



**A nation falls silent in tribute to bombing victims**

## **Presbyterian Church opens first 'dementia-friendly garden'**

Corkey House, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's (PCI) residential care home for older people in north Belfast has become the first of its six care homes to have its own purpose built dementia-friendly garden, has been officially opened.



**At the official opening of the new dementia-friendly garden at the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Corkey House in north Belfast, one of the residents plants a commemorative rose bush to mark the official opening of the garden with (left to right) Michael McDonnell, Choice Group Chief Executive, Corkey's Home Manager Ann Anderson and Rev. John Seawright, convener of the PCI's Older People's Services Committee.**

Run in partnership with Choice Housing Association, Corkey House is home to 35 older people. While many of the residents do not have dementia, the garden has been specially designed to provide a relaxing and safe place for those who do.

The garden incorporates

many features, including highly fragrant and colourful plants that provide sensory stimulation, safe pathways that will mitigate injuries from potential falls and raised bedding areas for residents to garden themselves.

Rev. John Seawright, convener of the PCI's Older People's Services Committee was joined by one of the residents and Michael McDonnell, Choice group chief executive, to plant a special rose bush to commemorate the official opening of the garden.

Mr. Seawright said, "This wonderful dementia-friendly garden will bring joy to many people, and I would like to thank our partner, Choice Housing, for creating it for our residents."

"As more people are being diagnosed with dementia, we as care providers and as a denomination are responding in a number of ways to enhance and improve the quality of life for those we care for."

Mr. Seawright continued, "As well as providing professional training for our staff, we also want to provide opportunities for those with dementia to live as full a life as possible. This dementia-friendly garden is one such creative example; it will provide a stimulating yet safe environment



## **A view of the pathways through the garden**

that can encourage independence as well as foster relaxation and a sense of calm.”

Michael McDonnell, Choice Group Chief Executive said: “Providing facilities that meet the needs of our communities and enhance tenant lives is a key priority for Choice. I am proud and enthused by the quality of facilities at Corkey House and the support provided by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

“The new dementia friendly garden is a welcoming place that promotes activity and wellbeing of body and mind. Spaces like this can play a vital role in local life and we wish our

residents well as they enjoy and develop the garden together.”

Along with the garden, Corkey’s ‘Vintage Café’ is another dementia-friendly area of the home that seeks to support people with dementia.

Decorated in an older style and full of memorabilia, it is place for residents and families to gather, relax and reminisce. It leads to the garden and was also officially opened today.

Like all PCI homes, Corkey House welcomes residents from all denominations and seek to provide care in a specifically Christian ethos and environment. Residents have the choice of attending regular worship services and fellowship times held within each home and a conscious effort is made to ensure that residents are offered spiritual support and encouragement when requested

## **Dublin’s Great Come&C Messy Church**

Regulars and visitors alike gathered at St Matthias’ Church in Killiney–Ballybrack on Sunday afternoon (May 21) for a special diocesan Come & C Messy Church. The team at



**James wows the children (and their parents) with Messy Science.**

St Matthias' runs one of the few registered Messy Churches in Dublin & Glendalough and they invited visitors from other parishes along to see how it operates and how it can compliment their existing worship.

The theme for the afternoon was 'The Unbelievable Truth – Jesus is Alive'. This was explored through Messy Science helping children to make the link with the truth of the Easter story: Jesus died and then was alive again and there are some science experiments that look like magic tricks but they are real. The

afternoon centred around Bible stories with science and crafts and concluded with worship in the church followed by amazing food.

St Matthias' Church started Messy Church in September 2015 and it has been growing from strength to strength ever since. Messy Church is a way of being Church for all ages involving craft, celebration and hospitality. The parish runs Messy Church once a month for two hours on a Sunday afternoon in the parish centre and church. It is informal and easy for people attending to invite family, friends and neighbours to Come & C. Their attendance ranges from 60 to 90 people each month and it is established as part of the regular worship services.

Their team of 20 people work in three main areas: welcome, craft and hospitality. Their commitment has seen new people coming to the church and a loyal attendance from families.

If you weren't able to attend on Sunday but want to learn more, you can watch a video in which the Rector, the Revd Dr William Olhausen and St Matthias' Messy Church coordinator, Alistair Doyle, outline how and why they do Messy Church.

Photos and videos from Sunday's event are available on [St Matthias' Facebook page](#).

Messy Church started 14 years ago in a Church of England Parish in Portsmouth, faced with many of the challenges that many parishes experience today, in attracting new people and engaging families and young people. Lots more information can be found at [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk) .

