



## Dean of St Patrick's elected

The Very Reverend Dr William Morton has been elected Dean and Ordinary of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. He was ordained deacon in 1988 and priested in 1989. He has been Dean of St

Columb's Cathedral in Diocese of Derry since 1997. He was appointed to the chapter of Saint Patrick's Cathedral as Prebendary of Howth in 2013. He succeeds the Very Revd Victor Stacey, who retired at the end of March.

Speaking on the election of William Morton, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, said, 'I wish Dean Morton well on his election as the next Dean of the National Cathedral, and to this new phase of his life and ministry. I know that he will draw on his extensive and valuable experience as Dean of Derry in this important role in the life of the Church.'

Archbishop of Dublin Most Reverend Michael Jackson said, "I wish to express my good wishes to the Very Reverend William Morton, Dean of Derry, on his election as Dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Dean Morton will bring a wide range of gifts to his new position. Personally, I look forward to working with him in the months and years ahead."

Dean Morton studied at TCD. He completed his doctorate at the Queen's University of Belfast in 1996. He was ordained deacon in 1988 and priested in 1989. Prior to becoming Dean of Derry he was Rector of Conwal Union

(Letterkenny) (Derry & Raphoe) from 1991 to 1997 and Curate of Drumachose (Derry & Raphoe) from 1988 to 1991. Dean Morton was appointed to the chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral as Prebendary of Howth in 2013.

A talented organist, Dean Morton has several musical qualifications. During his ministry at St Columb's he has overseen a major programme of renovation and he has built closer links with the Honourable The Irish Society and the London Guilds.

He is one of Her Majesty's Deputy Lieutenants for Londonderry City. On his appointment on 31 Oct 2014, the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, paid tribute to Dean Morton. He said, "Dean Morton is well known and respected in the diocese of Derry and Raphoe and particularly in the city where he ministers. His enthusiasm for both city and Cathedral life is unswerving and I am delighted he has received this honour in recognition of his commitment to public life and service."

Dean Morton's vocation was encouraged by a former Dean of St Patrick's, Very Reverend John Armstrong, when he was Archbishop of Armagh.

Dean Morton is married with three sons.

## **30 parishes have hosted Ireland's Climate Justice Candle**

The parish of Holy Trinity, Killiney, hosted Eco-Congregation Ireland's Climate Justice Candle recently.

The Rector, Canon Niall Sloane, spoke about the significance of the candle and noted that he had attended the National Ecumenical Prayer Service for the UN Climate Summit in November where the Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) Shine a Light on Climate Justice initiative was launched.

The candle has visited 30 parishes since then and it is hoped that it will continue on its journey around the country visiting churches of different denominations both sides of the border over the course of the next year.

As an extra bonus, the candle also visited Glenageary-Killiney National School where the children learned about climate change and how small changes can make a big difference.

ECI launched the candle initiative in the hopes of encouraging parishes and faith communities to focus on climate justice, not only for the week that they host the candle but in the weeks and

months to come. The candle has already visited seven other Church of Ireland parishes.

Encouraging more churches to focus on the urgent need for climate justice, ECI Chairperson, the Ven Andrew Orr, said: “We are delighted that so many churches have been so willing to host the Climate Justice Candle. We believe it is a great way of bringing the urgent issue of climate change, and its impact on God’s creation and on the poorest people of the world, home to parishes and congregations. We would love to hear from more parishes who would like to host the candle in their area.”

Anyone wishing to host the Climate Justice Candle should send an email to [info@ecocongregationireland.com](mailto:info@ecocongregationireland.com).

## **Waterside Presbyterian Church Londonderry celebrates 150 years of witness**

Throughout 2016 Waterside Presbyterian Church in Londonderry has been holding special events each month to mark its significant anniversary. Future events will include a special exhibition of old photographs and memorabilia and an old-style excursion on the train to Portrush in June.



***Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie, Mrs Anne McNie, Mrs Roberta Jones and Rev. Knox Jones***

Back in March, the 6th Londonderry Boys' Brigade Company, which is attached to Waterside Presbyterian Church, celebrated their 75th anniversary and various special events were held.

A central element of the year's special events was a time of mission and outreach in April conducted by Billy Patterson, a former Irish Mission Worker.

Remarking on the achievement of Watersides' anniversary, Dr. McNie said, "I am very pleased to be joining with Waterside today as they

celebrate 150 years of Christian witness in this city.

“It always heartens me to see the work being done across our land, and to see the impact Waterside Presbyterian continues to have in this city. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the congregation, as they continue to worship God and spread the Good News.”

Also joining the Waterside congregation for this service were members of its sister congregation, Fahan Presbyterian Church.

During the year it is also hoped that all four surviving past ministers of Waterside will renew fellowship with the congregation at some stage.

Speaking about the journey the congregation has taken, current minister, Rev. Knox Jones said, “Since 1866 many ministers have pastored the people of God in Waterside and many faithful elders and leaders have contributed very positively to the life and witness of the congregation.

“The culture in which the congregation seeks to serve God presently is radically different from

that of the period in which it was established. However, we nevertheless acknowledge the Gospel today continues to have the power to transform lives. As a congregation we were delighted that Dr. McNie led our morning worship, and were both encouraged and challenged through the message he brought us.”

## **Examining the dark net, grooming, radicalisation & other threats**

The fourth annual **Glimpse conference in Belfast** will be opened by the Chief Constable of the PSNI. It has been designed to help social workers and child protection professionals develop a greater awareness and understanding of the influence that a young persons vulnerabilities such as neglect, abuse and suffering with mental health issues can have on their susceptibility to on and offline grooming, sexualisation and radicalisation. It considers indicators of future risk and provides an insight into the how offenders think.

The organisers, INEQE Group, state - We have brought together an outstanding group of speakers. Each will share expert advice and provide contemporary and practical information.



The event will deliver the following learning outcomes:

- How neglect, abusive relationships and mental health impacts with online risks.
- Susceptibility to grooming; radicalisation; sexualisation and gang affiliation
- Offender behaviour; minimising, self justifying and victim blaming.
- The dark net; its purpose; use and abuse.
- Myths, tactical options and practical responses.

Many of last years delegates have already pre-booked their places. If you are interested in attending please note that early-bird and multi delegate discounts are available for a short time.

Event Date: Wednesday, 8 June, 2016 - 09:30 to 16:00. Venue: Newforge, 18b Newforge Lane, Belfast, BT9 5NW

For more information visit <http://ineqe.com/glimpse/> or call 02890232060

INEQE Group - Email: [enquiries@ineqe.com](mailto:enquiries@ineqe.com)  
Website with Further Details: <http://ineqe.com/glimpse/>

## **111 United Methodist Church clergy come out as gay ahead of US General Conference**

More than 100 United Methodist Church (UMC) clergy have come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and inter-sex ahead of the Church's General Conference this week.

The UMC currently does not allow "self-avowed practicing" gay people to be ordained, or same-sex marriages.

A letter published yesterday (Monday) by the 111 clergy accused the UMC of forcing clergy to hide their sexual identity.

"While we have sought to remain faithful to our call and covenant, you have not always remained faithful to us," the letter said.

"You have required that we not bring our full selves to ministry, that we hide from view our sexual orientations and gender identities.

"As long as we did this, you gladly affirmed our gifts and graces and used us to make disciples



of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world in the varied places you sent us."

It urged the UMC to welcome clergy of all sexual identities in its policies. "You cannot legislate against God's call," the letter added.

"The 'LGBTQI issue' is not one that can be resolved through restrictive legislation but instead by seeing that all persons are made in the image of God and welcomed into the community of faith."

The letter also urged unity in the midst of division. "Dear church, our prayers are with you,

with all of us, in the coming days. May we all be surprised by the Spirit who continues to breathe new life in unexpected ways. May we find the body of Christ stronger at the end of our time together, not weaker or more deeply harmed. May we provide a powerful witness of finding unity even in our differences to a world fractured by fear and mistrust."

