



Church of Ireland to host service hailing GAA inclusivity

The Gaelic Athletic Association is joining with the Church of Ireland to hold a special service celebrating inclusivity in the GAA., the Belfast Telegraph reports.

The special choral evensong service will take place in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin on May 26.

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The ecumenical service will acknowledge the rich tapestry of cultures and creeds that since 1884 have contributed to the enhancement of Gaelic games, culture, and life in Ireland and beyond.

It will feature contributions from a variety of figures from the GAA, Irish community and church life.

Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral The Very Reverend Dr William Morton (photo above) said: "The historic connection between the GAA and the Church of Ireland broke new ground in times past; it's vital to continue to stand together for inclusivity and welcome in an increasingly diverse world."

GAA President John Horan said: "We are privileged that the National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland will host us for this service of inclusivity.

"We need look no further than one of the most iconic names in the GAA - Sam Maguire - to recognise the diversity that has helped make the GAA what it is today."

Sam Maguire was a parishioner of St Mary's Church of Ireland, Dunmanway.

He rose to prominence in the GAA as chairperson of the London County Board following a successful playing career.

The famous All Ireland football championship cup which bears his name was presented to the GAA in his honour a year after his death in 1927.

In 2017, the local parish and community of Dunmanway - with the support of a grant from the GAA - restored the six original bells in the church tower while adding two new ones inscribed with Sam Maguire's name and dates (1877-1927).

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The Sam Maguire Cup will be on view at the Dublin service, as will the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship Cup.

Countdown to the 2019 Presbyterian General Assembly

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) opens in just over 3 weeks time on 3 June. As Presbyterian congregations get ready for the annual event, it will be Rev Trevor Gribben's fifth Assembly as Clerk of the General Assembly. Reflecting on the first time that he attended as an Assistant Minister in 1987 and looking forward to this year's meeting, he says that one thing that has always struck him about the annual meeting is that it is the Presbyterian family coming together.

"For me the General Assembly has always been a wonderful picture of our Church coming together: ministers, who have been called by their congregations, elders who have been elected by their brothers and sisters in Christ, joining with other representatives, all coming together as a Presbyterian family to worship and pray," Mr Gribben said.

One of the largest churches in Ireland and the largest Protestant, or Reformed' denomination in Northern Ireland, along with its primary focus on mission and ministry as part of the Church of Jesus Christ, the General Assembly is a time where the pressing social, moral, denominational and public issues of the day are also discussed. He also said that while many of the issues are important, some can be mundane, but necessary, and sometimes they can be controversial.

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“Sadly it’s often only the last of these that ‘make the headlines’, but on the ground and in different ways, our Church continues to make a unique contribution in communities across the country. Our annual meeting next month is the coming together of ministers and elders from every congregation across this island, meeting in General Assembly, to take decisions for the Church and often giving voice to the concerns of many people within and outside PCI,” Mr Gribben (photo above) explained.



“The reports that are debated, and the resolutions that are passed, shape the Church’s direction in different areas. These decisions are taken jointly by ministers and elders, men and women, from congregations up and down the land. People who give of their time freely and use their many gifts on various bodies in the service of the Lord Jesus – and I pay tribute to these people and the work that they do at denominational, presbytery and congregational level.

“This year, much of the work reported on has stemmed from decisions taken at the last, or previous, Assemblies. For instance, Task Groups have been looking at a number of areas, including dissent and guidance for congregations

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around membership. Valuable work that we will be able to discuss next month,” he said.

Mr Gribben continued, “With the vast majority of our business conducted in an open, transparent and public way, democracy is also one of the strengths and hallmarks of our Presbyterianism. As we discuss and debate together with grace and respect, I would also encourage everyone who is eligible to attend and take part.”

Speaking to the PCI family as a whole, Mr Gribben said, “As we come together, and as we seek to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to people of all backgrounds, please pray for all involved in this year’s General Assembly and its deliberations - and for the life, ongoing work and witness of our Church.”

The General Assembly will take place in Belfast from Monday 3 June to Friday 7 June. All are welcome. For full details www.presbyterianireland.org.

Major exhibition on C of I architecture opens in Dublin

A large audience gathered at the Irish Architectural Archive (IAA), on Merrion Square, on Tuesday evening for the launch of *A Visual Window to an Ecclesiastical World* – an exhibition of the Church of Ireland’s historical architectural drawings.

