



## Irish presence at World Methodist Council in USA

Vice-President of the World Methodist Council (WMC), Gillian Kingston, (*right*) from the Methodist Church of Ireland, was one of three leading Methodists to contribute to the final service of the 21<sup>st</sup> World Methodist Conference, held in Houston, Texas. Speaking alongside Ms Kingston were Bishop Ivan M Abrahams, the [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

General Secretary, WMC, Methodist Church of Brazil, and JC Park, President, WMC, Korean Methodist Church.

They each shared their background and experience with the Methodist Church. The WMC was described as 80 denominations, 82 million members, and 134 countries. 'The sun never sets on the Methodist movement,' added Ms Kingston.

They shared with the gathering their hopes and perspectives on the Methodist movement today. Memorable comments included: 'We've come of age as this is the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference. What better place than Houston to celebrate, one of the most diverse cities in the world.'

'WMC has an important convening role in the Wesleyan family.'

'There is a place at the table for everyone.'

## **Thousands to attend festival of faith in Holycross Abbey**

Up to 60,000 expected to participate in the nine-day solemn novena at the 800-year-old Cistercian Abbey in Thurles Co Tipperary.

Thousands of people from all over the country will attend a nine-day festival of faith at Holycross Abbey in Co Tipperary later this week.

This year's Novena runs from Wednesday 8 September to Friday 16 September.

Visitors to this year's Solemn Novena at the 800-year-old Cistercian Abbey in Thurles Co Tipperary, will have an opportunity to be blessed with a relic believed to be of the True Cross, which is presently situated in the ancient abbey's side altar.

Helpers in the form of stewards, caterers, musicians, singers, Eucharistic ministers, Gardaí, clergy etc have been drafted in to assist with this year's enormous event, which will see over 60,000 people pass down the abbey's aisles over the coming seven days.

Speaking this week about the Novena, Holycross parish priest Fr Tom Breen said, "After some 36 years of this annual novena, people are still bringing their own 'personal crosses' to Holycross Abbey."

"Christians currently burdened in various ways through personal health issues, finance issues,



***Fr Tom Breen by Brian Arthur***

other personal problems including difficulties in personal relationships etc are all still coming to the novena, where they listen and they gain the necessary strength to continue their personal battles, while often realising, possibly for the first time, that there are many people who are much worse off than they themselves.”

“The man with no shoes very often meets the man with no feet,” stated Fr Tom.

Speaking about why people attend the novena Fr Breen said, “We are aware of people who suffer in various ways in relation to health, finance,

personal problems, relationships, but when they come to the Novena they listen and realise that there are worse off people than themselves.”

“The abbey holds 1,000 people and we have a marquee which holds another 1,000 people who don’t mind making the sacrifice of coming here every morning from 7am to attend one of the five daily sessions.”

The daily novena times are 7am; 10:30am; 4.30pm; 7.30pm; 9.30pm and the Sunday times are 7am; 10.30am; 12.30pm; 2.30pm; 7.30pm; 9.30pm.

## **Lisburn parishioners brave the shave for Macmillan**

Two parishioners of St Paul’s, Lisburn, are taking the head stagers and getting their hair shaved off to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Janet Hunter and Tina McCreedy both lost their mothers to cancer and are taking up the challenge of Macmillan’s Brave the Shave in memory of their mums.

The two ladies will be getting a number three all over on September 24 when the Head Shave

takes place in St Patrick's RC Church, Chapel Hill, Lisburn at 7pm.

Janet, who is soon to be commissioned as a Lay Reader in St Paul's, said the results of her close shave would be on display when she attends the Diocese of Connor Synod just a few days after she goes 'under the clippers!'

"I am braving the shave in memory of my mum and for all my family and friends who are fighting cancer and those in remission," Janet said.

Her mother Annie McIlwaine died on June 3 this year and Tina's mum Betty McKay died from cancer two years ago. Both were parishioners of St Paul's.

"I am nervous about doing this, but we are doing it for a good cause, and will hopefully raise lots of money to pay for a nurse to care for a family when someone has cancer," Janet said.

