

Three candidates for next Presbyterian Moderator

The election of the next Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland will take place on Tuesday 6th February when the Church's 19 presbyteries will meet separately across Ireland to choose a new Moderator for 2018/2019 from a list of three names, which have been announced yesterday.

The ministers - who have agreed to have their names go forward to become the denomination's next principal public representative - are Rev. Brian Boyd of Kells and Eskylane, Rev. William Henry of Maze Presbyterian Church and Rev. Charles McMullen of Bangor West.

Explaining the process, Rev. Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland said that the Church's 19 presbyteries will meet



Rev. Brian Boyd B.Sc., B.D.

at different locations around Ireland on Tuesday, February 6, to prayerfully consider the three ministers on the short list and select the next Moderator.

“There is a wonderful rhythm to the life of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the first Tuesday in February is the first key event of the year for us, as ministers and elders from our 535 congregations across Ireland meet in their respective Presbyteries to nominate our next Moderator.



Rev. William John Henry B.Sc., B.D.

“The vote in each presbytery is by simple majority. This means that whoever receives the most votes within a particular presbytery receives the single vote of that presbytery. The minister who receives the majority of these votes from the 19 presbyteries, becomes our Moderator-Designate until their formal nomination and election as Moderator by the General Assembly in June,” Mr Gribben said.

Should there be a tie in the number of presbytery votes received on the first count, which



Rev. Charles McMullen, M.A., M. Litt., B.D.

happened in 2014, presbyteries will continue to meet that night until one minister is clearly ahead.

Starting in June, having chaired or ‘moderated’ the General Assembly, the Moderator will have a busy year preaching most Sundays in congregations across Ireland, encouraging them in their work and witness during three week-long presbytery tours, while undertaking an overseas tour. The Moderator will also chair a number of the Church’s councils and represent the denomination at various public and State events.

But as Rev. Trevor Gribben explained, the Moderator will not be the head of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, “Our constitution clearly states that ‘The Lord Jesus Christ is the sole King and Head of the Church...’ so the Moderator, whoever they are, is not the ‘head of the church’, but our most senior office bearer and principal public representative.

“As such they play an important role in the life and ministry of the Church across Ireland and further afield and I look forward to working with our new Moderator in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ,” Mr Gribben said.

Rev. Brian Boyd B.Sc., B.D.

Brian Boyd has been minister of Kells and Eskylane since 1992. Born in 1959, he was ordained as assistant in High Kirk Presbyterian, Ballymena in 1986 and installed two years later a minister of Culnady and Swatragh. Brian convened the Alcohol and Drug Education Committee from 1997 to 2000.

Rev. William John Henry B.Sc., B.D.

William Henry was ordained as assistant in Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church in 1994 and installed as the minister of Maze Presbyterian in 1997 and with Ballinderry (Stated Supply) in 2001. Born in 1968 William was convener of the

Home and Irish Mission/Strategy for the Mission Committee 2006-2012 and Union Commission 2012-2015 convening its successor body, the Linkage Commission, from 2015 to the present.

Rev. Charles McMullen, M.A., M. Litt., B.D.

Charles McMullen was ordained as assistant minister in Harmony Hill, Lisburn, in 1988 and was installed as minister of Legacurry Presbyterian Church in 1991. Born in 1960, he has been minister of West Church, Bangor since 1999. Charles convened the Magee Fund Scheme Committee from 1993 to 2000, National and International Problems Committee from 1993 to 1997 and Global Concerns Committee from 2005 to 2010.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has over 225,000 members belonging to 535 congregations across 19 presbyteries throughout Ireland which are regional supervisory church bodies made up of a minister and an elder from each congregation in that particular area. The Presbytery of Monaghan and the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster are located in the Republic of Ireland, while the Presbytery of Derry and Donegal is cross border, with congregations located in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Irish Presbyterianism has its origins in Scottish migrations to Ulster in the early 17th Century. Ballycarry Presbyterian Church in County Antrim is the oldest congregation dating back to 1613. The newest, Donabate Presbyterian Church in County Dublin, opened its doors in 2010. In 1840 two Presbyterian Churches, the General Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod formed the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, with Rev. Dr. Samuel Hanna elected as Moderator of the new church.

