



Armagh choristers to give final recital of series

On Friday 15 June 2018, the Choristers of St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh will give the final

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recital in this year's series. The recital will be held at 7.30pm in the Music Hall at 9 Vicars' Hill, Armagh.

Director of Music, Dr Stephen Timpany, said, "Members of the Choir will perform a variety of instrumental, vocal and choral items from a wide range of styles. They include classical to popular, with music by Handel, Joseph Corfe and Eric Clapton." He continued, "Our Choristers are a group of very talented musicians, most often heard singing sacred music in the Cathedral. This end of year concert will showcase their many musical talents in the less formal setting of the Music Hall. It is sure to be a memorable evening which should last around forty-five minutes."

As with all the recitals in this series, admission is free, with a retiring collection towards the further endowment of the Cathedral choir through the Archbishop's Choir Fund. Dr Timpany and members of the Choir thank the recitalists who took part throughout the year, as well as the audience who support the Choir in this way. Planning is underway for a new recital series which will begin in the autumn.

'New-look' Presbyterian General Assembly opens next week

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland will have a 'new look' to it when it gathers in Belfast on Monday (June 4) for its annual weeklong meeting. The decision making body of the all island church – the largest Protestant denomination in Northern Ireland – will discuss a number of major issues facing the Church and society, including assisted suicide and euthanasia, climate change, the political stagnation in Northern Ireland and the recent

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referendum on the Eighth Amendment in the Republic of Ireland. The Assembly will also focus on the central calling of the Church – to proclaim and live out the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in a needy world.

In discussing these and other issues, the Church has introduced a number of significant changes this year to the times that it meets and its membership, to make the Assembly more accessible.

Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rev. Trevor Gribben said, “The changes are not cosmetic, but a genuine attempt to make our debates and decision-making more accessible to those entitled to attend, especially for church elders who have other commitments during the day, which is why we have introduced later evening sittings.

“Another significant change means that for the first time churches can send an additional member of their congregation, aged 30 or under, to sit and deliberate. As we discuss major issues facing both the Church and society, we hope these changes will enable more people to come and younger voices to be heard,” he said.

The General Assembly is the principal decision-making body of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. From its oldest congregation in Ballycarry in County Antrim to its newest in Donabate in County Dublin established nearly 400 years later in 2010, around 1,000 ministers and elders from the Church’s 500-plus congregations across Ireland will come together for a week of fellowship, worship, prayer, Bible study, celebration and debate.

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Monday's Opening Night will see invited civic dignitaries and corresponding church representatives from denominations at home and overseas witness the formal election and installation of Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen, minister of West Church in Bangor, County Down, as the new Moderator of the General Assembly.

Rev. Trevor Gribben explained that business before the Assembly is contained in the '*Blue Book*', which this year includes reports from the Church's 124 councils, committees, panels and task groups, which have led to around 100 resolutions.

"Decisions that we take next week will set the direction for the life and ministry of the Church over the coming year and beyond, and this year we have some significant reports and resolutions. The report on Climate Change, for example, develops a biblical position on its causes and effects while setting out seven principles of being good stewards of God's creation. It also looks at what practical action and lifestyle choices can be made by churches and our members to be good stewards," Mr. Gribben said.

"Along with a range of in house and routine business, we will also discuss a major report on euthanasia and assisted suicide, asking the General Assembly to strongly oppose the introduction of either, while calling on governments to ensure the adequate resourcing of research and delivery of palliative care."

The Clerk of the General Assembly said that it will also discuss education in Northern Ireland, in particular the low morale and sense of disillusionment felt amongst school

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governors, principals and teachers caused by the ongoing political uncertainty and financial situation. The ongoing political stagnation in Northern Ireland will feature, as will the new generic model for hospital chaplaincy in Northern Ireland, which is being proposed by some health trusts. Members will also discuss the recent referendum on abortion in the Republic of Ireland.

Trevor Gribben also said that a number of doctrinal papers will be brought to the Assembly, including one on the Church's participation in multi-faith events. PCI's memberships of inter-church groups will also be discussed, the amalgamations of some congregations and its relationship with other denominations, including the Church of Scotland.

The role that Religious Education plays in the spiritual, moral and intellectual development of children and young people will also be on the agenda, as will the under provision of services for young people with a learning disability after they are 19.

Outside of the general debate and discussion that takes place, on Wednesday (June 6) **the new Moderator, Dr. McMullen**, will lead the traditional Wednesday Evening Celebration, which is open to all. Themed 'Building Relationships' the speaker will be the developer of the popular Christianity Explored course, the Rev Rico Tice, senior minister (evangelism) at All Souls, Langham Place in London.