"We had a lot of help from Macmillan. Having lived with the day to day care of my mother with cancer I know what the nurses go through. It is horrendous, and how they keep cheerful the whole time I do not know."

Janet added: “My family think I am nuts but they are backing me 100 per cent.”

To support Janet or Tina, visit [bravetheshave.org.uk](http://bravetheshave.org.uk) and search for Janet Hunter and Tina McCready.

## **2017 Holy Land Pilgrimage launched**

On 3 September, Bishop Harold Miller joined former and prospective pilgrims in St Molua’s, Stormont, for the launch of the 2017 Holy Land Pilgrimage and an accompanying brochure. The bishop, a former pilgrim, described his trip as, “Undoubtedly one of the most wonderful experiences of my life”.

The rector of Stormont, Canon David Humphries, has been leading an annual pilgrimage for around 20 years and the Hamilton Hall was set up with an exhibition of books, artefacts and photos. Guests were also treated to a beautiful Mediterranean–style lunch prepared by ladies from the parish.

Ms Rosemary Nutt, a working Director of McCabe Travel which facilitates the pilgrimages,



flew over especially for the launch. Rosemary has been with McCabe for 20 years and as well as being responsible for Operations and Accounts, is an expert on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She showed a short film of the McCabe pilgrimage experience and described how the company works mainly with Christians in the Holy Land and, where possible, with family-run businesses. The McCabe Educational Trust also partners three organisations in the Holy Land, one of which is Jeel Al Amal Boys Home in Bethany. Every McCabe pilgrim will visit at least one of these remarkable projects as part of their itinerary.

David outlined the workings of a spiritual journey and how the Holy Land pilgrimage has impacted



the lives of so many Irish Christians. He also talked about some of the practicalities of the trip and answered questions from prospective pilgrims.

Bishop Harold related his own very positive, 'incarnational' experience of Holy Land pilgrimage led by David and McCabe Travel and officially launched the new colour brochure. The brochure explores the nature of pilgrimage and Holy Land pilgrimage in particular and it is hoped that it will encourage readers to prayerfully consider joining in the next spiritual journey.

*The leaders of the pilgrimage, Canon David Humphries and the Revd Amanda Adams, are available to talk to church groups at their weekday meetings, by arrangement. (028 9048 2292).*

## **Archbishop of Canterbury to join Pope Francis in marking 30 years since Assisi**

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, will join Pope Francis in Assisi to mark the 30th anniversary of the first World Day of Prayer in



***Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby during a private audience at the Vatican in 2013***

1986, when leaders representing 32 Christian organisations and 11 other religions converged to pray and fast together.

According to a schedule published by the Vatican, other religious leaders including Patriarch Bartholomew, Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Aphrem II, and leaders of the Muslim, Jewish and Tendai Buddhist communities are invited to Assisi on September 20 to pray for peace. The event's theme is "Thirst for Peace: Faiths and Cultures in Dialogue".

Several victims of war will join Pope Francis and the other religious leaders at a luncheon in the Franciscan friars' convent. In the afternoon, the Pope will hold private meetings with many of the religious leaders, including Archbishop Welby and the patriarchs.

Pope Francis will participate in the concluding ceremonies of a three-day event sponsored by the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio. He will also participate in an ecumenical prayer service in the lower Basilica of St Francis.

After their prayer services, the Pope and religious leaders will meet in the square outside the basilica to listen to the testimony of a victim of war, to share their thoughts about peace-making and to sign a common appeal.

## **News briefs**

**+++ Connor ordinations in Ballymena** - St Patrick's, Ballymena, was packed for a Service of Ordination of Priests in Connor Diocese on Sunday September 4. At the service, the Rev Dennis Christie was ordained to serve as curate in the Parish of Ballymena; the Rev Aaron

McAlister to serve as curate in All Saints', Antrim; and the Rev Isobel Hawthorne-Steel to serve as curate in St Paul and St Barnabas, Belfast.

