

DRAFT (v.5) PROGRAMME 2026 DUBLIN CONFERENCE

CATHEDRALS PLUS CONFERENCE 2026

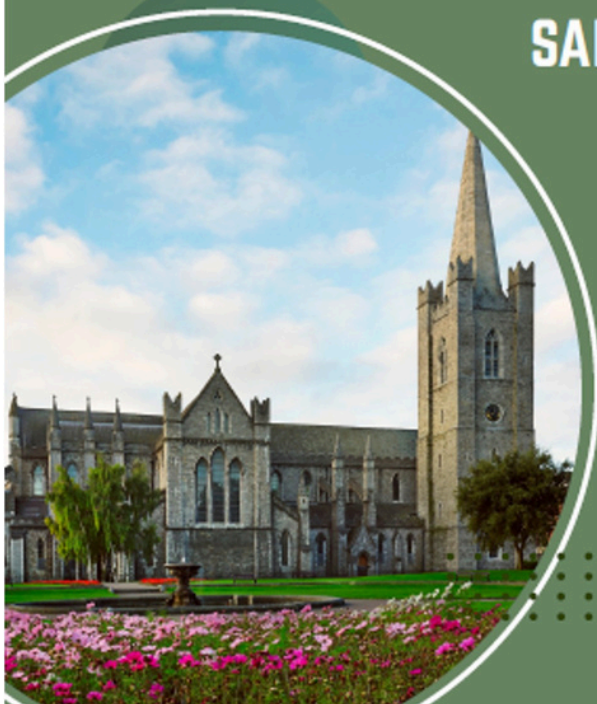
Come and join us in **Dublin** for a
Cathedrals Plus conference with an Irish
twist: **two cathedrals** for the price of one!

DUBLIN

JANUARY
13th – 15th
2026



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL and SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL



INSPIRING LIVES

PEOPLE OF FAITH
AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

This year's theme will examine the
role of people of faith in the wider
community, encompassing a range
of topics including outreach,
social justice and bringing people
to our spaces.

DRAFT v.5

PROGRAMME FOR 2026 DUBLIN CONFERENCE

Tuesday, 13th January 2026

- 11.30am Council members (those present) meet at registration desk to help
- 12.30pm Arrival - **CCCD**
 - Registration. Luggage store available at CCCD
 - Tour allocations and Workshop choices sign up.
 - Distribution of delegate bags
- Coffee/tea/lunch
- Resources available to peruse, displays & guest partners available to chat
- 2pm Welcome
Joint welcome by both SPC & CCCD Deans, plus Anthony Cane, Dean of Portsmouth and Chair of Cathedrals Plus.
- 2.30pm – 3.30pm Cathedral Tours (led by CCCD Cathedral staff and volunteers)
- 3.45 - 5pm Free time & check-in to hotel
- 4.45 - 5.45pm Speaker session 1 - **Rev Dr Alex Wimberly, Leader of Corrymeela**
- 6 - 6.40pm Evensong CCCD
- 7pm - 7.45pm Regional Hubs - CCCD rooms
- 7.45pm Fish & Chips Supper

8.45 Free time/social at The Lord Edward pub

Wednesday, 14th January 2026

- 08.30 - 8.50am Eucharist in Lady Chapel, SPC
- 09.00 - 09.20am Matins -NB. Choir sings this morning service
- 09.30 - 10.30am Speaker 2 - **Rev Abigail Sines, Assoc Minister in Carrigrohane Union of Parishes**
“The Power of Quirky: Connection, Creativity and Craft”
- 10.30 - 11 Coffee break
- 11 - 12noon Cathedral Tour SPC
- 12.15 - 1.15pm Workshops 1
- 1.15pm Lunch
Council Meeting working lunch
- 2.15 Panel Discussion
- 3 - 3.30pm Tea break
- 3.30 - 5pm Optional trips/tours and/or free time
- 5.30-6pm Evensong, SPC
- 6.45 - 7.45pm Drinks Reception, The Deanery SPC
- 7.45pm Conference dinner, The Lady Chapel SPC
After dinner speaker tbc
- 10pm [optional!] Live music at The Brazen Head (last orders at 11.30pm)

Thursday, 15th January 2026

- from 08.00am Bag drop, CCCD
- 8.30am Morning prayer, CCCD
- 9 - 10am Sharing Sessions
- 10.05 - 10.40am Coffee break, South Transept CCCD
- 10.40 - 11.10am Cathedrals Plus AGM
- 11.10 - 12.10 Workshops 2
- 12.10 - 12.55 Speaker 3 - **Eimhin Walsh, former Director of the Mendicity Institute**
"Why Bother? the Christian vocation in a post Christian world"
- 12.55 - 1.10pm Farewell, thanks & evaluations
- 1.10pm Collect packed lunches, depart

