

## Archbishop and Lord Mayor of Dublin visit Jerusalem

Archbishop Michael Jackson and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Brendan Carr, are currently on a joint visit to Jerusalem. They are being hosted by the Archbishop of Jerusalem, the Most Revd Suheil Dawani and they have visited St Paul's Church in Jerusalem, St Andrew's Church in Ramallah and Bethlehem. Archbishop Jackson also facilitated a session on Dublin & Glendalough's Come&C discipleship programme.

The visit arose out of Dublin & Glendalough's diocesan link with Jerusalem and Archbishop Dawani invited the Lord Mayor when he was in Dublin last December. The Lord Mayor mentioned that he had hosted Kids4Peace at an event in the Mansion House. The organisation was established by Archbishop Dawani in Jerusalem in 2002 and it is now a global movement of Jewish, Christian and Muslim youth, dedicated to ending conflict and inspiring hope in divided societies around the world. They visited Kids4Peace Jerusalem yesterday.

Yesterday the Lord Mayor presented a copy of the Dublin City Interfaith Charter to Dr Miriam Feldmann Kaye of the Three Faiths Forum Middle East.

# CNI CNI CNI



**The Lord Mayor of Dublin Brendan Carr presenting a copy of the Dublin City Interfaith Charter to Dr Miriam Feldmann Kaye of the Three Faiths Forum Middle East. Also pictured are Archbishop Michael Jackson and Archbishop Suheil Dawani.**

The presentation took place after a discussion of the work being undertaken by Dublin City Interfaith Forum and the Three Faiths Forum Middle East to further people's understanding of different faiths.

The Dublin charter was launched by the Lord Mayor last December and was signed by Archbishop Jackson along with many other Dublin faith leaders. This groundbreaking document was brought forward by the Dublin City Interfaith Forum and deals with issues including religious freedom, interfaith dialogue and the promotion of religious diversity in the city. The charter provides a platform for educating and encouraging people of different faiths to dialogue and act together in challenging all forms of injustice and discrimination. It also encourages people to live confidently with religious diversity and dispel fears of difference. This charter is intended to be used by all faith communities and can be found at <https://www.dublincityinterfaithforum.org/resources/>

Archbishop Jackson preached in St Paul's Church in Jerusalem yesterday (Tuesday May 30). The church was the first Arab Anglican church in the region and was consecrated in 1874. It was in regular use until 1948 when members of the congregation found they could not easily get there as it was on the west side of the green line dividing East and West Jerusalem. It was reconsecrated in 2011 and is now used by other Christian worshipping groups as well as Anglicans.

**The new life of St Paul's Jerusalem is something for Christians worldwide to celebrate - Archbishop Jackson of Dublin**



**Lord Mayor Brendan Carr and Archbishop Michael Jackson with representatives of Kids4Peace Jerusalem**

In his sermon, the Archbishop said that the new life and energy of St Paul's Church was something for Christians worldwide to celebrate as its congregation are sent to abide and witness in that part of Jerusalem.

“The community of baptism, of teaching and of nurture – The Second Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion – exists to equip ordinary people to be sent to proclaim and to strive for an ever more inclusive and ever more

universal *community of God's kingdom* – not simply to be bigger or louder than it was last year. Numbers are not the definition of mission,” he said.

Drawing on the readings [1 Peter 4.7–11; St John 15.26–27, 16.1–4] the Archbishop focussed on the phrases ‘let us abide’, ‘let us witness’, ‘let us be apostolic’ and ‘let us pray’. He concluded: “You have been called to abiding, to witnessing, to sending and to praying – and to suffering. You who are The Living Stones by God appointed are an inspiration to all of us worldwide. As we have been invited to Come and See, so we are commissioned to Go and Tell. May God continue to bless you, together with the Christian church world-wide. As children of Pentecost you in a very special way await the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as you pray”.

## **Man who has carried 12-foot cross through 176 countries visits Ireland**

An American father of five who has carried a 12-foot wooden cross through 176 countries on all seven continents, facing down firing squads, venomous jungle snakes, and members of al-Qaeda got a rather unusual welcome in Ireland last week.