Dennis served his internship in the Parish of Muckamore; Aaron in the Parish of Ballywillan (Portrush) and Isobel in the Grouped Parishes of Ahoghill and Portglenone. They were ordained on Sunday by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, who also preached.

### **+++ Inter church participation in Derry**

**ordination** - Scores of parishioners made the long journey from Newtonards to Londonderry on Sunday for the Ordination into the Priesthood of the Reverend Suzanne Cousins. The new curate's husband Alan was in the congregation in St Columb's Cathedral along with their daughter Rachel (one of the couple's three grown-up children). They were joined by members of the United Parishes of Moville, Donagh, Culdaff and Cloncha, where Rev Cousins will serve her curacy. The former primary school teacher, who grew up near Comber, in County Down, lived with her family in Newcastle. The local Rector there, Canon Ian Ellis, was one of Rev Cousins' sponsors. Prior to her ordination, Rev Suzanne served as Deacon Intern at St Mark's, Newtonards, while completing her full-time

training and formation for the priesthood. The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, led the worship at Sunday's Ordination Service. Among those who performed readings were the Minister of Glacknadrummond and Whitecastle Methodist Churches in Inishowen, the Reverend Alison Gallagher, and the Parish Priest of Moville, Fr Pat O'Hagan. The Preacher, the Rector of Newtonards, Reverend Christopher Matchett,

**+++ Clogher ordination** - On Wednesday September 7, Rev Chris MacBruithin will be ordained priest at a service in St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen beginning at 7.30pm. Mr. MacBruithin recently completed his Internship as Deacon in St Augustine's Church, Londonderry.

**+++ Derry installation** - The Rev Canon Malcolm Ferry will be installed as a Canon of St Columb's Cathedral at a Service on Thursday 8th September at 8.00pm.

**+++ Free theological journal** - The Bible Society has just sent out the latest edition of their free theological journal, [\*The Bible in Transmission\*](#), where they explore the theme of mercy with writers such as former High Court judge, Sir Jeremy Cooke and Shakespeare expert, Dr Linzy Brady. Published three times a

year, *The Bible in Transmission* covers contemporary issues with writers from across church, academic and professional backgrounds. It's all free to read, either [online](#) or as a [printed copy delivered to your door](#).

## **News links to reports on faith, politics and education**

### **Church of England gay bishop: local Anglicans split over revelation**

Belfast Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/church-of-england-gay-bishop-local-anglicans-split-over-revelation-1-7560721>

### **Gay clergy who married partners face disciplinary action**

Belfast Telegraph

Comment by Canon Ian Ellis

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/gay-clergy-who-married-partners-face-disciplinary-action-35021120.html>

### **North's top judge wants Troubles inquests fast-tracked**

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/north-s-top-judge-wants-troubles-inquests-fast-tracked-1.2780193>

## **Scheme could provide jobs for 120 newly qualified teachers**

Belfast Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/education/scheme-could-provide-jobs-for-120-newly-qualified-teachers-1-7561111>

## **Celtic Green Brigade need to learn truth about history of Palestine**

Belfast Telegraph

Ruth Dudley Edwards writes

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/ruth-dudley-edwards/celtic-green-brigade-need-to-learn-truth-about-history-of-palestine-35020707.html>

## **Titanic Belfast beats Eiffel Tower, Colosseum and Buckingham Palace as Europe's leading visitor attraction**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/titanic-belfast-beats-eiffel-tower-colosseum-and-buckingham-palace-as-europes-leading-visitor-attraction-35022109.html>

## **Scientology goes Gaelige - the church is seeking Irish translators**

Irish Examiner

Who knows, we might see Tom Cruise spreading the good **news** of Scientology in the wild and windy byways of Connemara soon, as the **church** is ...

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/scientology-goes-gaeilge--the-church-is-seeking-irish-translators-419222.html>

## **Unique church celebrates heritage**

Impartial Reporter

Leitrim, has celebrated Heritage Week in the Republic of Ireland with a ... The **Church of Ireland** parish of Lurganboy is based around the Chapel of ...