“As part of society and an integral part of community life in our cities, towns and villages across Ireland, our churches

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work and witness in a changing and more secular society. This obviously has its challenges and we will discuss and pray about many of them next week,” explained Mr. Gribben. “The local congregation is the key and the vital mission unit of PCI, where ordinary Christians share the Good News of Jesus Christ with their neighbours, in both word and deed.

“Our situation in this changing world and the mission of our Church is simply encapsulated in one of the reports before us next week. Comments by one observer summed it up in just in four simple words: ‘Difficult task - Active hope’. We need to accept and manage both realities, built first and foremost in the hope that we have in Jesus Christ and as beacons of His light.”

Dr. McMullen’s installation service as Moderator on Monday evening is open to the public and will be broadcast live on BBC Radio Ulster 1341 Medium Wave from 7pm. The installation and most of the other public sessions will be streamed live at www.presbyterianireland.org. You can also follow a live Twitter feed @pciassembly using the hashtag #PCIGA18. Business commences at 10.30am on Tuesday June 5 and will close on Friday, June 8 at 1.30pm.

Iona Community nears 'Miracle in May'

The Iona Community is making a final push to raise £300,000 this month, which could enable it to complete work on accommodation at its historic abbey early.

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The Community tweeted yesterday that it was ‘so near’ to the target of its Miracle in May appeal.

The money is needed to reconfigure the accommodation in the Abbey. Combined with what the Community calls ‘another very significant contribution we are hopeful of securing in the near future’, the £300,000 would enable the Community to complete the work at the Abbey a year earlier than planned.

The works form part of a £2.5 million project addressing issues around the Abbey’s accessibility, flexibility and sustainability. The work includes new access and doors, installation of a lift, improvements to the kitchen and refectory, new toilets and showers, reconfiguration of bedrooms, improved lighting and insulation and a new heating system.

The Iona Community was founded in 1938 by the Rev George MacLeod, who took unemployed craftsmen to Iona

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to rebuild the medieval abbey. The new work is hoped to make the accommodation for visitors and staff fit for the 21st century.

The appeal states: “These improvements will enable the Iona Community to provide facilities which match our hospitality. They will also enable us to extend the guest season, to welcome more people and to improve financial sustainability across the organisation.”

[Donate here.](#)

*In its report to last week’s Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Iona Community stated that its Leader, Dr Michael Marten, had stepped down two years earlier than planned. Former leader Kathy Galloway and Caro Smyth, a former Convener of the Community’s Council, have been appointed as joint leaders.

New novel on the Preacher and the Prelate explores Achil in raw famine times

Irish Author Patricia Byrne has launched her latest novel ‘The Preacher and the Prelate: The Achill Mission Colony and the Battle for Souls in Famine Ireland’ this week. The book, which is published by Merrion Press, got its official Limerick launch in O’Mahony’s on Thursday, May 24.

Speaking at the launch, Patricia Byrne said, “Researching and writing this book took five years of my life. It was an obsession really for those five years. The story is raw, tempestuous, tragic and trauma-filled. It is the story of one man’s attempt to transform an island”

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Revd Canon Prof Patrick Comerford, Author Patricia Byrne and Mary Coll at the book launch of Patricia's newest book *The Preacher and the Prelate* at O'Mahonys Booksellers, Limerick, Thursday, May 24, 2018.

Limerick poet and playwright Mary Coll launched the book, while Achill expert Reverend Canon Patrick Comerford also spoke at the launch.

'The Preacher and the Prelate' tells the extraordinary story of an audacious fight for souls on famine-ravaged Achill Island during the nineteenth century. The flood of hostility between Edward Nangle and John MacHale exposes the fault-lines of religion, society and politics in nineteenth-century Ireland.

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Patricia Byrne is a Mayo-born writer who lives in Limerick, Ireland. Byrne writes narrative nonfiction and personal essays and is a graduate of the NUI Galway writer programme. Her first novel 'The Veiled Woman of Achill: Island Outrage and a Playboy Drama' was published by The Collins Press in 2012 to great acclaim. Byrne's work has featured in New Hibernia Review, The Irish Times 'Irish Woman's Diary', Sunday Miscellany, Irish Story and a range of other outlets.

For more on Patricia Byrne, go [here](#). To purchase 'The Preacher and The Prelate', go [here](#). Report courtesy of ilovelimerick.

News briefs and vacancies

+++ MUSIC IN DERRY ON SUNDAY

Service of Choral Eucharist at 11.00am. Music is by Richard Shephard (Wiltshire Service) and César Franck (Panis Angelicus).

Then at the earlier time of 3.00pm, the George Cross Service follows a special order, with music from the Royal Ulster Constabulary GC Male Voice Choir and the Britannia Concert Band.