4 Corners Feast fund raising for lives transformed by organ donations

The 4 Corners Feast, now in its 6th year, will once again be a partnership between the *4 Corners Festival* and the *Lord Mayor of Belfast*. The aim of this special meal has been to honour and acknowledge people who, often out of the public eye, have made a significant impact on the life of our city and beyond. This year's banquet, on Tuesday, 6th February in Belfast City Hall, will focus on those whose lives have been transformed through organ donation, either as donors or recipients.

A spokesperson for 4 Corners said, “We hope to provide our guests with a memorable evening of lovely food prepared by *Root Soup* (a social enterprise that involves people who have learning difficulties and people who are homeless working together to learn and grow, part of an overall ‘field to fork’ initiative) along with contributions by local musicians and opportunities to meet new friends and hear life transforming stories.

“The cost to sponsor one 4 course meal is £20. (To sponsor half a table, it is £100 or a full table is £200). However, any contribution towards this special banquet will be deeply appreciated.

Contributions to the 4 Corners Feast can be made by way of the following:

- Through [our Just Giving page](#)
- Transfer into 4 Corners Festival Account 60125628 (Sort Code 950679) reference ‘Banquet’
- Cheque to ‘Four Corners Festival’ and posted to: 4 Corners Festival, c/o Clonard Monastery, 1 Clonard Gardens, Belfast BT13 2RL

Taoiseach to give main address at Holocaust commemoration

Taoiseach [Leo Varadkar](#) will deliver the keynote address at next Sunday's National Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration in Dublin's Mansion House, Patsy McGarry reports in The Irish Times.

The event has taken place annually since 2000, when [Ireland](#) signed an international agreement to commit to remembrance of the Holocaust.

It takes place in Dublin on the last Sunday in January, close to the date when the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps in [Poland](#) were liberated by Soviet forces on January 27th, 1945.

Also taking part this year will be Lord Mayor of Dublin [Cllr](#) Mícheál Mac Donncha and Minister for Justice [Charlie Flanagan](#).

As part of the ceremony six candles are lit for the six million Jewish people who perished in the Holocaust as well as candles for other victim groups murdered by the Nazis because of their ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliations or their religious beliefs. There are



The Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps in Poland were liberated by Soviet forces on January 27th, 1945.

also readings, including survivors' recollections, and music.

More than 100 pupils from Stratford College, Dublin; St Aloysius' College in Carrigtohill, Co Cork; St Dominic's College, [Ballyfermot](#), Dublin, and St Gerald's College, [Castlebar](#), Co [Mayo](#), will take part in the ceremony with 12 pupils reading from the scroll of names, an Irish memorial to family members of people living in Ireland who were murdered in the Holocaust.

In attendance this year too will be Holocaust survivors [Suzi Diamond](#), [Tomi Reichental](#), and [Jan Kaminski](#). Suzi Diamond was deported to

Bergen-Belsen concentration camp on the last transport of Jews to leave [Budapest](#) in [Hungary](#).

She and her brother Terry survived and were brought to Ireland by Dr [Bob Collis](#), who arranged for them to be adopted by a Jewish couple in Dublin. Recently she learned her father died as a slave labourer in the [Soviet Union](#) and discovered living family members in Hungary and the US, having believed for most of her life that she was the only Holocaust survivor in her family.

Tomi Reichental was a child in Bergen-Belsen. He is from Piestany in [Slovakia](#) and was nine years old when the Nazis deported him with his mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin and brother to the concentration camp. He lost 35 members of his family in the Holocaust. He came to Ireland in 1960.

Jan Kaminski, from Balgoraj in Poland, escaped a round-up of the Jews and in 1942 when aged 10 and fled into the forest. He spent the war on the run while his entire family perished.

He now lives in Dublin and his personal testimony will be delivered by his daughter Jadzia Kaminska on Sunday.

