



C of I members to meet Royal Wedding Preacher during USA visit

The Episcopal Diocese of Albany will celebrate its 150th Anniversary at this year's Annual Convention this month.



Albany is linked to the Diocese of Down and Dromore. An

invitation is always extended to clergy and lay people from Down and Dromore. Joining Bishop Harold and Mrs Liz Miller this year are: Capt Gary Roberts (Church Army) and his wife Angela (Newry); Revd Adrian Green and his wife Linda (Mount Merrion), Revd Myrtle Morrison and Dr Alison

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Troughton (St Saviour's), Revd Andrew Irwin (Donaghacloy), Mrs June Butler (MU Diocesan President), Linda Abwa and her 2 children (CMSI), Hugh Crookshanks and Jolly Cherian (Drumbo).

This year the diocese will welcome for the first time, the church's Presiding Bishop, the Most Reverend Michael Curry (right)



Bishop Curry has become a well-known figure in the UK after preaching at the recent Royal Wedding.

In a letter to his diocese, the Bishop of Albany, The Rt Revd Bill Love said: "While much has changed these past 150 years, the one thing that has remained constant is the solid foundation upon which the Diocese is laid – Jesus Christ! It is only fitting that the theme for this year's 150th Diocesan Convention is: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever!" (Hebrews 13:8)."

The Albany Diocesan family plus guests will gather at beautiful Camp of the Woods in Speculator, NY from Friday 8 – Sunday 10 June for a weekend of worship, diocesan business, seminars and fellowship.

Presbyterian Moderator installed as General Assembly gets underway

The Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen, minister of West Church in Bangor, was installed last night as the new Moderator of the General Assembly.

The 179th Moderator since 1840, Dr. McMullen will be the 173rd person to hold the office – and the fifth Moderator to come from a congregation in the County Down town. Speaking ahead of this evening's service, Dr. McMullen said that it still seemed “a little surreal, but I am deeply honoured and humbled to be embarking on this new phase of my ministry, one that I had never expected.”

The Omagh born minister continued, “Throughout my life the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been a sacred place of unnumbered blessings. It has given me the sheer joy and enduring friendship of so many sisters and brothers in Christ. I look forward to being able to represent the Church over the forthcoming year and would genuinely appreciate the prayers of people up and down the length of Ireland for this week and for the coming months beyond.”

Throughout the week, the General Assembly will discuss a number of major issues facing the Church and society. These include assisted suicide and euthanasia, climate change, the political stagnation in Northern Ireland and the recent 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.

The principal decision-making body of the Church will see around 1,000 ministers and elders from the Church's 500-plus congregations across Ireland come together for a week of fellowship, worship, prayer, Bible study, celebration and debate.

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On Wednesday Dr. McMullen will lead the traditional 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.

In an attempt to make its debates and decision-making more accessible to those entitled to attend, later evening sittings have been introduced. 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.

Rev. Trevor Gribben, The Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland said that, "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."

Rev. Trevor Gribben explained that business before the Assembly includes reports from the Church's 124 councils, committees, panels and task groups, which have led to around 100 resolutions.

"As part of society and an integral part of community life in our cities, towns and villages across Ireland, we 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 this week," explained Mr. Gribben.



Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen

Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen has been minister of West Church, Bangor in County Down, Northern Ireland since 1999. He was born in Omagh, County Tyrone in 1960 and attended Omagh County Primary School and Omagh Academy, where he was Head Boy. Along with his family he worshipped at the town's Trinity Presbyterian Church.

With a lifelong interest in languages he graduated with Joint Honours in French and German from Trinity College Dublin in 1982; his MA was awarded in 1985. In 1982 he went to St. Antony's College, Oxford where he studied Modern European History and completed his Master's Degree by thesis in 1987. In the meantime (1984-1987), he attended the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Union Theological College in Belfast.

On leaving Union College he was licensed in Trinity Presbyterian, Omagh in 1987 and ordained as assistant minister in Harmony Hill, Lambeg, County Antrim in 1988. In 1991 he was called to Legacurry Presbyterian Church near Lisburn, also in County Antrim, where he was installed, becoming minister of Bangor West eight years later. The congregation was established in 1961 and has 1,100 families of around 2,700 people.

