



Image of the day - Red Arrows over Lincoln Cathedral

Reports

PCI's General Assembly returns

Ministers and elders from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's 500-plus congregations will gather in Belfast this morning (4 October) for the all-Ireland denomination's General Assembly.

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Right Rev Dr David Bruce, will begin his second term of office at the Opening Service of Worship, at which he will give his address focusing on his first year in office and the year ahead. Dr Bruce is only the seventh Moderator to serve two terms in office since 1840, and the first to do so in the last 127 years.

The General Assembly is the first in two years, as last year's meeting was cancelled as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Opening this morning, and not the traditional Monday evening, this year's Assembly will be in person, but socially distanced, with the various necessary mitigations in place for the voting Members of Assembly who will be present.

As in previous years, it will be livestreamed. Looking forward to the event, Rev Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland said, "In an era that will be remembered for many things, including Zoom meetings and meetings via Microsoft Teams, I am really very thankful that with the easing of some Covid regulations and the opening up of society, we can gather



Rev Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly with The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Right Rev Dr David Bruce, and “The Blue Book”.

together in person once more for fellowship, worship, prayer, Bible study, debate and decision making, which I think is really important.

“The business before us over the next three days will focus upon the life and mission of the Church and also touch upon some of the challenging issues facing society across the island. These include climate change, in terms of divesting in fossil fuels, and human identity, to the UK government’s proposals on legacy and PCI’s support for the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland. There will also be much

discussion on significant reports on how we do our business,” he said.

“The pandemic and its impact on society, the lives of individuals, families, church families and frontline workers at home, and Covid’s impact overseas, will also be reflected in the business before us, through a number of heartfelt resolutions that will pay tribute to, and thank those frontline workers, who have kept us safe and enabled essential services to be maintained across Ireland. That appreciation also extends in resolutions that pay tribute to everyone involved in schools.”

Mr Gribben concluded by saying, “While we will be meeting for only three days, there will be much to discuss. At the heart of the Church is our central calling to proclaim and live out the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in a constantly changing world. Much of our work this week will seek to further that primary calling in different contexts, including both within the Church and in relation to the public issues around us. After the last 19 months, it will also be a welcome opportunity to be together, and be able to worship together, as a Presbyterian family.”

During the Service of Worship, members of the New Irish Choir and Orchestra, including a string quartet, will provide the music to accompany the three hymns that will be sung at the service. Led by Creative Director Jonathan Rea, Sylvia Burnside performed the song ‘There is hope’. The organist was the Rev Mark Spratt, Minister of Kilmore Presbyterian Church.

October 4, 2021

The General Assembly will meet in Assembly Buildings until the afternoon of Wednesday, 6 October. For the business before the Assembly, news stories and other information, visit www.presbyterianireland.org/GA21. Proceedings can also be followed on Twitter via @pciassembly hashtag #PCIGA21.

Bishop Colton to receive Pride of Cork Award 2021



The Pride of Cork Award 2021 will be presented to the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Dr Paul Colton on Friday 26th November, 2021.

The award is awarded to people, organisations and communities who are nominated by the people of Cork in a public call for nominations.

Bishop Paul is recognised for

numerous reasons, such as his night prayers during the Covid-19 pandemic that gave hope, solace and inspiration, his inclusiveness for all in our society and his ability to speak out and be heard in Civic, Church and State matters, among others.

As the longest serving Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross in over 400 years, and as the longest serving Bishop still in office in the Anglican Churches of Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, Dr Colton is also recognised for the affection that the people have for him as a person and as a Church leader.

Commenting on the recognition, Bishop Colton said, “I had been told a long time ago that I was nominated for this award by various people. Looking around at the other award winners I feel both honoured and inadequate, but would like to express my thanks to everyone, including the judges and those who nominated me. These have been demanding times when we’ve all been doing the best we can to support one another and that is all I thought I was doing. Thank you.”

Queen full of praise for BBC favourite as ‘Songs of Praise’ turns 60

The Queen has thanked Songs of Praise for showing Christianity as a “living faith”, as the programme celebrated its 60th anniversary.

Sending a message for a special episode of the show yesterday. the Queen, who is head of the Church of

October 4, 2021

England, admired how it had “drawn together congregations” for collective worship.