Archbishop Eamon Martin welcomes Pope Francis' message for World Communications Day 2018

On 24 January, the feast of Saint Francis de Sales, Pope Francis published his message for World Communications Day 2018 on the theme, “‘The truth will set you free” (Jn 8:32). Fake news and journalism for peace’.

In his message, Pope Francis called for ‘a journalism that is truthful and opposed to falsehoods, rhetorical slogans, and sensational headlines. A journalism created by people for people, one that is at the service of all, especially those – and they are the majority in our world – who have no voice.’

Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and chair of the Bishops' Council for Communications, welcomed Pope Francis' message saying, ‘This year's theme is particularly relevant in this era of social media and digital communications where we now live.’

‘All of us need to ask ourselves “what is ‘fake news’?”. This is a very important question for



each of us to reflect on. Pope Francis tells us “fake news” is “false but believable news” that is sensational and often goes viral. It is the “spreading of disinformation online or in the traditional media” “based on non-existent or distorted data meant to deceive and manipulate the reader”. It seeks to “advance specific goals, influence political decisions, and serve economic interests”.

Archbishop Martin continued, ‘In his own words, Pope Francis tells us we can “rediscover the truth when we experience it within ourselves in the loyalty and trustworthiness of the One who loves us” and we can recognise the truth of

statements from their fruits – whether they provoke arguments and cause division or promote informed mature dialogue and discussion with friends, family, colleagues and loved ones.

He tells us: “Informing others means forming others; it means touching peoples’ lives”. ‘The Holy Father describes the work of journalists as not just a job but a mission. He is inviting everyone to promote a “journalism of peace” – journalism that is truthful, and opposed to falsehoods, rhetorical slogans, and sensational headlines. He says journalists are the “protectors of news” with a responsibility to expose the truth at all times and hold people to account.’

Archbishop Martin concluded, ‘Today our world is rich in communications resources and our era is often described as the age of “democratic journalism”. The way we express ourselves has changed radically and we can now share our ideas on a multiplicity of platforms. There is great potential in social media to communicate the truth of the Gospel on the “digital highways”. It is important that we do so with compassion and love – otherwise, as Saint Paul warns, we will come across like “a gong booming” or “a cymbal clashing”! The Good News, spoken in

love, will enhance, not destroy, the life of the Church and of society. In the coming months, as we reflect on the message of Pope Francis, I encourage Catholics and all people of goodwill to consider how we can be more authentic, active and “truth-full” witnesses in the new digital world.’

World Communications Day will be celebrated on Sunday 13 May, Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. The full text of Pope Francis’ message can be found on www.catholicbishops.ie.

Conversation café feature of first ever Church of Ireland Youth Forum

Young people from throughout the Church of Ireland converged on the City North Hotel, near Dublin, on Saturday (January 20) for the first ever Church of Ireland Youth Forum.

Organised by the Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD), the forum was attended by young representatives and youth leaders from almost every diocese. The event was officially opened by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, who also launched CIYD’s Lent resource, Fuel.



Some of the young diocesan representatives at the Church of Ireland Youth Forum explain their ideas for church design to the youth leaders.

Throughout the day young people debated issues affecting them and looked at ways of encouraging and supporting youth participation. They also looked at ways of facilitating change and taking action as well as how young people could be supported on their spiritual journeys. They were facilitated by Captain Nic Sheppard of Church Army and Mrs Sally Sheppard who ran an engaging and interesting programme.



CIYD staff Barbara Swann, Simon Henry and Steve Grasham with the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, at the first Church of Ireland Youth Forum.

Launching Fuel, Archbishop Clarke said that the Lent resource asked the questions: “What does God want of me?” and “How does God want to use me?”

“The word of God is often driving us out into the world. Very often today we ask ‘What use is this to me?’ but the word of God should drive us out into the world and allow us to ask ‘What use am I to God?’,” the Archbishop said.