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.

By tradition, the Moderator is selected by the Church's 19 presbyteries on the first Tuesday in February. They met separately across Ireland on 6th February 2018 to choose from three nominees. Dr. McMullen was selected.

During his year in office Dr. McMullen will travel throughout Ireland and overseas to see the work and ministry of the Church and encourage its members.

Belfast hosts World Federation of Methodist Women European seminar

From 7-10th June 160 women from the British Isles and Europe will gather in Belfast for the 10th Joint European Area Seminar. This is organised by the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women. Ms Louise Wilson



from Newtownabbey is the Area President for Europe, Britain and Ireland.

Among those attending will be women from Italy, Estonia, Russia and Serbia as well as those from the Czech Republic and Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria.

The Seminar will have as its theme "Chosen People - Call to Proclaim" and among those addressing those present will be Mrs. Gillian Kingston Vice-President of the World Methodist Council and the first Lay Leader of the Conference of the Methodist in Ireland. Her theme will be "Called to Proclaim through our Relationships" in the course of which using an incident from the Book of Acts chapter 10 she will challenge those gathered to consider who are the people from a cultural or religious you have rejected and how they can now view them from God's stand point.

Matilda Johnston from the Gambia, who coordinates the organisations representatives to the United Nations,

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consulting on Woman's and Children's Work will reflect on the Sustainable Development Goals the World Federation are committed to working for. For more information on the event click [here](#).

Seagoe Youth Club in Portadown wins share of almost £6 million for the development

Seagoe Youth Club in Portadown is to share in a funding package of almost £6 million for the development of new facilities.

Ten capital schemes across Northern Ireland have been confirmed.

Collectively, they will see an investment of £5.9 million for new premises and facilities over the next number of years.

The funding is earmarked to give a boost to the voluntary youth sector and will allow all now to advance to the planning stage.

Seagoe Youth Group operates from a variety of buildings within Seagoe Parish, including the Youth Centre attached to St. Patrick's Church in the Killicomaine Estate. The Youth Group, lead by a dedicated leadership team of paid and volunteer leaders, offers youth work six evenings a week and in addition is engaged in a variety of schools projects in partnership with the EA.

The Management Committee of the Youth Group has struggled to maintain the current buildings at Killicomaine and so applied to the Department of Education for a major



works grant to improve the facilities. Various options were discussed from a major refurbishment of the complex to a complete rebuild.

Seagoe rector, Canon Terence Cadden said: “We are delighted to have received confirmation last week that we have been included in the next round

of the process, and sharing of a £5.9 million throughout Northern Ireland. Whilst plans have not been finalised, it would appear that we are most likely to be offered a complete rebuild of the complex to provide suitable accommodation for your current and future youth work in the area.

“The Management Committee of Seagoe Youth Group are looking forward to working with the Department as the plans unfold further.”

Department of Education Permanent Secretary, Derek Baker said: “Good quality youth work can significantly and positively impact on the lives of young people and make a real difference to their future.

“The Voluntary Youth Capital Scheme gives youth organisations across Northern Ireland the opportunity to improve the facilities and services they offer to young people.

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“With this in mind I have given approval to progress the first 10 voluntary youth capital projects under the current scheme through the business case, design and planning stages.

“This is good news for young people and indeed the wider communities involved.”

The timing of this grant coincides with Seagoe Youth Group’s imminent recruitment campaign for a replacement Leader in Charge due to the current Leader in Charge moving to a new post with the Education Authority.

The first Sustainable Synod

Magheralin Parish will host Down and Dromore diocese’s first ‘Sustainable Synod’ on Thursday 14 June. The parish will go ‘plastic free’ with all coffee cups, plates and cutlery used at synod made of 100% compostable and biodegradable materials from Kingdom Coffee International which is one of the UK’s leading ethical Fairtrade coffee and tea suppliers that specialises in providing compostable disposables. The cups, plates and cutlery can go directly into the green bin after use.

