

On June 12, 1889, 89 men, women and children died in the Armagh rail disaster.

It happened as the annual Armagh Methodist Church Sunday school excursion was heading to Warrenpoint.

Armagh Methodist Church will hold two special services and a Flowers and Arts weekend in the Abbey Street venue from June 6-8.

On Friday, June 6, the opening service will be conducted by former Methodist president, Rev Ken Todd. The closing service, featuring a school choir and the Armagh Old Boys Band, will take place on Sunday, June 8 with the current President, Dr Heather Morris, presiding.



**Scene of the devastation on edge of Armagh City – site is close to Portadown Road.**

A specially commissioned sculpture will also be unveiled on The Mall in Armagh city to commemorate all those who died and were injured.

The *Belfast News Letter* commented at the time:

*...the most appalling catastrophe of the kind which has ever taken place in the north of Ireland. It has plunged a city into profound mourning for the appearance of some quarters of Armagh last night suggested the visitation of remote antiquity of which it is recorded that 'there was not a house in which there was not one dead'. In the neighbourhood of those public buildings which have been used as temporary morgues and surgeries, the scene last night resembles such as one can imagine occurring when some form of deadly pestilence has been raging unchecked and has converted a prosperous city into a charnel house. As the ghastly burdens were borne along the road during the afternoon and evening the gloom that was overhanging the city became greater.*

See also -

[http://armaghmethodist.co.uk/wp/?page\\_id=343](http://armaghmethodist.co.uk/wp/?page_id=343)

## **Belfast Cathedral Music Festival**

**Details of Belfast Cathedral's Music Festival, which opens on June 7, are now available.**

Highlights include a concert by the Edinburgh University Music Society on the



opening night, an organ recital by Jonathan Clinch of Durham University on June 10 and a three-choirs concert featuring the choirs of St Anne's Cathedral, St George's Parish and St Peter's RC Cathedral on June 14 before the closing Festival Eucharist at 11am on June 15. Over the course of the week, Jonah-Man Jazz will be presented by the young singers from the Cathedral's ambitious Choir School Project, the girls' choir and the Cathedral Jazz band. There will be organ recitals, Choral Evensong, Sung Compline and Baroque Favourites featuring Belfast Baroque and others.



The Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann, will join professional violinist Katie Stevens in a performance of Bach's Double Violin Concerto accompanied by Master of the Choristers David Stevens on harpsichord.

Entry to all events is free, with the exception of the three-choirs concert on June 14. More at -

<http://ireland.anglican.org/news/5157>

## Catholic schools 'have welcomed Orange Order visits'

The Orange Order has said that many Catholic schools have welcomed it to give presentations to pupils, but questioned why the same is not happening in most state schools.



Sam McBride in News Letter -

An editorial in the Order's official publication, The Orange Standard, said that at the recent launch of one of its educational initiatives the only school represented had been a Catholic school from Armagh, while a representative from the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools was also present.

The Order said that its educational programmes “have been finding a home within the maintained sector for some time now” and went on: “This engagement with the maintained sector has included historical talks, presentations and even, in one instance, a Lambeg drumming workshop.”

It added: “There is no mistaking the interest in the Orange tradition or the desire to understand it within those schools engaging with the education programme.”

Mindful of some opposition to the Order’s attempts to modernise by reaching out to those who are not natural supporters of the Institution, the editorial said: “There is nothing which threatens the Orange tradition by telling its story and explaining its background and its position in society. We have nothing to hide and much to share.”

However, the editorial went on to question why “relatively few” state schools had entered such a “healthy engagement” with it.

It asked: “Is this a symptom of lack of confidence? Is prejudice at play? What concerns lie behind this situation? If the Orange Order educational programme is good enough for the maintained sector, then it is certainly good enough for the state sector too.”

But the Order said that there was an “onus” on its members to serve on schools’ boards of governors to push for such visits.

## Connor Parishioner set for coast-to-coast fundraiser

**A parishioner from Derrykeighan, Diocese of Connor, is in training for a Coast to Coast trek which will see her walk over 190 miles from one side of England to the other.**

Ballymena Times - Gail Callan is undertaking the 192 Coast to Coast Walk in September, starting at St Bees in Cumbria and ending in Robin Hood’s Bay, near Whitby.

Devised by Alfred Wainwright, it passes through three contrasting national parks: The Lake District National Park, the Yorkshire Dales National Park,



and the North York Moors National Park. Wainwright recommends that walkers dip their booted feet in the Irish Sea at St Bees and, at the end of the walk, in the North Sea at Robin Hood's Bay.

Gail said she came up with the idea of going Coast to Coast after watching a television programme hosted by Julia Bradbury.

'I have always been a keen walker and would have done walks in the Lake District before. I had been watching the Julia Bradbury series and decided the Coast to Coast would be a good way of raising funds.

'My church in Derrykeighan needs a lot of work done to it and our family knows about the good work done by the Friends of the Cancer Centre at the City Hospital in Belfast so I decided to fundraise for them both.'

Donations can be made by cheque payable to Derrykeighan Parish Church Fundraising Account. Please forward cheque to Gail's Coast to Coast Challenge, C/o Rev J Anderson, The Rector, 231 Castlecatt Road, Dervock, BT53 8BP.

When Gail completes the walk, the funds in the Derrykeighan Parish Church Fundraising account will be split 50/50 between The Friends of the Cancer Centre, Belfast and Derrykeighan Parish Church, Building & Repair Fund.



**Cardinal Vincent Nichols:  
Tolerance isn't enough for a good society**

**Newly appointed Cardinal Vincent Nichols says Christians must "go to the peripheries"**

**and seek justice, noting that to transform lives we have to be more than just tolerant towards one another.**

Christian Today - He was speaking as faith and community leaders from around the country met in London for the launch of the 'Good Society

Project'; an initiative born from a partnership between Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and Church Action on Poverty.

Following David Cameron's much-ridiculed attempt to promote the 'Big Society', CTBI and Church Action on Poverty want to open up dialogue about a Good Society instead, and what it looks like to encourage good values and real relationships within community.

The project aims to "make a contribution to the wider debate concerning the role of the Church, and faith more generally, in seeking the common good," and has engaged in conversations with faith and community groups all over the UK to give people who are working at a grass-roots level across Britain a voice in how social justice is best sought.

At the launch, Cardinal Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, gave an address in which he hailed Pope Francis' assertion that Christians must "go to the peripheries" as of the utmost importance, adding that "it's in the peripheries that you will meet the person of Christ most clearly".

"In those least endowed, least possessed, with power, you meet Christ, and the truth of human nature and what we're called to be," he said.

"The Good Society is one that recognises, shares and builds on the fundamental truths about the human person...It's a window to the transcendent."

More at -

[http://www.christiantoday.com/article/  
cardinal.vincent.nichols.tolerance.isnt.enough.for.a.good.society/37703.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/cardinal.vincent.nichols.tolerance.isnt.enough.for.a.good.society/37703.htm)

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