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IRELAND

Presbyterian Moderator on tour



Rev Dr McMullen, ,The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church visited Letterkenny. He said he had the pleasure

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and privilege of being alongside many involved in education. He shared time with the staff of local National Schools connected to pci assembly in Silver Tassie Hotel. Pictured with the outstanding choir of the Royal School Raphoe.

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, was in Corvally Presbyterian Church, Co Monaghan this Sunday kicking off a week long tour of the Church's Presbytery of Monaghan.

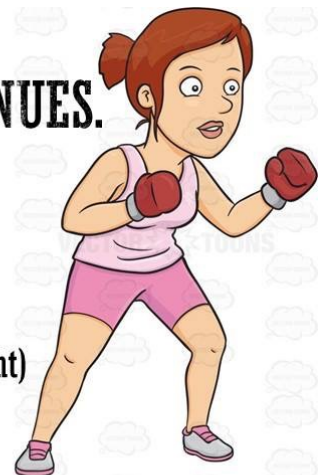
The tour, which will be his fourth and final presbytery tour, will include visits to local businesses, schools and a local hospital, but will focus primarily on encouraging members and ministers across the presbytery and seeing first-hand the mission and ministry of the Church in this part of the country.



**FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT CONTINUES.
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IT'S LADIES' FIGHT

(And the feeling's right. Yes, it's ladies' night. Oh what a night)



St. Columba's, Kilcooley

TUESDAYS 7.30-9PM

8 weeks of learning boxing skills and testimonies

Beginning 19th March 2019

Ladies over 18 only

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While taking in more than just County Monaghan itself, the presbytery stretches from the Wild Atlantic Way across country to the shores of the Irish Sea. Made up of 34 congregations consisting of approximately 1,000 families, it extends to Dundalk in Co Louth in the east, to Ballina in Co Mayo to the west and from Sligo City in the northern part of the presbytery to Kells in Co Meath in the south. Most of the congregations, however, are situated in counties Monaghan and Cavan.



Yesterday 427 years ago – 3 March 1592 – Trinity College formally came into existence, after it was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth I. The letters patent called for “a College... near Dublin city, for the better education, training and instruction of scholars.”

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Accompanied by his wife Barbara, the Moderator will take part in two significant celebrations, the first being the 300th anniversary of First Castleblayney Presbyterian Church. Monaghan County Council will also host a civic reception for the senior office bearer and principal public representative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, who will also attend a performance of 'The importance of being Ernest' at the Castleblayney Drama Festival.

Looking forward to the tour, Dr McMullen said, "My previous three presbytery tours have been outstanding opportunities to get an overview of the witness and outreach of our denomination in local areas. It has been a privilege to visit congregations, spend time with and hopefully encourage manse families as well as to engaging with many Presbyterians in their varying places of work. For these reasons I am looking forward immensely to a week full of engagements in the Monaghan Presbytery.

"On a personal note, my father-in-law hails from Co Monaghan and there has been a family joke that all roads somehow lead back to Ballybay! Barbara and I have been amazed over the years by the number of people we have met who have roots in the area, and know that we ourselves will be blessed as we discover something of the wider region's innate beauty and charm."

Throughout the week there will be opportunities to offer pastoral support for ministers and elders at the Annual Elders' fellowship dinner that will be held in Cootehill Presbyterian Church Hall, Co Cavan and a breakfast for ministers, which is also in Cootehill. A presbytery rally, which is a time of worship and teaching that is open to everyone

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from all over the region, will be held in Braddox Presbyterian Church. He will also spend time with senior members from congregations in the border area around Clones.

The Clerk of the Presbytery of Monaghan, Rev Daryl Edwards, who is the minister of Cootehill, Drum and



Bishop Paul Colton spoke to the annual meeting of Changing Attitude Ireland

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Kilmount Presbyterian Churches, said that they had arranged a busy week for Dr McMullen. “We are excited for the Moderator’s visit, as it not only reminds us of our links with the wider church family but also gives us an opportunity to come together within the Presbytery for times of fellowship and refreshment, something that isn’t always easy given our geographical spread.