The exhibition was launched by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, and attended by the

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Dr Susan Hood, Archbishop Richard Clarke, Dr Michael Webb, Colum O’Riordan (CEO, IAA) and Dr Michael O’Neill, architectural historian and exhibition curator.

Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson. This is among the events marking the 150th anniversary of the Church of Ireland’s Disestablishment, enabled by the Irish Church Act 1869.

Archbishop Clarke commented: “It’s totally right that we do reach back into our past. Any of us who have any grounding in history will always feel that you cannot really grasp the present unless you know where you have come from, and you certainly cannot look – with any confidence – into the future if you can’t somehow relate the present to the past, and hence look towards the future.”

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Queen Anne was instrumental in providing funds for the building of churches and there was “a huge burst of activity” in their construction after the Act of Union 1800. Archbishop Clarke made a presentation to Dr Michael Webb on his retirement as Chair of the Representative Church Body’s Library and Archives Committee. Dr Webb is also Chair of the IAA’s Board of Directors, a role in which he will be continuing.

The exhibition is curated by Dr Michael O’Neill FSA and draws on his extensive research into the Church’s architectural history, which has included the digitization of more than 8,000 drawings over eight years to safeguard them for future generations. The full collection of digitized drawings is catalogued and searchable online **here**.



The theme at the IDAHO service in St Anne’s Church, Shandon, tomorrow is 'Allies for Inclusion' and is borrowed from this year's Cork City LGBTI+ Awareness Week which will be launched on Monday 13th May at Cork City Hall and run until 19th May.

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Dr O'Neill recounted the Church's architectural history under the Board of First Fruits (1711–1833) and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners (1833–1871). Many of the drawings were office copies, drawn on tracing paper – their fragility makes the rationale for digitization even greater. He related that there are “wonderful synergies” between the work of the RCB Library and the IAA and thanked all those who had helped to bring the exhibition to fruition, including the former and present Librarians, Dr Raymond Refaüssé and Dr Susan Hood.

Dr Hood noted that attendees had come from as far as Faro, Omagh, Armagh, Belfast and Jordanstown, and acknowledged the support of funding from the Esme Mitchell Trust, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Christ Church and St Patrick's Cathedrals, and the Representative Church Body.

“This exhibition is one outcome of the dedicated hard work of Dr O'Neill who first brought the Church's attention to the value and uniqueness of its drawings,” she remarked. It was “a mammoth task but also a labour of love.” The Library staff are pleased that they can now present the documents digitally rather than handling them.

Digitization is therefore a form of preservation and protection for archives.

Thanking the IAA, she commented that both the archive and the Library have a small dedicated staff, are open to public, and their multiple audiences have large expectations. Dr Webb was presented with a framed copy of the Visual Window poster in recognition of his work as chair of the Library and Archives Committee which he has served since

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January 2008. He then closed the launch with his thanks and added that the Library and Archives Committee was “the friendliest and happiest of committees”.

Admission is free and the exhibition will be open to the public from Tuesday to Friday (10am–5pm) until Friday, 30th August. A series of lectures is planned for Heritage Week, which runs from 17th August to 25th August.

Pre-loved baby grows from famous mums highlight Sierra Leone’s shocking maternal death rate

One hundred and fifty baby grows donated by mums from all walks of life, including MPs, broadcasters, actresses, bloggers and faith leaders have been displayed outside a famous London landmark as a symbol of solidarity with mothers in Sierra Leone – the most dangerous place in the world to give birth.

The installation has been placed in and around St Martin-in-the-Fields on Trafalgar Square in London, as part of Christian Aid Week (12-18 May), to illustrate the stark reality that women in Sierra Leone are 150 times more likely to die in childbirth than those in the UK.

Mums in public life who donated to the project include MPs Luciana Berger, Jo Swinson, Seema Kennedy and Alison Thewliss, BBC broadcasters Emma Barnett and Kate Bottley, ITN newsreader Romilly Weeks and actress Jemma Powell.



The charity is hoping the installation will draw attention to the high maternal death rate in Sierra Leone, where women face a lack of access to healthcare facilities or health professionals. The West African country is the most dangerous place to give birth in the world, with an estimated 15,000 mothers having died during childbirth since the Ebola crisis in 2014. For every 100,000 live births, 1,360 women die in Sierra Leone, compared to nine women in the UK.