Archbishop Clarke said that Lent could be seen as a time for getting rid of things. “Lent for us is about getting rid of what we do not need and,

more importantly, getting rid of what we are not – the pretence and the emphasis on the image we want to project to others. That is not what the Gospel is about. Rather we should focus on being ourselves because it is by being ourselves that God can work with us.

“Fuel brings us through the Gospel of John which all the time is asking us to dig deeper. It helps to use the Scriptures and dig deeper with yourself and Jesus Christ. It invites you to pray and ask questions of God and of yourself. As you go through this you will be leaving behind what you do not need and what you are not,” he stated.

National Youth Officer with CIYD, Simon Henry, said the Youth Forum provided an exciting opportunity to bring young people together for the first time. He added that it was a pilot project and he, Steve Grasham and Barbara Swann of CIYD hoped it would develop further.

Throughout the day, under the stewardship of Nic and Sally, the young people engaged in fun games and serious discussions. As part of the a ‘conversation café’ they debated a number of questions looking at what is good about young people getting together and what makes it harder or easier for that to happen. They talked

about the big issues of concern for young people and about their priorities. They then looked at their own spiritual journeys and what they had found exciting and inspiring, difficult and helpful and what they gained from being part of a church community.

As the forum drew to a close the young diocesan representatives spoke about what they would like to see for their church. Among their aspirations were greater equality in the church, involvement of young people in church services, a church beyond walls, provision for people with disabilities, welcome for groups on the fringes, ways for young people to express their faith, increased variety and spread for youth groups, all age sermons, greater use of technology and more leadership opportunities for young people.

More photos from the Youth Forum are available [here](#).

Diocesan Youth Officer for Cork commissioned

On Sunday, 21st January, Hilda Connolly was commissioned as the new Diocesan Youth Officer in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. The commissioning by the Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, took place at a



The Connolly family with Bishop Colton

special Service in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork. People from all over the Diocese, including large numbers of young people, youth workers, clergy and readers, were present and took part.

Hilda Connolly lives in Clonakilty, County Cork, with her husband, Kevin, and they have two

sons. Hilda says: 'Being surrounded by males can be very chaotic and crazy at times but it's a lovely change having come from a family of 4 sisters and 1 brother! For the past 3 years, I have had the pleasure of being part of our young people's lives as their Youth Development Officer in West Cork on a part-time basis. I also worked alongside the Cork Diocesan Youth Council on many events throughout the three years. This enabled me to build up a good relationship with the youth and to discover what their needs were. It has been and very fulfilling and amazing time.'

In January 2018, I was appointed to a full-time position as Diocesan Youth Officer for Cork, Cloyne and Ross. Because of my previous role I have made great connections with clergy, youth leaders, parents and young people which will hopefully help me to carry out what I hope to achieve in this new post.

Preaching at the Service, the Bishop emphasised that the appointment of a youth officer does not let everyone else in the Diocese 'off the hook' in relation to youth work. He said: 'In commissioning Hilda for this work as Diocesan Youth Officer we are not handing over responsibility for all youth work to her. She is not to be a dumping ground for our fears, laziness, or inadequacies, such as they may or may not

be, in the area of youth work. Her appointment and commissioning does not let us all off the hook: me as Bishop, clergy and lay people in parishes, chaplaincies and institutions throughout the Diocese.

‘Hilda is not the youth worker for every parish to do for you what you should be doing yourselves. And that begs a question of all of us; what are we doing ourselves? What are you doing in your neck of the woods? What are we investing in terms of time and resources in youth work?’

During the Service, readings and prayers were read by young people from the Diocese. Representatives of the Cork Diocesan Youth Council brought forward symbols of youth ministry and presented them to Hilda as part of her commissioning: a Bible, a cross, a map of the Diocese, the Cork Diocesan Youth Council logo, an emblem of our times (a mobile phone), and the Diocesan report Charting a Future with Confidence.

C of I Biblical Association launched its Bible studies for Lent 2018

The Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland (BACI) has launched its Bible studies for Lent 2018 with the focus this year being on mission.