The letter was posted on the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) website, which crashed soon afterwards.

It comes a day before the UMC's four-yearly conference meets in Portland, Oregon, today, Tuesday.

The UMC currently does not allow "self-avowed practising" gay people to be ordained, or same-sex marriages, and activists have been gearing up to promote the advancement of LGBTQ rights at the conference.

They want what they consider "discriminatory language" in the Book of Discipline – the law and doctrine of the UMC updated every four years – to be removed, for gay and lesbian ministers to be ordained, and for same-sex weddings to be performed in UMC churches.

Rev David Meredith, an elder in the UMC in West Ohio, married his long-term partner Jim Schlachter at [Broad Street United Methodist Church](#) in Columbus this weekend. There have been calls for his suspension.

Speaking to Christian Today, executive director of RMN, Matt Berryman, said the clergy who came out "are speaking to make themselves visible, and to shine a light on the injustice of this whole situation, and a Church that would utilise and benefit from the talent, skills and gifts of all people, but not allow them to be their full selves."

He said: "Being self-avowed and practicing as a gay person in the UMC is against policy – you can be removed from your job and lose your salary, so it's an act of courage and we hope that this act itself will affect a kind of change; it's an act of courage to break the system".

Berryman went on to describe the letter as "classic civil obedience", and said that recent surveys have shown the majority of UMC members are in support of same-sex marriage. RNM has seen more growth in the last four years than ever before, he said, and there has been a

40 per cent increase in the number of churches that are inclusive.

See also -

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/united.methodists.row.over.gay.marriage.as.general.confERENCE.begins/85691.htm>

## News briefs

The President of the Methodist Church re-dedicated a set of three stained glass windows in **Woodvale Methodist Church**, Belfast, on Sunday.

**Kilkenny College** raised raised €1,490 from a 24 hour mobile phone fast for Christian Aid's Open Schools Worldwide programme.

## Cathedral and choral

The **Saint George's Singers** and friends , conductor Marion Doherty Hayden, will present a light-hearted charity concert of songs and verse drawn from the 16th - 20th Centuries on Thursday May 12th at 7.30pm in Riddel Hall, Stranmillis. It takes place during **British Red**

**Cross Week** and Charlotte King, Senior Community Fundraiser NI & Isle of Man, will give a short presentation on their work. Proceeds will be donated to the Syrian Crisis Appeal. Tickets now on sale from Choir Members, Matchetts Music or online via Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/madrigals-and-more-a-concert...>

The **Kilkenny Presentation School Choir's** phenomenal rendition of Karl Jenkins' Adiemus on the talent show Britain's Got Talent, on April 28 won them a standing ovation and praise from all four judges. The next day the girls got an equally warm reception when they performed in front of 60,000 people, including President Michael D. Higgins, at the Dublin v Kerry match in Croke Park.

The choir director Veronica McCarron, Veronica was born in Enniskillen and raised in Scotland, so considers herself equally Irish and Scottish. "My mother and father, Mollie and Charlie McCarron, were from Irvinestown," she explains. "They were from neighbouring farming families, married, and had thirteen children. I was born in Erne Hospital, Enniskillen but grew up in Glasgow, in a very Irish community. We always



***Choir director Veronica McCarron***

considered ourselves Irish and 'came home' every summer."

When she was just 15, Veronica got a scholarship to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. She became a full time student there at 18. After completing her degree, she embarked on a career as a music teacher, a job that took her all around the world, including the USA and Australia.

Although Veronica retired two years ago, she still travels up and down to Kilkenny, to spend two weeks each month at the Presentation, directing



the Choral programme and the Vocal programme.

Veronica started the Presentation choir, with 50 students, in 1996 and there are now 300 students in the choral programme. She only auditions students to find out which voice type they have and doesn't cut anyone. "Anyone who wants to be in the choir can be," she smiles.