[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

## **Knock blesses pencil cases and exam students**

A special mass at Knock for exam students, and the blessing of their pencil cases, has raised a few eyebrows, and many Facebook Likes and Shares. While the blessing of the pencil case is symbolic, the young students who are about to sit their exams do appreciate the special Mass which is fast becoming an annual fixture at the Basilica in the National Shrine at Knock.

“It is aimed at giving the students a sense of hope and encouragement but also a sense of calm and control over their exam process ... and to remind them of the idea that God is with them,” said Andrea Lynch, a youth minister at Knock.



Andrea is a religious education teacher originally from St Louis, Missouri, living in Ireland for the last five years to study for her PhD in special education and working in Knock for the summer.

“So many of them think that exams are the be-all and end-all of life, and [the Mass is] to try to put perspective on life,” she said.

Before she arrived in Ireland, she had never seen an exam Mass let alone a pencil case blessing. She said that “[last year] there were 80 to 100 young people around the altar for the blessing of the pencil cases, so it was a neat thing.”

She added: “It also shows a sense of solidarity, to remember you are not the only one going through this, it is a rite of passage, there are other people just like you facing the same thing.”

The Mass is attended by young people and their families from Knock and other parishes in Mayo and nearby counties such as Sligo, Galway and Roscommon. Often members of the community, aunts, uncles and grandparents attend and pray on behalf of their young neighbours and relatives.

Fr Richard Gibbons, PP and Rector of Knock Shrine, is the celebrant, and Una Nolan is involved in the music for the Mass.



Students from nearby parishes and schools have already volunteered to help with the readings, prayers and presentation of the gifts. All the readings are specially chosen. The gifts will include an atlas, calculator and history book.

Students will be able to take home the Mass leaflet so they have the prayers and readings to hand during the exams. They will also receive a keepsake with a quote from scripture.

The exam Mass is being held in early June and is just one of a whole programme of events for young people to be held at Knock over the summer.

The Volunteer at Knock Shrine (VAK) is continuing this year, enabling young teens from

the age of 16 to 18 to train in communications, manual handling, sign language and other areas and then use their new skills while volunteering on weekends when there are pilgrims in Knock.

During the first week in July, Knock Youth Ministry (KYM) will be open for children aged 7 to 11 with arts and crafts, sports, prayer, dance, music and much more that will help get them thinking about God.

There is also a kids club – The Ark – for children of 5 years and older. Then there is the HUB (Hear Understand Believe) for older children and young teens to drop in and meet other like-minded teens.

During the Annual Novena in August, there will also be special programmes for children and young people. The Exam Mass is on 5 June at The Basilica, Knock Shrine at 7:30 pm.

## **Moderator says his year was non-stop and a privilege**

As the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland approaches his last full week in office, before the Church's General Assembly opens on June, 5 Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar has said that it was a year full of divine opportunities to serve,

that has left him greatly heartened having found 'a church not in retreat, but a gracious and humble partner in the advancement of God's Kingdom across Ireland.'

This year has seen Dr. Sellar preach close on 100 times in all of the Church's 19 presbyteries, he has visited congregations, numerous projects and carried out various engagements across 20 counties. Writing a final blog as Moderator for [presbyterianireland.org](http://presbyterianireland.org), Dr. Sellar described the year as 'non-stop', but a 'privilege'.

"Throughout the year Claire and I prayed that God would guide us and we would be sensitive to the prompting of His Holy Spirit. He was ever faithful and we found divine opportunities from Kathmandu to Kells (Co. Meath) and from Carrigart to Cloughwater. Describing the year, I think that the word I am looking for is 'privilege'. A privilege to be allowed into people's lives, members of the Church, ministering in ordinary contexts and working in Christ's Name."

Dr. Sellar also spoke of 'moving memories' having taken part in the centenary commemorations of the Battle of the Somme in France last July, and meeting members of the Irish Naval Forces in Co. Cork during December, having recently rescued over 15,600 refugees from the Mediterranean Sea.



**Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

But it was the three presbytery tours that provided some of his abiding memories and invaluable insights into the diversity of what local congregations are doing on the ground. From working with young people and children with special needs, to supporting people to get out of debt through Christians Against Poverty and partnering with others to establish Food Banks.

He said that he had seen a similar demonstration of Christ's love in Nepal, where he witnessed again how God strategically placed people, like

the Church's overseas mission personnel, in the right place at the right time.

Dr. Sellar also explained that he had been affected by the 'real life-changing benefit' that the last Moderator's Appeal had brought to people in situ, after the 2015 earthquakes – especially seeing first hand the physical connection between what had been sacrificially given at home and the blessing that had flowed from it in Nepal.