The programme marked 60 years on air yesterday, with nearly 3,000 episodes broadcast since its first transmission in 1961. Current episodes are seen by about one million people a week.

In scenes filmed at Westminster Abbey, presenter Aled Jones read the message from the Queen, who has strong personal faith and is a regular church-goer.

“For 60 years Songs of Praise has drawn together congregations and BBC viewers throughout the United Kingdom in collective worship,” she said.

“The programme has shown Christianity as a living faith not only through hymns, but also by featuring the many people who have put their faith at the centre of their lives. I congratulate Songs of Praise and all those involved in the programme on its 60th anniversary.”

Germany honours Bishop of Coventry for 'remarkable contribution' to peace and reconciliation

The Bishop of Coventry has received one of Germany's highest awards in recognition of his peace and reconciliation work.

October 4, 2021

Dr Christopher Cocksworth has been Bishop of Coventry since 2008. Coventry was one of Britain's worst hit cities during World War II, with the city centre mostly destroyed by the German Luftwaffe in November 1940.

The destruction extended to St Michael's Cathedral which was rebuilt but with the bombed out ruins remaining as a monument to the losses of World War II.

The diocese's close connection to the devastation of war has inspired decades of peace and reconciliation work, and part of this legacy has been a strong commitment to fostering friendly relations between Germany and Britain.

On a personal level, Bishop Cocksworth is actively involved in Coventry's twinnings with the German cities of Kiel and Dresden, and he also serves as an ex-officio trustee of the Frauenkirche Dresden Foundation, Patron of the International Friendship and Reconciliation Trust, and Patron of the Dresden Trust.

The Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit was conferred on Dr Cocksworth at the German Embassy in London on Friday.

The embassy said the bishop was being honoured because of his "enduring" commitment to German-British relations, and his "tireless efforts" and "remarkable contribution, based on deep personal conviction, to fostering understanding between nations and peace in Europe".

Paying tribute at the award ceremony, German Ambassador to Britain Andreas Michaelis said, "You are an outstanding

October 4, 2021

bridge-builder, an ardent champion of reconciliation and peace, and a staunch and inspirational campaigner against prejudice and injustice.

"You nurture the spiritual legacy of reconciliation through your very close ties with Germany as well as your inspiring dedication to Coventry's twinnings with Kiel and Dresden."

Bishop calls for DNA tests and physical checks as transsexuals infiltrate seminaries

Transsexual women are presenting themselves as men to infiltrate Catholic seminaries, a US bishop has said.

Bishops should now order physical examinations or DNA tests for candidates for the priesthood, Archbishop Jerome ListECKi of Milwaukee advised members of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops in a memo, Simon Caldwell reports in the Catholic Herald

He said that on more than one occasion women who have undergone sex changes have applied to the priesthood and have been accepted into seminary.

"Recently, the Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance was made aware of instances where it had been discovered that a woman living under a transgendered identity had been unknowingly admitted to the seminary or to a house of formation of an institute of consecrated life," said Archbishop ListECKi in his memo.

October 4, 2021

In one case “the individual’s sacramental records had been fraudulently obtained to reflect her new identity”, said Archbishop ListECKi, the chairman of the USCCB’s canonical affairs committee.

He said: “In all instances, nothing in these individuals’ medical or psychological reports had signaled past treatments or pertinent surgeries.”

“Luckily, each case was discovered prior to a celebration of Holy Orders,” continued the archbishop.

He added that he was “encouraged by the committee to alert you to these occurrences so that you will exercise special vigilance as a new year of seminary formation begins”.

The memo was silent on precisely which seminaries had been infiltrated or where they were located.

Archbishop ListECKi, a doctor of canon law, reminded his brother bishops that only men “who possess the requisite physical and psychological qualities” may be admitted for training to the priesthood.

He went on to quote the sections of the Code of Canon Law that require bishops to establish moral certitude that such criteria are met.

“Some members of the Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance observed that a bishop could consider requiring a DNA test or, at a minimum, certification from a medical expert of the bishop’s own choosing, to assure that

October 4, 2021

an applicant is male,” the archbishop said. Courtesy the Catholic Herald September 30, 2021

News briefs



Pioneer Licensed Lay Minister

Bishop David Chillingworth with his sister Helen who was licensed last week as a Pioneer Licensed Lay Minister in Ely Cathedral. Helen trained at St Mellitus and Ridley Hall in Cambridge.