Over the years, the choir has gone from strength to strength. They've won RTÉ Lyric FM's Choirs for Christmas competition three times, Cork and Sligo Choral Festivals several times each, were named Top Choir at last year's Feis Cheoil and were finalists in the All Ireland Choral Competition 2009 in Belfast. They've also sung for the President of Ireland at Áras an Uachtaráin, and been invited to perform in Carnegie Hall by Sir Karl Jenkins, composer of Adiemus.

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

### **Three families in Ireland made homeless every day**

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/top-charity-warns-three-families-made-homeless-daily-in-ireland-1-7371332>

## **Sinn Fein gets outflanked on the Left in its very heartlands**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/sinn-fein-gets-outflanked-on-the-left-in-its-very-heartlands-34692341.html>

## **No, Gerry, you were never kept on a plantation**

Irish Independent - Ruth Dudley Edwards

<http://www.independent.ie/opinion/columnists/ruth-dudley-edwards/no-gerry-you-were-never-kept-on-a-plantation-34695130.html>

## **Sabina Higgins: Making women carry fatal foetal pregnancies ‘an outrage’**

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/sabina-higgins-making-women-carry-fatal-foetal-pregnancies-an-outrage-1.2640814>

## **Making pro-gay marriage cake ‘would be sinful’ for Christian bakers**

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/making-pro-gay-marriage-cake-would-be-sinful-for-christian-bakers-1-7372680>

## **Northern Ireland gay blood donation ban goes to Supreme Court**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-gay-blood-donation-ban-goes-to-supreme-court-34698320.html>

### **Star/Exp/Mail**

Further coverage of Islamic Relief's use of bus adverts, with a slogan praising Allah, to raise funds for victims of war and disasters in countries such as Syria during Ramadan next month. The articles all note that last year leading cinema chains banned an advert that featured the Archbishop of Canterbury reciting the Lord's Prayer. Also comment from the Christian Institute.

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/513937/British-buses-to-carry-praise-Allah-adverts-months-after-Lord-s-Prayer-banned>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/668398/Praise-Allah-bus-slogans-get-green-light-just-months-after-Lord-s-Prayer-ad-gets-banned>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3579301/British-buses-slogans-proclaiming-Allah-country-s-biggest-Muslim-charity-launches-campaign-aid-Syrian-victims.html>

### **Exp**

Reports that Christians in Pakistan have launched a campaign to save churches amid fears they could be destroyed by officials to make way for an underground line. The four churches are all in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore, where a Taliban bombing at a playground on Easter Sunday killed 69 Christians.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/668341/Christian-persecution-Pakistan-Islamabad-Lahore-government-destroy-churches-Taliban>

## **BBC**

Reports that an airfield established during World War One as a Royal Flying Corps base for anti-Zeppelin fighters has marked 100 years of active service. RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire was initially named after the nearby town of Stamford. A centennial memorial has been unveiled at All Saints' church in Wittering.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-36226611>

## **Exp** (*scroll down*)

Diary item that the revelation that the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby's real father was Anthony Montague Browne, Sir Winston Churchill's last private secretary, has focused renewed interest in Browne's memoirs

<http://www.express.co.uk/comment/expresscomment/668189/Cross-Bencher-Top-Gear-star-Chris-Evans-quits-Labour>

## **Letters**

**Times:** Government retreat on 'forced academies'.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/government-retreat-on-forced-academies-zbbzp2hml>

## **Blogs**

**Dean of Southwark:** Celebrating Diversity

<https://southwarklivinggod.wordpress.com/2016/05/08/celebrating-diversity/>

**Archbishop Cranmer:** Thy Kingdom Come. A week of prayer for confidence to make Jesus known

May 10

<http://archbishopcranmer.com/thy-kingdom-come-a-week-of-prayer-for-confidence-to-make-jesus-known/>

**Law and Religion UK:** Round up 8<sup>th</sup> May

<http://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2016/05/08/law-and-religion-round-up-8th-may/>

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