Summarising his year, Dr. Sellar said, "Claire and I are greatly heartened by what we have found on our travels. Ours is not a church in retreat, but a gracious and humble partner in the advancement of God's Kingdom across Ireland.

"The abiding delight has been meeting with God's people, living, ministering and working in Christ's Name in the countryside, towns and cities of this island – and further afield - joyfully serving. This has been our greatest privilege."

Dr. Sellar will share his reflections in his final address as Moderator on the Opening Night of the Church's General Assembly on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> June, which is open to the public.

Members of Assembly and invited guests will join together in worship and witness the

installation of the Church's 178<sup>th</sup> Moderator, Rev. Dr. Noble McNeely, Minister of First Holywood Presbyterian Church, County Down. The ceremony will be broadcast live on Radio Ulster 1341 Medium Wave from 7pm. A live daily Twitter feed that can be followed @pciassembly hashtag #pciga17.

You can read more of Dr. Sellar's reflections on his year in office his blog at

[www.presbyterianireland.org/blog](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/blog).

## **Church of Scotland Go For it grants hit almost £5 million**

The first round of Go For it grants in 2017 brings to almost £5 million to total donated to good causes in the 5 years since it was created by the General Assembly.

The money has been distributed to 252 applicants across Scotland, reaching those who need it most in almost every Presbytery.

Ministries Council Convener Rev Neil Glover says Go For it is fulfilling the vision laid out for it by the 2012 General Assembly.



**The homeless, children and families projects, and support for refugees and asylum seekers are among the latest groups to benefit from the Church of Scotland's Go For It Fund.**

"Go For It grew out of a movement in the Church called Church Without Walls which sought to break down the barriers between the Church and the people of Scotland," he said. "Each of these inspiring projects is testament to the fulfilment of that vision.

"I am thrilled to see the range of projects supported by Go For It. Each of them shows how different Churches have been dreaming of what might be possible, learning from the best



ideas, responding to their local communities and daring to take risks.”

Go For It has just chosen 10 organisations to receive the first round of grants for 2017 which total £333,740 with homelessness charity Borderline securing this Spring’s largest Go For It Main grant.

## **Contemplative prayer at Clandeboys Chapel, Bangor**

Clandeboye Chapel is situated on Clandeboye Estate and is a worship centre of the Parish of Bangor Abbey

On Saturday, June 10 Canon Raymond Fox will lead a morning of guided reflection at Clandeboye Chapel.

It will be a gentle introduction to the practice of silent prayer and an opportunity to spend time in the presence of God.

Raymond has many years’ experience in leading groups and will provide some thoughts for reflection, but the essence of the morning is to offer space and stillness to listen to God.

The programme:

9.30am: Coffee/tea; 10am: Introduction to contemplative prayer; 10.15–11am: Contemplation based on Isaiah 43:2. Break. 11.15am: –12.15pm: Contemplation based on Luke 24: 38,39. 12.30pm: Contemplative Communion

Lunch - Participants should bring their own lunch, though tea and coffee will be provided. The morning is free but you can make a donation if you wish. To register or for more information and directions to the Chapel please contact the Bangor Abbey parish office, phone 028 9145 1087

## Today in Christian History, May 26

**May 26, 1521:** The Edict of Worms formally condemns Martin Luther's teachings, and he is put under the ban of the Holy Roman Emperor. Those who fear for his life then kidnap Luther and hide him in Fredericks Wartbury castle.

**May 26, 1232:** Pope Gregory IX sends the first Inquisition team to Aragon, Spain.

**May 26, 1647:** Massachusetts enacts a law forbidding any Jesuit or Roman Catholic priest from entering Puritan jurisdictions. Second-time offenders could face execution.

**May 26, 1664:** Increase Mather becomes minister of Boston's Second Church, a position he held until his death 59 years later. He became one of the leading clergymen in the colonies.

**May 26, 1700:** Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, founder of the Moravian church and a pioneer of ecumenism and mission work, is born in Dresden, Germany.

**May 26, 1926:** Church of the Foursquare Gospel founder Sister Aimee Semple McPherson disappears from a California beach. Her mother announced that Aimee must have drowned, telling the Angelus Temple congregation, "Sister is gone." However, three days after an elaborate memorial service on June 20, Sister reappeared in Arizona, saying she had been kidnapped. (Rumours circulated that she had eloped for a romantic tryst.) Her support base remained strong, but media coverage turned negative, and her image never fully recovered .