“In this tour, we have deliberately included every group of congregations, to both bring encouragement and to illustrate how spread out we really are. However, Dr McMullen will attend events in counties Sligo and Mayo at the end of the month when he undertakes separate engagements there, a time we are also looking forward to. His agenda this week also encompasses time with people of all ages from nursing homes, to work places, to schools.”

Mr Edwards said that many within the region are dependent on the rural agricultural economy and local engineering and entrepreneurial enterprises. “Dr McMullen will take time to visit local employers, including Combilift in Monaghan, Lakeland dairies in Bailieborough and Carleton Cakes in Cootehill. He will also visit St Mary’s Hospital Castleblayney and a number of schools under the patronage of the Presbytery of Monaghan, Castleblayney Central, Ballybay Central, Drumcorrin School and Dun Dealgan National School.

In the Presbyterian system of church government each presbytery consists of ministers and elders who are drawn from local congregations in a particular area. As a court of the church each presbytery is responsible for overseeing those congregations in its local area while undertaking other

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important tasks, which includes the annual selection of the Moderator which takes place each February. Dr McMullen will also attend the March meeting of the Presbytery, which will be held at Glennan Presbyterian Church.

“This is my final Presbytery tour and I am particularly delighted to be south of the border. While our denomination is an all-Ireland church, it isn’t as big as others in the Republic of Ireland, but nonetheless Presbyterians play their full part in the life of the nation on various levels and I have heard many stories of vibrant faith communities, some of which, after years of decline, are now growing again. It will also be good to discover in greater detail some of the issues in the local area, particularly as Brexit fast approaches,” Dr McMullen said.

The Moderator will conclude his presbytery tour on Sunday 10 March in Kells Presbyterian Church. Celebrating its 150th anniversary, worshipers will be joined at the service by the Romanian congregation that also uses the church.

Causing a stir in Donegal - Bishop commends parishioners at Thanksgiving Service

“There’s a stirring going on here,” the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, told worshippers in Donegal Town, on Friday evening, “and practical steps are being taken to respond to spiritual things”. He was speaking at the Service of Thanksgiving and Re-dedication which followed the restoration of Donegal Parish Church, which

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Pictured on Friday night at the Service of Thanksgiving and Re-dedication which followed the restoration of Donegal Parish Church

was built in 1828 and which had sustained significant damage in a Christmas Day lightning strike just over two years ago.

The Republic's Minister for Education, Fine Gael Deputy Joe McHugh, and Sinn Féin TD, Pearse Doherty, were in the congregation to hear the bishop compare the Jerusalem of the 6th century B.C. to modern day Ireland. Also present were the Mayor of Donegal Town and Surrounding Areas, Pauric Kennedy, county councillors, clergy from other churches and the bishop's wife, Mrs Mary Good.

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The Rector of Donegal Group of Parishes and Archdeacon of Raphoe, Ven. David Huss, began the service with an update on the fundraising effort to pay for the restoration work – mostly to the spire and tower of the building. “We’re delighted that over the past 12 months, thanks to the generosity of so many people, over €128,000 has been raised – which takes us within striking distance of our overall target of €186,000 to complete the payment of the work.”

The Rector said Donegal Parish Church was a much-loved landmark in the town and they were delighted to see it restored to its original glory. “I would venture to say it’s looking as good as it has since 1828,” he said. “A church spire is a pointer to heaven, an arrow looking upwards and encouraging us in the midst of our busy lives to turn our thoughts towards the Lord, and that is what we’ll be doing tonight.”

Archdeacon Huss said the Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication was an opportunity to thank all who had been involved in this project in any way: the contractors Rainey Restoration, Paul Doherty Architects and the numerous craftsmen whose skills had enabled the restoration work to be done. He acknowledged the work of the overseeing committee and the Select Vestry who had guided every step of the process. “To friends far and wide who contributed to the ‘Save Our Spire’ Appeal we are hugely grateful.”

The Rector also thanked various grant-making bodies – including EJM Trust, Donegal County Council, the

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Department of Heritage and the Church of Ireland Fabric Fund – the many volunteers who had held fundraising events, and the local community “who dug deep again and again to lend their support to this project”.