(1.10 - 1.45pm - Council members debrief & feedback)

Workshops *Two sessions to run concurrently; delegates will choose their preferred options on registration*

- Tom Little, **Director of Music** and Tomos Watkins, **Assistant Director of Music** CCC
Music Outreach

Tom and Tomos will speak about their work establishing a 200-strong Community Choir from scratch, which invites local people to come and sing together in the cathedral every week; plus their music outreach to schools.

- Susanne Reid, **CEO CCC** and Gavan Woods, **Adminstrator (CEO) SPC**
Keeping our Cathedrals Alive

Dublin's sister cathedrals: vibrant spaces in the heart of the city. How we enable them to thrive for the whole community and fulfil their charitable purpose.

- Ruth Kenny, Head of Learning and Interpretation CCC
Sacred Space: Common Ground. Programming and Adjacency

Ruth will talk about the challenges and opportunities of programming for visitors of different or no faith, within an Irish context.

Workshops (cont.)

- Honesty Box Café Scheme

The Gathering Grounds

A representative from Kilternan Parish, Dublin, will share their experience of setting up The Gathering Grounds; a voluntary community café supported and run by two part time staff that provides a wide range of services every week to families, at-risk communities and social outreach projects.

- Kelly Bermingham, **Community Officer** SPC

Saint Patrick's Cathedral – an historic sanctuary space for theological, sociological, economic, justice and political discourse.

A discussion with 3 parts:

- Presentation with a focus on the Community and Safeguarding role,
- Q&A session;
- Summation & response – gathering the wisdom within the room into an action plan for each participant (*time permitting*)– the take-home commitments to community connections in your home spaces

- Saul Penfold, **Inspired Classrooms**

Inspired Classrooms is an innovative free online resource designed to explore churches as places of creative learning across the school curriculum. Providing bespoke learning ‘tools’ for both schools and churches, Inspired Classrooms challenges the perception that churches are places in which only RE can be ‘delivered’. Saul will demonstrate the resources and engage delegates with some of their suggested activities.

- Louis Parminter, **Cathedral Manager** SPC

The Ministry of Welcome

Details to follow

- Kryzel Bonifacio, **Education Officer** SPC

Congregating curiosity: Educational engagement for the whole community

From weekend family workshops to major festivals, this workshop will explore the benefits, challenges, and logistics of organising free, community-focused educational programming in a bustling city-centre cathedral.

- Aaron Hoey, **Verger and Conservator** SPC

Conserving the intangible heritage of churches in times of diversified use

Churches and cathedrals across the British Isles have diversified their use through concerts, gala dinners, and museum use as a means of widening both income and community engagement. While on the whole this has proven to be a success story, issues of the appropriate use of sacred space have gained media attention due to perceptions of what is suitable and not suitable, and what impact the type of use has on the heritage and history of worship at sites which have a broad or mixed use. This talk will explore the issues of the conservation of the intangible heritage of churches and cathedrals during uses which may be described as profane or secular. Drawing on examples from across Ireland, from parish churches to cathedrals, the complex balance between secular use and the protection of the spirit of place will be discussed, highlighting areas where intangible heritage of these sacred sites can be highlighted and conserved in into the future, where diversified use will likely be the norm.

Optional Tours

- Teelings Whiskey Distillery
- Marshes Library
- Chester Beatty Library
- Trinity College Long Room
- Dublinia
- Tower Tours of both cathedrals

THE INSPIRING LIVES PROJECT



With generous support and funding received from Westhill Endowment, we look forward to the second phase of our project beginning at the January 2026 conference.

INSPIRING LIVES:- People of Faith at the Heart of the Community.

Cathedrals Plus is an ecumenical professional network, supporting colleagues involved in visitor engagement and learning in cathedrals, abbeys, minsters, major churches and shrines. Our two-year project, 'Inspiring Lives: Saints, Martyrs and Missionaries', will create a digital and in-print resource about people of faith at the heart of the community, historically or currently. By collating the shared knowledge and experience of our members, and researching further examples of inspiring individuals, we will create and curate a range of materials for cathedrals and churches to use in their outreach work with local communities, schools, families and individuals.



Cathedrals Plus are extremely grateful to our sponsors for their support of our work, and for their generous contributions towards the Dublin conference.