+++SAYING GOODBYE SERVICE

There's a special service in Belfast for anyone who has lost a baby. The Saying Goodbye Service will take place at St Anne's Cathedral on Sunday, June 3, at 3.30pm. The service is for anyone who has lost a baby in pregnancy, at birth, or in early years.

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+++CASHEL CONFIRMATION GARDEN PARTY

Were you confirmed since 2006 in this Diocese? If so, you are invited to a garden party at the Bishop's House in Kilkenny on Saturday, 15th September, 2018 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Bishop Michael Burrows is holding this party for all people who have been confirmed by him since he became Bishop in summer 2006. You can bring a guest to join in this social occasion with you. Anyone who has been confirmed and is still under 18 years of age must bring an adult with them, of course. RSVP to bishopmichaelcelebration@gmail.com or through your rector. Parents and guardians of under 18's are asked to RSVP on their behalf.

+++MORNING SERVICE FROM BROUGHSHANE

BBC Radio Ulster's Morning Service on Sunday, 17th June, will be broadcast from St Patrick's Church, Skerry, Broughshane, and conducted by the rector, the Revd Dr Andrew Campbell.

+++MORNING SERVICE FROM PORTSTEWART

BBC Radio Ulster's Morning Service on Sunday, 1st July, will be broadcast from Church of St John the Baptist, Agherton, Portstewart, and conducted by the rector, the Revd Canon Stephen Fielding. The programme will be broadcast at 10.15am

+++CARE WORKER VACANCY

At Belfast Central Mission. Carrying out a range of duties within the day-to-day programme of Care for the Elderly and in so doing, affording care and comfort to the personal needs and safety of residents as required.

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[https://www.communityni.org/job/care-worker-level-2?
utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter](https://www.communityni.org/job/care-worker-level-2?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)

+++YOUTH PASTOR VACANCY

The Parish of Kill O' The Grange is looking for a full time Youth Pastor. If you are interested and for more information contact the office at office@kotg.ie or visit our website www.kotg.ie

+++PASTORAL ASSISTANT

The Church of Ireland Parish of Knockbreda, Belfast, seeks to appoint a Pastoral Assistant to be responsible for youth and family outreach ministry. Salary circa £11,700 (part-time, 20 hours) plus expenses. Details and an application pack can be obtained by contacting the rector, Revd Bill Press, by email on: billclaire.press@gmail.com Closing date for applications: Wednesday 13 June 2018

+++FEMALE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY WORKER

Love for Life requires a Full Time Permanent Female School and community worker. Working as part of a committed and motivated team, travelling across Northern Ireland and beyond, you will have the opportunity to impact the lives of over 40 000 young people annually with positive, value-rich Relationships and Sexuality Education. You will work across a wide variety of contexts including schools, churches, youth groups and statutory organisations to develop and deliver excellent, age and context appropriate programmes that engage young people and equip them to value themselves, relationships and sex. For application forms and further information please contact:

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Love for Life, 6 Banbridge Road, Waringstown, BT66 7QA

Phone: 028 38 820 555 or e-mail: info@loveforlife.org.uk

This vacancy is only open to female applicants. This is because being female is a genuine occupational qualification of the post in accordance with article 10(2)(e) of the sex discrimination (NI) order 1976. Applications must be returned to Love for Life no later than noon on Wednesday 13th June 2018. It is anticipated that interviews will be held the week beginning 25th June.

+++EVENTS AND OFFICE MANAGER

New Irish Arts is recruiting for an Events & Office Manager to cover a period of maternity leave of up to 12 months from August / September 2018. This exciting role will involve the successful candidate overseeing the administration of the office of New Irish Arts and playing a key role in organising events on both a large and small scale. The hours of work will normally be 35 hours per week, although certain busier times around major events may require additional hours and there may be an opportunity to take time off in lieu of additional hours worked during less intense periods in the organisation's calendar. The post is based in the New Irish Arts office in Newtownards.

However, there may be some flexibility to work from home by negotiation. Salary will be negotiable and dependent upon the range of experience and skills that the successful candidate will bring to the role. The nature of the post and the context in which it is carried out dictate that it is an occupational requirement that the post-holder is a committed Christian, subscribing to the Statement of Faith of New Irish Arts. Please email office@newirisharts.com for a job description, person specification and application

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form. Please note that CVs will not be considered. Closing date for applications – Monday June 4, 2018, 5PM. <http://www.newirisharts.com/news.aspx?id=103418>

+++SCRIPTURE UNION - ITS YOUR MOVE

Have you seen SU 'It's your move' excellent booklet to give y6 leavers from the local church - <http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/ItsYourMove/112817.id> the website has a resource pack of talks/ideas free to download