Christian Aid's media & PR lead Chine McDonald said: "Pregnancy and birth can be an anxious time no matter where in the world you live. But as the world celebrates the birth of a new royal baby, let's spare a thought for the women of Sierra Leone for whom pregnancy and childbirth can be a particularly terrifying time due to the country's extremely high maternal death rate.

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“We are very thankful to the mums from all walks of life who answered our call to donate baby grows to this special project. We believe something beautiful happens when women stand together. We hope that this Christian Aid Week we will all stand up for mums in Sierra Leone and give generously to support our work alongside local partners to build more health clinics, so that pregnant women can deliver their babies safely.”

Christian Aid is also inviting supporters to [join its campaign](#) to drop Sierra Leone’s debt that was incurred during its fight against Ebola, in 2014-2016. It was the worst outbreak of the disease in history, killing 10% of the country’s healthcare workers. Debt repayments are taking money away from improving healthcare services that is so desperately needed.

- *The baby grows will be at St Martin in the Fields in London until 18 May*
- *Following the installation, the baby grows will be donated to a UK poverty charity, who can donate them to families in need.*
- *Should anyone passing by the installation want to donate to the appeal, they can use their mobile phones, using near-field communication (NFC) technology and QR codes supplied by tech company Thyngs.*

Today in Christian history

May 11, 330: Roman emperor Constantine, the first Christian emperor, inaugurates Constantinople as his capital on the site of the Greek city of Byzantium.

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May 11, 603: Comgall, founder and first abbot of Bangor, dies. Considered the founder of Irish monasticism, by his death he oversaw 3,000 monks—including the famous missionary Columbanus.

May 11, 1610: Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci, the first Catholic missionary to China, dies. Entering the country as a repairer of clocks, Ricci was criticized for becoming a Confucian scholar and allowing ancestor "worship." Though the number of his converts was relatively small, it included many influential Chinese scholars and families, who played key roles in the future of Christianity in China.

May 11, 1682: The General Court of Massachusetts repeals two 2-year-old laws: (1) a ban on the celebration of Christmas, and (2) capital punishment for banished Quakers who returned to the colony.

May 11, 1825: The American Tract Society organizes in New York City. A leader in developing printing technology, the nondenominational organization was publishing 30 million tracts a year by its sesquicentennial.

News briefs

+++ Cork charity administrator retires - Miss Barbara Veitch, who has served until recently as grants administrator of the St Stephen's Protestant Orphan Society in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross was entertained to lunch on Tuesday last to mark her retirement. The lunch was hosted jointly by the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, as President of the Charity, and by the Dean of Cork, the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne, who chairs the Grants Committee.



Miss Barbara Veitch receiving a presentation from the Bishop of Cork, and flowers from the Dean of Cork, following a lunch to mark her retirement.

Barbara Veitch started work with the Charity when it was the Protestant Orphan Society for the City of Cork and County in 1989. In 1992 it was amalgamated with the St Stephen's Society. In addition Barbara has been administrator of the Cork Indigent Roomkeepers' Society since 1991.

Paying tribute to Barbara, and making a small presentation to her, following the lunch, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton said:

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As Bishop over the last 20 years, I have seen Barbara's gentle and compassionate contribution to meeting human need in our name and on behalf of the Church in this Diocese.

I know from my pastoral contact with some of those who have been assisted over the years that often these gifts to them have been the difference between fear and hope, distress and comfort, getting an opportunity or not, and feeling supported and affirmed.

I know now many of the young adults whose careers have been supported and shaped by the education grants they received; opportunities they might not otherwise have been able to take up. Barbara's pastoral work as a lay person has brought solidarity to many people in their hour of need. We are all indebted to her and we thank her.

+++ Presbyterian Church Youth Night - CALLED -



*Hearing God's Voice,
Bearing God's Name -
Sat 8 June. Come along
and hear from Phil
Houston, Craigavon
Presbyterian Church.
Tickets: £5 Youth Night
only, £7 Youth Night &
Unplugged (or euro
equivalent)*

Tickets presbyterianireland.org/Resources/Tick...

+++ Tribute to Bishop Good's leadership in education -

The Board of Education (Northern Ireland) wished Bishop Ken Good a happy retirement at its last meeting. Bishop Ken has served on the Board for a number of years and has
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been acting Chairperson for the last six years. Dr Peter Hamill, Secretary to the Board, said: “Bishop Ken has brought great wisdom and leadership in his role on Board of Education (NI) and more widely with the Transferor Representatives’ Council. We will miss him and wish him a long and healthy retirement.”