Curate for Enniskillen

The Revd Christopher West, currently serving as Curate Assistant in Taney Parish, in the Diocese of Dublin, has



The Chapel, Trinity College, Dublin

accepted the position of Curate Assistant in St Macartin's
The Chapel, Trinity College, Dublin

Cathedral, the Parish of Enniskillen, in the Diocese of
Clogher. Revd West's "farewell" Sunday in Taney Parish will
be on 31st October 2021 and he will undertake this new
position in Enniskillen Cathedral from Advent Sunday

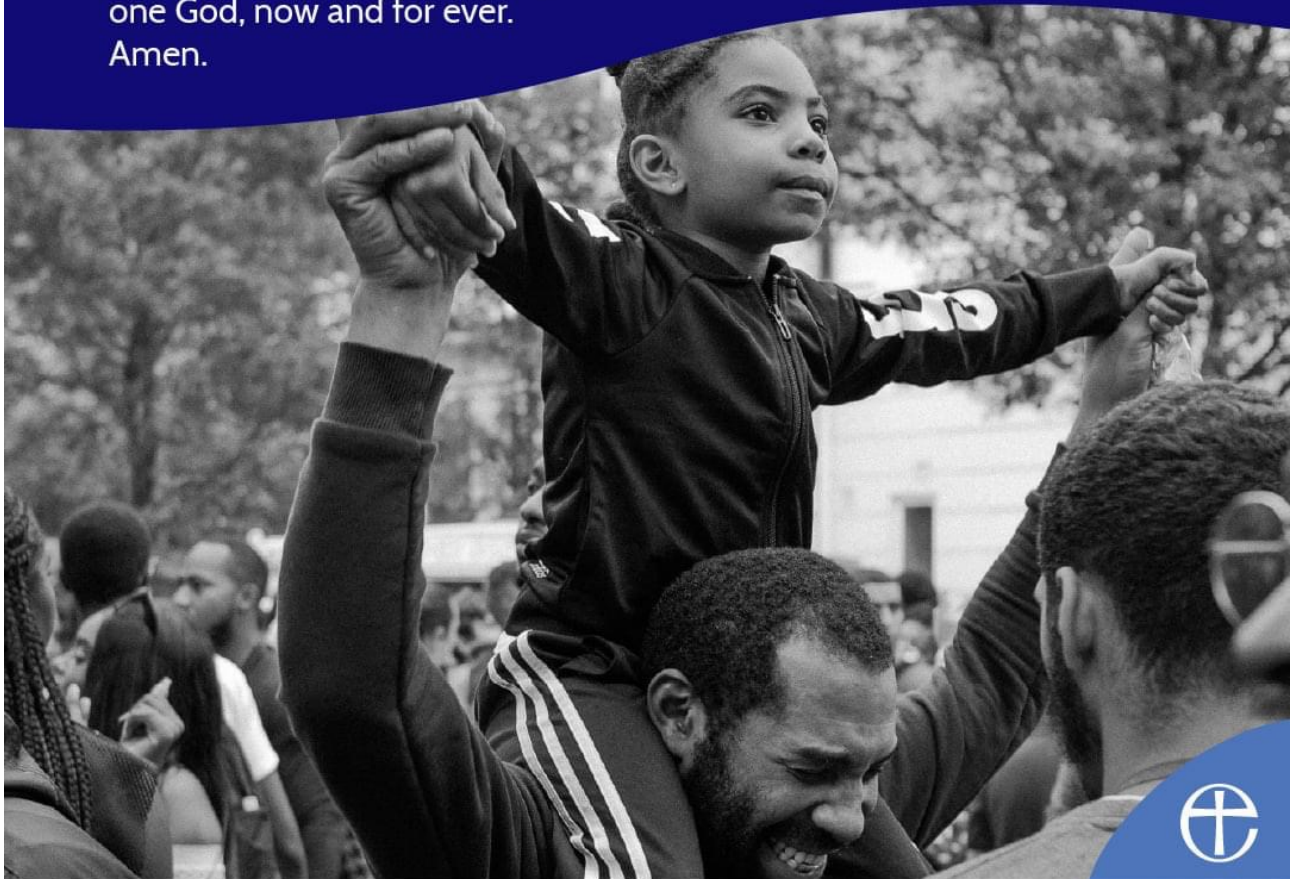
2021.Diocese of Jerusalem prepares to reopen historic church closed for decades