In his sermon, Bishop Good said it was a big night: a big night for the community, as well as for the parish, and for the town, and for the county and for the Church of Ireland. “So, to all those who’ve worked hard – and much hard work has been done – I want to say my own personal thanks and congratulations. To the architects, builders, craftspeople, generous donors, people involved in any way, I say to you all well done.”

Bishop Good said the Old Testament reading that Fr William Peoples read – Haggai 1:1-15, in which the prophet criticises the people for living in their panelled houses while the Lord’s house remained a ruin – was “quite different” from what had just happened here in Donegal Parish. “You have not procrastinated. You have not delayed. You have got it done, and that is why I’m paying tribute to you.”

In the reading, the people knew that the temple needed to be repaired, Bishop Good said, they could see it, but the problem was that their own houses needed to be repaired, too. So, they postponed the work on the temple, and that dragged on for weeks and months and years.

“And then, into the picture comes Haggai, the prophet, and he has a word to say that goes right to the heart of the matter, and right to the heart of the people, because what he said was this – and I think it’s a powerful speech that

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you could say to Ireland today, or to any society today. He said, I notice you in your panelled house.”

Bishop Good paid tribute to Archdeacon Huss for his leadership in the Donegal Group of Parishes and for the manner in which he was helping his congregations to grow in discipleship. He also commended parishioners for “seizing the moment” and allowing the Lord to stir them into action.



King AbdullahII and Queen Rania of Jordan visited Westminster Abbey as part of their governmental visit to the UK. During their time at the Abbey prayers were said at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior.

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“We don’t like to be stirred into action, Bishop Good said, “we have other things we need to be doing. Now, the strike of lightning may’ve had something to do with you being stirred into action. I was here shortly after it happened, on Christmas Day 2016, and there were things strewn all over the place – the lightning had hit the spire and come right down, and all of the electrics were shattered – that’s a way of getting your attention!



The Church of Scotland was represented at the recent service attended by HM Queen Elizabeth, marking the centenary of the Army Chaplains Department being granted the title of ‘Royal’. Above - Ven Clinton Langston, the newly appointed Chaplain General, and Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Convener of the Chaplains to Her Majesty’s Forces Committee

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“But, on a more serious note, I think you have been stirred into action – with your leadership, Archdeacon. There’s a stirring going on here, and practical steps are being taken to respond to spiritual things. I have noticed the Mustard Seed project. I think that’s evidence of not wanting to procrastinate but saying yes, Lord, we think we should do this and we’re going to do it. We don’t know if we can afford it but we’re going to do it.

“Having a parish outreach worker, that’s a sign of courageous willingness to take a step of faith. A parish administrator – not all parishes have them. A week of prayer – that’s a stirring, that’s an unusual thing, a spiritual stepping out in faith. A prayer walk. There are things going on round here that seem to me to be signs of the stirring of the spirit and that is good.

“Rather than procrastinating – saying someday we’ll round to that, we know it’s important but someday we’ll do it – you’re saying now we will do it. The Four Parishes Challenge, the Golf Classic, the Laghey Development Fund Option, the Church Tidy-up, that’s a sign of being stirred. I want to commend you and say thank you, Lord, for stirring these people.”

Pray for the nation on Brexit day UK Church leaders urge

Church leaders are calling on people to pray for the nation on the day the UK is due to leave the European Union.

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The bishops of the Church in Wales fear Brexit could bring a time of “confusion and anxiety” as the country begins a new era on



March 29. They are asking churches to be kept open for private or corporate prayer or simply for people to spend time in quiet reflection.

The Bishop of St Davids, Joanna Penberthy, says, “Leaving the EU will impact on almost every area of our lives; and as we approach March 29, many people are fearful at the prospect of leaving without a negotiated deal, leading to unknown consequences for people, businesses and communities. The Bishops of the Church in Wales are calling for March 29 to be a day of prayer for our nation, at this time of confusion and anxiety.”