Philip McKinley, Barbara Bergin, the Revd Dr William Olhausen, Archbishop Michael Jackson, Archbishop Richard Clarke, Canon Dr Ginnie Kennerley and Canon Paul Houston at the launch of BACI's 2018 Lent studies.

“As the Father sent me, so I send you” has been designed to foster a biblical approach to the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion. It consists of five Bible studies from five different people.

The Five Marks of Mission were formulated in the Anglican Communion in 1984 and have been emphasised in the Church of Ireland in recent years. The five studies focus in turn on the Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform, Treasure aspects of mission, moving from the teaching and pastoral

care required after initial conversion to the wider social and environmental challenges of the Gospel. The writers are the Revd Jack Kinhead, the Revd Lesley Robinson, Mr Philip McKinley, Canon Paul Houston and Mr David Ritchie of the RCB.

The Lent studies were launched in Church House, Dublin, yesterday (Tuesday January 23) by Archbishop Michael Jackson who has put the Marks of Mission at the centre of the United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough's discipleship programme, Come&C.

The Archbishop thanked the studies' editor, Canon Dr Ginnie Kennerley, for the way the work is presented and commended BACI's work in bringing the Bible to the centre of life in the Church of Ireland.

He said that the invitation to go and make disciples is not just an invitation to go and recruit members – "It is about affirming people who are already doing good and interesting and Godly things".

Archbishop Jackson drew out some of the nuggets contained in the Bible studies. Under the heading of Tell he said one of the important questions raised is how the Church of Ireland would cope with a plentiful harvest, a question



Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland

he suggested that is not often asked. The Teach study highlights the importance of both instruction and modelling and looks at the holistic aspect of teaching.

The Tend study looks at the wider responsibility and individual commitment that need to come together and the concept of praying for and contributing to the flourishing of the city we are in. The study looks at pilgrims, refugees and migrants but also people who are moving through a consumer society and also looks at tending the self.

The Transform study makes a plea for Christian engagement in politics and the Archbishop said that Christians are encouraged not to sidestep the political world and also to seek ways of being in solidarity with others.

Archbishop Jackson said that the Treasure study looks at the connection between theology and ecology. “It is very important for us in the Church of Ireland to have this articulated by the Chief

Officer,” he stated citing the chilling phrase used by Mr Ritchie that we are “chipping away at the goodness of the Earth”. He said the study highlights our theological responsibility but also the need for a reversal of expectations whereby we walk or cycle where we would formally have driven.

“Each of these studies draws in reflection, Scripture, commentary and prayer so as to comprehensively engage with the Five Marks of Mission ... The Marks of Mission are not exclusive of each other. In doing one you might be doing two or three. Mission is exciting. It is also an intrinsic part of our relationship with our neighbour,” he concluded.

Chairman of BACI, the Revd Dr William Olhausen, also thanked Canon Kennerley and all the BACI committee and contributors for their work on the studies. He said that each year BACI aims to engage the Church with more relevant studies and get more people involved. He said that the studies alert people to the broad canvas of what mission is and added that there is something for everyone in them.

Copies of BACI’s Lent 2018 studies are available at £2.25 or €2.50 each and are obtainable from the larger cathedral bookshops or by post from

the Book Well in Belfast or Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland treasurer Barbara Bergin in Dublin berginba@gmail.com.

The Great British (Antrim) Bake off between the curate and the Vicar!

All Saints' Parish Church, Antrim, held an alternative format of service on Sunday January 21 – a family service aimed at all members of the family and the community of faith.

There were drinks and pastries before the service which took place in the parish centre.

The informal service included well known songs from the Thanks and Praise book, an interactive Bible reading about Jonah's story, as well as a Great British (Antrim) Bake off between the curate and the Vicar! The bake off demonstrated the need to follow instructions, paralleling the bake off talk with Jonah's life which went better for him and the Ninevites once he followed God's instructions.

Feedback indicated the service had a good mix of spirituality, liturgy, music and fun.

All Saints' hopes to repeat this service in the future.

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