+++ Church history made in New Zealand - The first Maori woman to be elected bishop has been named by the Archbishops of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. Waitohiariki Quayle, currently the Archdeacon of Wairarapa, will become the Bishop of Upoko o Te Ika, in the lower North Island after she is consecrated later this year. The announcement was made by Archbishop Don Tamihere, senior bishop of the Maori tikanga, or cultural stream of the Church, alongside his fellow Primates, Archbishop Philip Richardson and Archbishop Fereimi Cama.

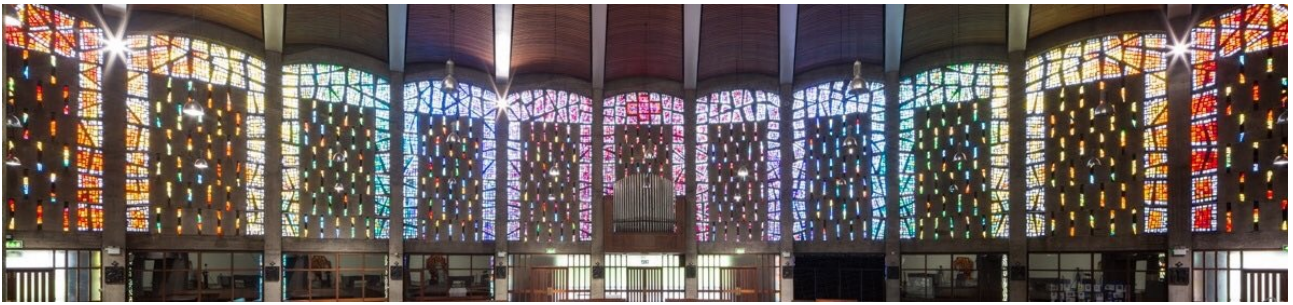
“Bishop-elect Wai becomes not only the first Maori woman to be elected bishop, but the first Aotearoa New Zealand-born woman to be chosen to serve as bishop in any Tikanga,” he said. “Her election is very significant for our Church, and I believe for Maoridom as a whole.

“We’ve waited far too long for our Church to elect a Maori woman as a bishop, and to finally have that happen brings us incredible joy.

“Bishop-elect Waitohiariki is humble, compassionate, wise and a person of great faith. She comes with a long track record of grassroots service. I have no doubt that she will be a great shepherd of our people.”

+++The Priests in concert - Tickets will be on sale soon for the mid summer concert in St Bernadette’s Church, Belfast on Friday 21 June. A perfect evening to see the church

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windows designed by Dom Charles Norris of Buckfast Abbey in all their glory and, of course, for some music.

+++ Please pray for - Pray for Gary and Mary Reid, PCI global mission workers in Kenya.

Give thanks for the work which God's Holy Spirit is doing amongst the Maasai people. Remember Gary as he teaches, that he will be continually led by God's Holy Spirit. bit.ly/2cgVbSa



Pray for Zambia - its President Edgar Lungu and the Zambian government. Ask for wisdom as they try to alleviate extreme rural poverty and high unemployment levels, made worse by a high birth rate, a relatively high HIV/AIDS burden, and power cuts.

+++ Food for thought -

Having To Live in the Country

By Patrick Kavanagh

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Back once again in wild, wet Monaghan

Exiled from thought and feeling,

A mean brutality reigns:

It is really a horrible position to be in

And I equate myself with Dante

And all who have lived outside civilization.

It isn't a question of place but of people;

Wordsworth and Coleridge lived apart from the common man,

Their friends called on them regularly.

Swift is in a somewhat different category

He was a genuine exile and his heavy heart

Weighed him down in Dublin.

Yet even he had compensations for in the Deanery

He received many interesting friends

And it was the eighteenth century.

I suppose that having to live

Among men whose rages

Are for small wet hills full of stones

When one man buys a patch and pays a high price for it

That is not the end of his paying.

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"Go home and have another bastard" shout the children,
Cousin of the underbidder, to the young wife of the
purchaser.

The first child was born after six months of marriage,
Desperate people, desperate animals.

What must happen the poor priest

Somewhat educated who has to believe that these people
have souls

As bright as a poet's - though I don't, mind, speak for
myself.

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