On Sept. 22, Archbishop Hosam Naoum and his staff met the Rev. Kevin Cable and Jen Cable at St. Peter's Anglican

A Prayer for Black History Month

Compassionate God,
who sent Jesus Christ
to deliver us from all manner of injustices and inequalities,
create in us new hearts and enlarged visions,
to see the image of God in every person irrespective of background,
race and ethnicity.

May we be generous in our love of others
as we work towards ending racism and injustice;
creating communities of human flourishing,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



October 4, 2021

Church in Jaffa, Israel, to inspect the historic church in preparation for repairs and renovations. While church services there dwindled after the War of 1948, finally ending in the 1980s, the Cables from the Episcopal Church) have newly arrived in Jaffa to take charge of its reopening. Their ministry will be to the Anglican presence in Tel Aviv-Yafo, which consists mostly of the diplomatic staff of embassies in countries where the Anglican Communion is strong.

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Free song book and calendar at Getty Family Hymn Sing Tuesday, October 5th

The Gettys invite you to join them tomorrow, Tuesday, October 5th, for a special edition of the Getty Family Hymn Sing. This month's Hymn Sing will feature a special on-site interview with their friends at The Voice of the Martyrs headquarters, share the incredible story of an Olympic gold medalist, and discuss the urgent needs in missions today. Tune in to learn more about the persecuted family around the globe and sing along to "It Is Well With My Soul"—a newly released single from the Getty's upcoming album featured in the film Sabina: Tortured for Christ.

This event will be broadcast twice on Tuesday, 10/5 – once at 7:15 PM BST (UK), and again at 7:15 PM CT (USA) on Facebook Live and YouTube. Gather your family and be sure to visit [www.gettymusic.com/hymnsing] to download your free expanded keepsake song book filled with songs and arrangements that the Getty band uses for these classic

October 4, 2021

hymns and your free prayer calendar courtesy of The Voice of the Martyrs.

Irish History from Plantation to Partition: Free online lecture series

Armagh Robinson Library, in collaboration with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, has organised a six-week lecture series that will explore Irish history from the Plantation of Ulster to Partition.

The free lectures will be delivered by Zoom on Wednesday evenings (7.30pm-8.30pm) from 13 October to 17 November.

Here's the programme:

Wednesday 13 October: **The establishment of Ulster's Plantation Towns**, with Dr Brendan Scott (Historian-in-Residence, Cavan CoCo)

Wednesday 20 October: From the 1641 **Rising to the Restoration**, with Dr Robert Armstrong (TCD)

Wednesday 27 October: **The Williamite-Jacobite War**, with Professor David Hayton (QUB)

Wednesday 3 November: **Revolutionary Ulster, 1776-1801**, with Dr Andrew Holmes (QUB)

Wednesday 10 November: **The Great Famine and 19th-century politics pre-1870**, with Professor Peter Gray (QUB)

Wednesday 17 November: **Home Rule and the Road to Partition**, with Dr Eamon Phoenix

You can book online here for the full series or for individual lectures. If you prefer, you can reserve your place by email to admin@armgahrobinsonlibrary.co.uk or call 028 3752 3142.

Perspective

The time has come for us to now trigger Article 16 by Iain Duncan Smith MP

Unilateral action is needed against an intransigent EU to rectify the Northern Ireland Protocol impasse writes Iain Duncan Smith

I was always led to believe that the survival of the Union must ultimately come above all else for a Conservative government.

Yet as a result of the dangerous and deeply divisive Northern Ireland Protocol – which this Government made the mistake of signing up to – the place of Northern Ireland within the UK is looking more and more precarious. In short, as we all travel to Manchester for the first face-to-face party conference since the landslide victory in 2019, the Union has never been in greater jeopardy.