Keith Wheeler has been travelling around the world with his cross for over thirty years as a pilgrim of peace with a message of reconciliation and love.

“I am not here promoting another religion, organisation or charity – I am promoting a message of love on the roadsides,” he said.

In 1985, as Keith was praying one night, he felt that God spoke to his heart, “I want you to make a cross and begin carrying it through the streets on Good Friday.”

He also felt these words burning in his heart, “Anyone can carry a cross – think about Simon of Cyrene; he carried Jesus’ cross. Anyone can die on a cross – think about the two thieves on either side of Jesus. Only One, however, could die for the sins of the world ... and that was because of love. I want you to take the cross and identify that message of love along the roadsides of this world.”

Later, Keith felt God saying to him, “For you, the cross is never to be a symbol of protest, but a symbol of reconciliation; I want you to be a ‘pilgrim of peace’ and a messenger of My love.”

Three years ago he carried his weighty cross to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro with his wife, Nicole, a schoolteacher and marathon runner.

His pilgrimage has taken him to places like Iraq, Iran, Tibet and China, as well as nations at war, including Bosnia and Rwanda during the genocide. He has even brought his cross to Antarctica.

4

He has been arrested over 40 times by authorities unnerved by his pilgrimage, and in the US state of Louisiana he was beaten and left for dead.

To his list of incredible experiences in remote and dangerous spots around the world he can now add an Irish tale of welcome, which saw the patrons of three packed Dublin city centre pubs come out to greet him and, in one case, insist that he bring his cross inside.

The 57-year-old, who bears a resemblance to Bruce Springsteen, said that though he doesn't drink, he was bought six pints of Guinness.

A number of Irish wags chided him for "cheating" because his cross has a small wheel and "Jesus didn't have a wheel!"

He spent time with the "heaps of homeless people" he came across in the capital and he also brought his cross to Glendalough and the Cliffs of Moher, where tourists from places like India, France, Switzerland and Nigeria thronged to talk to him.

Praising Ireland for being open and welcoming to the stranger, he said that "There is a right way and a wrong way to do it and Ireland seems to have done a very good job so far.

I know it is an issue in our world – how we handle other nations. But there is also a blessing when we



**Keith Wheeler has been travelling around the world with his cross for over thirty years as a pilgrim of peace with a message of reconciliation and love.**

welcome nations. I was a stranger and Ireland welcomed me. They welcomed the cross."

Speaking in the wake of the atrocity in Manchester, he said the challenge today was to build bridges and dialogue.

“Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers – not the peace-lovers or the peace-wanters – but the peacemakers. That means we go into a world of conflict and we go to both sides. How can we make peace if we only go to our side – the people who look and act like us?”

## **Presbyterian General Assembly meets next week**

Plans to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, relationships with other denominations, the role and ministry of chaplaincy in Ireland, concerns over the education proposals in the Republic of Ireland, the political situation in Northern Ireland and support for persecuted Christians around the globe are just some of the issues that will be on the agenda for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s (PCI) General Assembly, which opens in Belfast next week.

The annual weeklong gathering of 1,000 ministers and elders from the Church’s 500-plus congregations across Ireland opens on the evening of Monday, June 5. Invited civic dignitaries and corresponding church representatives from denominations at home and overseas will witness the formal election and installation of the Rev. Dr. Noble McNeely, minister of

First Holywood Presbyterian Church, as the new Moderator of the General Assembly.

Unveiling the business for the week, Rev. Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly and General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, said that with close to 100 resolutions before the Assembly this year it would be a busy time. “This is very much the Presbyterian family in Ireland coming together for a week of worship, prayer, Bible study, celebration, debate and decision-making,” he said.

“As a Church we are involved in many aspects of day-to-day life across Ireland and the resolutions that come before our governing body reflect these and in some cases the concerns that we have. This year is no different, as we will be discussing the important role that chaplaincy plays in society North and South, the concerns that we have in relation to education proposals in the Republic of Ireland and possible outcomes of the Citizen Assembly’s recent proposals on abortion, to highlight a few.”

This year’s annual reports and resolutions before the General Assembly can be found in ‘the Blue Book’, which some have dubbed a ‘bumper edition’ this year, as it covers 416 pages. It also details visiting church leaders from overseas.