In addition, churches are being advised to prepare for Brexit in several other practical and pastoral ways. These include being aware of the pressures facing businesses, employees and families with members abroad; helping any EU citizens in their congregations with the new registration process; making sure foodbanks are well supplied with goods and volunteers; reaching out in friendship to other faith and

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minority ethnic groups and teaching about the importance of welcome and hospitality to promote community cohesion; and praying for politicians, negotiators and civil servants.

More information on how churches can prepare for Brexit
Brexit prayers have been prepared by the CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland). You can download them here -

Brexit Prayer – English

News briefs

+++Living Worship and Anglican Chant - The second session of Living Worship 2019 is on Saturday 23 March in Christ Church Cathedral. Ian Keatley, director of music at the cathedral, will lead a workshop on Anglican Chant. This session will involve lots of singing of chant and we invite all – members of congregations and choirs – to this event in our diocesan cathedral. So, whether you are a seasoned regular or have not had the opportunity to sing psalms and canticles to Anglican Chant in recent years, this session is for you. Fee: €5 per person, to include refreshments.

Groups are also welcome: please email info@churchmusicdublin.org to tell them how many to expect. Saturday 23 March 2019 from 10 am to 12.30 pm

+++Appointment of rector of Glencraig - Revd Catherine Simpson has been appointed rector of the Parish of Glencraig, in the Diocese of Down. She is currently serving as Curate Assistant in Seapatrick, Banbridge.

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Catherine was ordained Deacon in 2014 and served her internship in the Parish of Christ Church, Castledawson, in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. In August 2015 she was ordained priest in Down Cathedral.

Catherine is the author of “Be Reconciled”, a 6 week biblically based small group course, designed to inspire and equip local churches in peacemaking.



+++Bishop's Morning for Confirmation - On Saturday, supported by clergy and children's youth workers in the Diocese, Bishop Colton of Cork hosted his annual 'Bishop's Morning for Confirmation candidates.' Around 100 confirmands from Cork, Cloyne and Ross for 2019 had a busy and fun morning.

+++Oíche den scoth! A great night! - The audience got the opportunity to look through a collection of Bibles and

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prayer books in Irish, Scottish and Manx Gaelic. Rev Gary Hastings enthralled us with stories of growing up in east Belfast, attending Euston Street Primary and Grosvenor Grammar before going on to study Irish. The evening ended with a queue of people keen to purchase the new bilingual edition of 'The Irish Language in the Church of Ireland'. Míle buíochas to Caroline Nolan, Irish Language Development Officer with the Church of Ireland for travelling up to be present and to Gordon McCoy for organising the event.

+++ Events at St Canice's Cathedral this March -

Due to popular demand, these tours will be rescheduled to a later date in order to facilitate numbers. Please stay tuned for updates and many thanks for your support.

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Events at St Canice's Cathedral this March

Start Time: 10.30 a.m Duration: 1 hour

8th & 9th March: Legends of Ireland at St Canice's Cathedral.

15th & 16th March: St Patrick and the Saints of Ireland.

22nd March: St Patrick's Story: A Children's Tour (Booking Essential)

29th & 30th March: Surnames of St Canice's Cathedral .

Admission fees apply



8th & 9th March: Legends of Ireland at St Canice's Cathedral – Explore Irish myths, the miracles of local saints and the legends of Kilkenny, all in the magnificent surroundings of St Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower.

15th & 16th March: St Patrick and the Saints of Ireland. Learn about the major Irish saints while exploring St Canice's Cathedral. Hear about St Patrick and his impact in Leinster and Kilkenny.

22nd March: St Patrick's Story: A Children's Tour - Discover St Patrick's harrowing story from nobleman to slave to patron saint of Ireland through story-telling, challenges,

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drama and crafts on this special children's tour. (Booking Essential)

29th & 30th March: Surnames of St Canice's Cathedral - On this unique tour learn about some prominent people from St Canice's Cathedral's past, the origins and meaning of their surnames and the monuments that commemorate them.