At the heart of the problem with the protocol is the EU's insistence that its law must govern goods coming in from the UK to Northern Ireland. Instead of imposing checks only on those goods that are at risk of being transported to the Irish Republic, EU negotiators have taken the unreasonable view that all goods coming into Northern Ireland are in danger of entering the EU.

The result of this ridiculous assertion is – incredibly – that there are now more checks on the trade that flows into Northern Ireland than on all the trade which comes through the EU's entire eastern frontier – a major smuggling route – or through the port of Rotterdam, the entrance into the EU for goods imported from the rest of the world.

And these pettifogging and often incomprehensible regulations are causing real harm to the Northern Ireland economy. There are frustrated pet owners needing rabies checks to move animals across the Irish Sea, and consumers are being denied favourite products because retailers cannot yet “understand the changes”. Worse, trade is being diverted from GB to the Irish Republic, in contravention of the protocol itself.

Lord Frost has tried to get the EU to see sense and be reasonable, but time and again EU negotiators have rebuffed his overtures. If anything, in fact, they have become even more intransigent, maintaining that the only alternative to the protocol is a hard border.

They say that their only agenda is to protect the Good Friday Agreement, but Lord Trimble (one of the principal architects of the GFA) has made it very clear that this is

nonsense. In fact, he has gone further, arguing that the protocol is damaging the fine balance of his agreement by antagonising Unionists.

The EU should be reminded that for Trimble, persuading the Unionist community to support the GFA was dangerous. He persevered in the hope of bringing peace to Northern Ireland and won out in the end because the Unionist population was guaranteed that the Union would be safe as long as the majority wanted to stay in the UK. For his efforts, he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998. So the fact that he believes the assurances he was given back then are now being broken by the protocol should not be taken lightly.

If EU negotiators were serious about protecting the peace in Northern Ireland, they would end the impasse with a “Mutual Enforcement” deal between Brussels and London, committing to writing that both sides will trust one another to apply the other’s rules to the movement of goods. The deal would remove any need for borders, either on the island of Ireland or in the Irish Sea, and would allow free passage without laborious paperwork and delays.

Yet even though the wording of the protocol makes clear that it is a temporary mechanism which could be replaced, the EU remains adamant that it is sacrosanct – and that renegotiation must not even be considered.

Perhaps this should come as no surprise. Ever since the Brexit referendum in 2016, the EU has made it clear that it wants to punish us for daring to take back control. From unnecessarily restrictive export rules on seafood to taking

October 4, 2021

France's side in the endless fishing rows, the bloc is doing everything in its power to make life difficult for Britain.

Lord Frost has worked very hard to find a way forward with the EU, and he should be praised for his efforts. But now it is time for a different course. Article 16 makes clear the UK can take unilateral action if there are "serious economic, societal or environmental difficulties or diversion of trade". All are now present in Northern Ireland.

I know Boris Johnson is serious about the integrity of the Union, which is why after so much EU intransigence he must bite the bullet and invoke Article 16 now, before it is too late.

Courtesy The Daily Telegraph

Poem for today

Bluebells For Love by Patrick Kavanagh

There will be bluebells growing under the big trees
And you will be there and I will be there in May;
For some other reason we both will have to delay
The evening in Dunshaughlin - to please
Some imagined relation,
So both of us came to walk through that plantation.

We will be interested in the grass
In an old bucket-hoop, in the ivy that weaves
Green incongruity among the dead leaves,

October 4, 2021

We will put on surprise at carts that pass-
Only sometimes looking sideways at the bluebells in the
plantation
And never frighten them with too wild an exclamation.

We will be wise, we will not let them guess
That we are watching the or they will pose
A mere facade like boys
Caught out in virtue's naturalness.
We will not impose on the bluebells in that plantation
Too much of our desire's adulation.

We will have other loves -or so they'll think;
The primroses or the ferns or the briars,
Or even the rusty paling wires,
Or the violets on the sunless sorrel bank.
Only as an aside the bluebells in the plantation
Will mean a thing to our dark contemplation.

We'll know love little by little, glance by glance.
Ah, the clay under these roots is so brown!
We'll steal from Heaven while God is in the town--
I caught an angel smiling in a chance
Look through the tree-trunks of the plantation
As you and I walked slowly to the station.

Speaking to the Soul

Bible verse, thought for the day and prayers - on site daily

October 4, 2021