This year it is hoped that representatives from the Presbyterian Church in South Sudan and National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, churches ministering and bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in very difficult situations, will be able to take part in ‘Listening to the global church – Leadership in the crucible,’ one of three alternative presentations scheduled during the week.

Mr. Gribben also said that much of what is to be discussed was routine - affecting the Church, how it operates and its relationships with others. “In October we are looking forward to celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation and members of Assembly will hear plans around the three events that have been proposed.

“Resolutions coming before members will seek to widen accessibility and the demographic of future General Assemblies; we will also look at the priorities that will govern all aspects of our work. A report setting out the principles by which the Church relates to other denominations, locally, nationally and globally will also be discussed.

Mr. Gribben also highlighted a resolution that seeks to engage the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland in



**The new Moderator, Dr. Noble McNeely, will lead the Assembly service, which is themed ‘Everyday Disciples’.**

discussions around the contemporary understanding of the Doctrine of Justification. “While we would work closely with other churches on a range of matters throughout the year, if agreed to, I think that this would be the first time in recent memory that we have considered a formal church-to-church theological dialogue with the Roman Catholic

Church. All things considered it will be an interesting and I hope productive week,” Mr. Gribben said.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the two worship services at 12.15 on Wednesday and Thursday. Wednesday also sees an Evening Celebration of public praise and worship in the Assembly Hall that begins at 7.45pm.

The new Moderator, Dr. Noble McNeely, will lead the service, which is themed ‘Everyday Disciples’. The well-known author and speaker Vaughan Roberts, the Anglican rector of St. Ebbe’s Church in Oxford is the keynote speaker for the evening and will address the theme.

Dr. McNeely’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](http://www.presbyterianireland.org). You can also follow a live Twitter feed @pciassembly using the hashtag #PCIGA17 for all public sessions. Business commences at 9.30am on Tuesday. Proceedings will close on Friday, June 10 with the vast majority of business open to the public.

## **Big Sing of a treasury of hymns at St Mark’s Dundela**

The countdown to what the BBC might call a ‘Big Sing’ is underway. The venue is St. Mark’s (Dundela), the date is Saturday, June 17 and the event is ‘One Song – An Appreciation of Hymns’.

This is an invitation to make your way to east Belfast – for the benefit of the satnav-dependent, 2 Sydenham Avenue, BT4 2D is the address – there to join in singing some of the great treasury of hymns dating from the Reformation through to the present day. It is a non-denominational event, everyone is welcome.

In addition, with ‘One Song – An Appreciation of Hymns’ being hosted by the Royal School of Church Music (Ireland), that in itself should ensure a great selection of music. So if you enjoy singing great hymns, be there.

Please note that while tea and coffee will be provided, participants are asked to bring a packed lunch. This is a free event, though donations will be accepted.

For information or to confirm attendance, please contact [awards@rscmireland.com](mailto:awards@rscmireland.com) or text +44(0)7901 835771

## Praise, Passion and Power, 50 years of Charismatic Renewal

50 years of Charismatic Renewal will be celebrated in the Concert Hall, RDS, Dublin on Saturday, 24th June 2017 10 a.m., concluding with Mass at 6.30 p.m. This is a one-day national event Tickets: €20  
 Speakers: Fr Pat Collins, C.M., and Testimonies. Mass Celebrant/Homilist – Archbishop Eamon Martin  
 Further information: Sr Bridget Dunne, The Haven, Bachelor's Quay, Cork. Phone: 021-425 1100 Email: [nsc@iol.ie](mailto:nsc@iol.ie) Website: [www.ccreland.org](http://www.ccreland.org)

## Conference report: Choir Schools Association 2017

Singing is a highly effective way of helping to deal with mental ‘chatter’ and today’s demanding lifestyle, said Paul Smith, chairman of the Choir Schools Association (CSA), at its annual conference in Durham earlier this month.

The theme was ‘Completeness’, and Smith, headmaster of Hereford Cathedral School (HCS), used his keynote address to delegates to remind them of the health benefits of singing for all pupils – not just specialist musicians such as the cathedral and parish c



church choristers educated at the association’s member schools.