[http://www.impartialreporter.com/news/14717964.Unique\\_church\\_celebrates\\_heritage/](http://www.impartialreporter.com/news/14717964.Unique_church_celebrates_heritage/)

## **BBC/Guard/Times/Mail/ITV/Tel**

Obituaries for David Jenkins, the former Bishop of Durham who has died at the age of 91. An academic theologian, articles note his views on the virgin birth and the resurrection caused protest and considerable opposition to his appointment as Bishop of Durham. His forays into the field of politics saw attacks on both Conservative and Labour administrations for what he saw was their over-reliance on market forces.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37093551>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/04/david-jenkins-former-bishop-of-durham-dies-aged-91>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-right-rev-david-jenkins-f6vhtsc8t>



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3773755/Unbelieving-bishop-Jenkins-famed-sceptical-views-dies-aged-91-long-battle-Alzheimer-s.html>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-09-04/unbelieving-bishop-who-questioned-virgin-birth-and-resurrection-of-jesus-dies-aged-91/>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2016/09/04/the-right-reverend-david-jenkins-bishop-of-durham--obituary/>

### **Guard/Mail/Metro/Christian Today/Mail**

Further coverage of the letter written in the *Sunday Times* to the House of Bishops by C of E priests and lay members who have married their same sex partners. The *Mail* focuses on comments made by church officials condemning comments made by the Revd Colin Coward, founder of Changing Attitude, that other bishops are gay, saying the comments were irresponsible. The *Metro* reports the statement of the Global Anglican Future (Gafcon) critical of the decision to appoint Nicholas Chamberlain the Bishop of Grantham.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/03/conservative-anglicans-appointment-of-gay-bishop-a-major-error>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3773776/Church-England-condemns-gay-clerics-outed-11->

[bishops-amid-warnings-witch-hunt.html?  
ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://bishops-amid-warnings-witch-hunt.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)  
<http://metro.co.uk/2016/09/04/gay-priests-reveal-they-secretly-married-same-sex-partners-to-defy-church-of-england-6108813/>  
<http://metro.co.uk/2016/09/04/first-openly-gay-bishop-gets-bashing-from-christian-organisation-6108641/>  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3773041/Gay-clergy-call-greater-inclusion-Church-England.html>

## **Guard**

Reports that the Bishop of Grantham insisted it was “business as usual” as he held his first service since becoming the first C of E bishop to publicly declare that he is gay and in a same-sex relationship. Bishop Nicholas took a service at St Mary and St Nicolas church in Spalding, Lincolnshire yesterday. The article quotes at length from Bishop Nicholas’ sermon based on the gospel of Luke 14.25-33.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/04/business-as-usual-bishop-of-grantham-nicholas-chamberlain-gay-declaration>

## **Tel**

Further coverage of the shortage of bell-ringers. The BBC has surveyed delegates at the Central Council of Church Bell-Ringers and three quarters said it had become harder to recruit new members in the past decade, while eight in 10 said it was difficult to engage under-21s.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/09/04/bell-ringer-shortage-as-youngsters-no-longer-find-hobby-appealin/>

### **Comment**

**Times:** Church will soon be reconciled to gay relationships writes Tim Montgomerie.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-church-will-soon-be-reconciled-to-gay-relationships-6zfrhj8cl>

### **Letters**

**Guardian:** Church's long history of closet relations.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/04/churchs-long-history-of-closet-relations>

**Independent:** Gay bishops must be welcomed if the Church wants to stay relevant.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/gay-bishops-must-be-embraced-if-churches-want-to-stay-relevant-a7225136.html>

## **Blogs**

**Law and Religion:** Round up 4<sup>th</sup> September  
<http://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2016/09/04/law-and-religion-round-up-4th-september/>

**Michael Sadgrove:** David Jenkins in memoriam  
<http://northernwoolgatherer.blogspot.co.uk/2016/09/bishop-david-jenkins-in-memoriam-with.html?sref=tw>

**Nigel Harris** (Tearfund CEO): Open hands of love  
[http://www.tearfund.org/en/2016/09/open\\_hands\\_of\\_love/](http://www.tearfund.org/en/2016/09/open_hands_of_love/)

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