Admission fees apply



+++Cultural orientation in Limavady - Roger & Gillian of CMSI were at Limavady Grammar School on Saturday morning doing some cultural orientation and prep for the team of 31 heading out to Kajiado in July for 3 weeks.



+++C of I School Managers annual conference - The annual Church of Ireland Primary School Management Association Conference is taking place on Saturday at DCU All Hallows hosted by the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU. Delegates explored the theme - Who are we? - Accounting for ethos!

+++Wicklow school stats - Preliminary enrolment numbers in primary and post-primary schools in Wicklow show 0.8 per cent increase between September 2017 and September 2018. The total number of pupils enrolled for the 2018/2019 school year in both primary and post-primary schools in Wicklow rose to 29,103, an increase of 233. Total enrolments in Wicklow primary schools rose to 18,114 in September, an increase of 93 pupils. In percentage terms, this is an increase of 0.5 per cent on September 2017, which compares with an increase of 0.8 per cent across the

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**Staff of the
Church of
Ireland
Centre:
Geraldine
OConnor,
Jacqui
Wilkinson
and Anne
Lodge
(Director)
with the
Minister of
State for
Higher
Education at
the CIPSMA
Conference
in DCU All
Hallows' on
Saturday.**



State generally.

The figures demonstrate changes in the numbers of children attending schools of different ethos. Enrolments in multi-denominational primary schools in Wicklow increased by 9.4 per cent while in Catholic schools they decreased by 0.4 per cent.

Total enrolments in Catholic primary schools in Wicklow stood at 13,329 in September 2018, representing 73.6 per cent of all pupils, down from 74.2 per cent in 2017.

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Enrolments in multi-denominational schools stood at 1,356, accounting for 7.5 per cent of the total, up from 6.9 per cent in 2017.

Church of Ireland schools had enrolments of 2,108, representing 11.6 per cent of all pupils.

+++Louth schools see increase in numbers - The number of pupils being enrolled in school in Co Louth is on the rise once again, with over 500 more students in classes than 2017/2018.

The total number of pupils enrolled for the 2018/2019 school year in both primary and post-primary schools in Louth rose to 29,692, an increase of 562 or almost 2%.

At both primary and secondary level, the number of multi-denominational schools has risen, and there is also a move towards larger schools in our post-primary system as enrolments increase each year.

Total enrolments in Louth primary schools rose to 17,259 in September, an increase of 126 pupils. In percentage terms, this is up 0.7% on September 2017, compared to 0.8% across the State generally.

The figures also show changes in the numbers of children attending schools of different ethos, where enrolments in multi-denominational primary schools in Louth increased by 2.1% while in Catholic schools they increased by 0.6%.

Total enrolments in Catholic primary schools in Louth stood at 15,924 in September 2018, representing 92.3 % of all pupils, down from 92.4 % in 2017.

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Enrolments in multi-denominational schools stood at 1,009, accounting for 5.8 % of the total (up from 5.8 in 2017).

Church of Ireland schools had enrolments of 242, representing 1.4 % of all pupils.

Overall in Louth more primary schools gained than lost pupils, with 20 schools seeing an increase of 5 or more pupils, compared with 13 schools that saw a decrease of 5 or more.

The data shows that the average primary school size in Louth is 247 pupils, above the national average of 180 pupils.

March 4 & 3 in Christian history

March 4, 1583: Bernard Gilpin, the English clergyman whose ministry in neglected sections of Northumberland and Yorkshire earned him the title "Apostle of the North," dies at age 66.

March 4, 1866: Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ and the Church of Christ, dies. He sought desperately to get back to a "simple evangelical Christianity" founded on the Bible alone. Only this—not creeds or confessions or liturgy—could bring unity to Christians: "The testimony of the Apostles is the only and all-sufficient means of uniting Christians".

March 3, 1263: French cardinal, Hugh of St. Cher, dies. He reputedly compiled the first Bible concordance and was the first person to divide the Old and New Testaments into chapters.

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March 3, 1547: At the Seventh Session of the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic church defines its theology of the sacraments. Arguing that seven sacraments are necessary for salvation—Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony—the council rejected the teaching of most Protestants that only two were required: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

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