He described how in a recent whole-school singing practice, HCS’s director of music, David Evans, instructed everyone to turn to their neighbour and ‘out-sing’ them: ‘To see every pupil in the school totally absorbed in singing to their peers was certainly good for my well-being! For a short period, everyone was focused on the job of singing. They stopped dwelling on negative internal chatter, those distracting thoughts we all have about life’s issues and problems. Their singing created positive energy and a happy mood which was infectious and transparently good for everyone.’

‘Singing can act as a form of meditation, taking us away from everyday worries and concerns, and as such has a real spiritual benefit. It brings people together, and encourages empathy.’



The conference was hosted by The Chorister School, Durham, and its headmistress, Yvette Day. It was praised by delegates for a particularly imaginative and stimulating programme that focused on the positive aspects of choir school life rather than the problems. Simon Oliver, Van Mildert professor of theology at Durham University and a residentiary canon of the cathedral, spoke about the habits of practising, singing and listening that are instilled in choristers by their daily routine, exploring how philosophers have viewed the negative as well as the positive aspects of habit: does it compromise our freedom and our ability to think for ourselves, or does it form the disposition of our lives in such a way that we instinctively do the right thing in a given situation? Only through a combination of habit and knowledge can a skill such as playing a musical instrument or singing a vast range of repertoire be acquired.

James Randle, director of music of The Chorister School, gave an outline of the school's outreach programme, a continuation of work begun under the Sing Up initiative. The conference included a chance to hear boy and girl choristers singing together with the men of the cathedral choir at Evensong, directed by James Lancelot, who retires at the end of this academic year as cathedral organist. His recollections of a life in cathedral music – going back to the 1960s when he was a chorister at St Paul's, London – were a highlight of the programme (including colourful a parish

## Being a parish church chorister influenced my subsequent career –

### Sir Thomas Allen vice-chancellor of Durham University

church chorister anecdotes about a time when the organist chain-smoked his way through choir practices and the boys went for Sunday walks completely unchaperoned).

A mini song recital by two cathedral choral scholars and a former girl chorister, and an instrumental recital by several pupils of The Chorister School, enhanced the conference experience and the speaker at the formal dinner was Sir Thomas Allen, who spoke of how much his experience as a parish church chorister had influenced his subsequent career – and how as vice-chancellor of Durham University he now enjoys the privilege of attending Evensong as often as he can.

The CSA represents and supports the work of 44 schools attached to cathedrals, churches and college chapels in Great Britain and elsewhere, including helping to fund some chorister scholarships and bursaries. It celebrates its centenary in 2018.

[www.choirschools.org.uk](http://www.choirschools.org.uk)

## Churches praised for quick snap election response

Churches have been congratulated for the speed of their response to the announcement there would be a snap general election next month.

The praise comes after it emerged a website for churches to promote their hustings events had seen dozens of events registered.

More than 70 of the events - where political candidates address voters - have been posted on the engage17 website created by the Christian organisation, CARE.

UK Director, Gareth Davies, said: "Even though there has been very little time to prepare for this snap election the response of the church has been nothing short of amazing.

## Churches mobilised as Sri Lanka floods death toll passes 200

Clergy in Sri Lanka have been urged to prepare their churches and church halls to provide refuge for people displaced by serious flooding in the country's Southern and Sabaragamuwa regions. This morning (Wednesday) Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Centre

said that 202 people had died as a result of the devastating floods and landslides caused by severe rains which have hit the country since Friday when Cyclone Mora hit the island.

China's national news agency Xinhua reports that at least 83,200 people are seeking shelter in safe locations and many are unable to return to their homes due to fully damaged or partially damaged houses.

## Today in Christian History, June 1

**June 1, 165 (traditional date):** Justin, an early Christian apologist, is beheaded with his disciples for their faith. "If we are punished for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, we hope to be saved," he said just before his death. Christians soon named him Justin Martyr .

**June 1, 1843:** Isabella Baumfree, having received a vision of God telling her to "travel up an' down the land showin' the people their sins an' bein' a sign unto them," leaves New York and changes her name to Sojourner Truth. She became one of the most famous abolitionists and women's rights lecturers in American history.

# CNI CNI CNI