The Parish has been making efforts in recent years to reduce its carbon footprint. The Rectory had additional insulation and draft proofing added to save on heating bills and reduce emissions. The recently refurbished Parish church also had a new energy efficient heating system installed. The Parish is currently piloting an energy audit project, initiated by the Representative Church Body in Dublin, to see what further improvements can be made.



The Rector of Magheralin Parish, Revd Simon Genoe said, “It is a real privilege to host the diocesan synod in our recently refurbished church. The facilities, comfort and flexibility we now enjoy in our beautiful and historic building makes it possible to have these events. We’re delighted that this year will also be the first ‘sustainable synod’ for Down and Dromore.”

The ‘Sustainable Synod’ initiative follows on from a similar idea at General Synod in Armagh in May 2018.

News briefs

+++Queen’s Awards for local groups

The Britannia Concert Band is one of six organisations from County Londonderry – and almost two dozen throughout

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Northern Ireland – to have been given the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The honour, which is given to organisations rather than individuals, is equivalent to an MBE. The Churches Trust Ltd, Foyle Child Contact Centre, and Caw/Nelson Drive Action Group (all based in Derry-Londonderry), and Assistance Dogs Northern Ireland (who are based in Limavady) and Vineyard Compassion from Coleraine have also had the award conferred upon them. The Britannia Concert Band has been in existence for over 150 years and will be performing next at the St Columba's Day Service in Gartan on Sunday 10th June. Other Northern Ireland recipients of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service include the Cancer Fund for Children, Glentoran Football Club and the Ulster Aviation Society.

+++New issue Eco–Congregation Ireland newsletter

The latest edition of the Eco–Congregation Ireland newsletter highlights events, case studies and suggested activities to help parishes take a greater interest in the environment. This issue includes coverage of the Church and Society Commission's seminar on climate change, environmental initiatives at General Synod, and an Eco–Congregation Ireland Award for the Catholic and Church of Ireland parishes in Westport. Eco–Congregation Ireland is an initiative of the Irish Inter Church Meeting, and includes members from the Roman Catholic Church, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church and Religious Society of Friends.

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Members of the Templebreedy Children's Choir were photographed after a Service marking 150 years of worship in the parish church, with (l-r at rear): the Rev. Hazel Minion, Canon George Murphy, the Rev. David Bowles, the Rev. Isobel Jackson (Rector), Archbishop Patrick Coveney (Apostolic Nuncio Emeritus to Greece), the Bishop, Father Patrick Stevenson, Canon Eithne Lynch, and Archdeacon Adrian Wilkinson.

+++Music highlights at Christ Church, Dublin

Thursday, 7 June, 6:00 pm: Joint Evensong with Christ Church Music Summer School

Sunday, 10 June, 3:30 pm: Christ Church Choir Diocesan Outreach Project to Monkstown Parish Church. Choral Evensong in the cathedral sung by the Voluntary Choir

Sunday, 24 June, 3:30 pm: Festal Evensong for the Feast of the Birth of St John the Baptist. Accompanied by The Christ Church Baroque Players

Current Music List - Available [here](#)

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+++35,000 assaults on hospital staff

There have been almost 35,000 assaults on NHS hospital staff in Northern Ireland over the last five years, The Detail has revealed. Overall, there were 34,373 of these assaults recorded between January 2013 and December 2017. This works out at, on average, nearly 19 such incidents per day. Deputy Director of the Royal College of Nursing for Northern Ireland, Garrett Martin, told The Detail: "It's not acceptable. Under no circumstances should these assaults be seen as an occupational hazard. "These figures are staggering, in many ways not surprising, but they are still staggering. To think that 19 incidents per day are being recorded across the hospitals in Northern Ireland is a great cause for concern." More at -

<https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/almost-35-000-assaults-on-nhs-hospital-staff?>

+++Refugee Week Prayers of Lament, Prayers of Hope

**Sunday, 17 June. In Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin
7:00 - 8:30 pm**

Space for scripture, prayer, song and silence marking the eve of Refugee Week, 18 – 24 June 2018. Stop for just a little while or stay for the whole evening. Write down a prayer for refugees living in our community and around the world, light a candle, or simply offer your own prayer for peace in silence. All are welcome.



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