

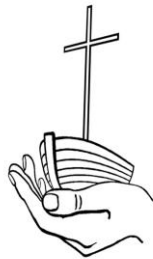
Dublin Council of Churches

Annual Report

2025 - 2026



(Opening Service for Week of Prayer 2026)



The Dublin Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.(DCC Constitution, Article 2)

Antiochian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic, Church of Ireland, Greek Orthodox, Jacobite Syrian Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Religious Society of Friends, Roman Catholic, Romanian Orthodox, St. Thomas Indian Orthodox, Salvation Army

<https://www.dublincouncilofchurches.ie/>

The Dublin Council of Churches Objectives:

- (a) To explore within a Christian fellowship, based on mutual love and the presence of Christ among us, the calling of the People of God to pray and work together for the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer 'that all may be one' (John 17:21).
- (b) To encourage co-operation between churches and inter-church groups, at both local and district level.
- (c) To facilitate an exchange of information and views of member Churches on matters of concern.
- (d) To support joint study and action.
- (e) To disseminate information on ecumenical activities and resources.

Office Holders 2025 – 26

Chairperson:

Eamonn Murray

Roman Catholic Church

Minute Taker:

Lesley Rankin

Methodist Church

Correspondence Secretary:

Margaret Fozzard

Salvation Army

Vice-Chairperson

Niamh Hardiman

Religious Society of Friends

Treasurer

Edward Lewis

Church of Ireland

Contact Details:

Chairperson:

dccchairperson@gmail.com

Secretary:

dcouncilofchurchessec@outlook.ie

Web Page:

<https://www.dublincouncilofchurches.ie>

All office holders were voted in for the coming year 2026 – 27, and there commitment was acknowledged.

We gather as members of one Body, united in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity invites us to pause, to listen, and to remember who we truly are in Christ. Before we belong to any tradition, denomination, or nation, we belong to Him. We are baptised into one faith, nourished by one Gospel, and called to bear witness to one love. (Bishop Hovakim Manukyan Homily)

Current Membership and Representatives

MEMBERSHIP	REPRESENTATIVE
Antiochian Orthodox	Fr. John Hickey
Armenian Apostolic	Dr. Paul Manook
Armenian Apostolic	Ayda Lundon
Church of Ireland	Edward Lewis
Church of Ireland	Rev. Philip Heak
Ethiopian Orthodox	Vacant
Greek Orthodox	Yvonne Luven
Lutheran Church	Pastor Florian von Issendorf
Lutheran Church	Pastor Martin Sauter
Lutheran Church	Yvonne Langebach
Jacobite Syrian Orthodox	Fr. Dr. Jobymon Skaria
Jacobite Syrian Orthodox	Jiby Jacob
Jacobite Syrian Orthodox	Santheep Kallungal
Methodist	Rev. Andrew Kingston
Methodist	Lesley Rankin
Presbyterian	Rev. Alan Boal,
Presbyterian	Cherry Poynton,
Presbyterian	Denis Poynton
Religious Society of Friends:	Niamh Hardiman,
Religious Society of Friends:	
Roman Catholic:	Fr. Damian McNeice,
Roman Catholic:	Deacon Eamonn Murray,
Romanian Orthodox:	Fr. Bogdan Cadau
St. Thomas Indian Orthodox:	Fr. Stanley David James,
St. Thomas Indian Orthodox:	John Mathew
Salvation Army	Major Margaret Fozzard

Each of the local governing bodies of the member churches shall appoint up to three members of the Council, to serve for a stated period. At least one representative from each church shall be lay. (Art 5 Dublin Council of Churches Constitution)

We thank the representatives of our member churches for their dedication to the Dublin Council of Churches (DCC) and for their involvement in organising various ecumenical services held during the year. We also see an opportunity to strengthen this participation, as not all member churches are currently fully represented on the Council.

Introduction:

As we look back on the work of the DCC during 2025–2026, we see another year of Christian fellowship, shared worship, and ecumenical collaboration. Through our regular Council meetings, the work of dedicated planning groups, and our annual services for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and St Patrick's Day, we have sought to build and strengthen relationships between member churches and provide visible expressions of Christian unity. During the year the DCC also shared significant milestones with a few member churches.

The year has highlighted both the opportunities and the challenges facing our ecumenical endeavours. While encouraging examples of cooperation and fellowship continue to be seen, our survey of members and patron churches has reminded us of the need for better communication, wider participation, and renewed commitment to our shared objectives. We are grateful for the generosity, hospitality, and support received from member churches, council members, clergy, volunteers, and friends of the DCC, without which much of our work would not be possible.

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Isobel Manook on April 17. Isobel was the wife of Dr Paul Manook and a close friend of the DCC. We pray that Isobel is at peace in the hands of Our Lord.

On behalf of the DCC, I extend my sincere thanks to all office holders, Council members, and church leaders, who have contributed their time, wisdom, and dedication throughout the past year. Their service has enabled the DCC to continue its work to encourage co-operation between churches, and of fostering understanding, and fellowship across our city. We pray that our work will continue in the year ahead and that the world, and we pray that God will grant peace to all nations across the world.

Edmonn Murray
June 2026

Reflecting on Our Journey Together (2025 – 2026).

The DCC met on six occasions during the year, continuing its commitment to encourage co-operation between churches and inter-church groups. In addition to these formal meetings, working groups responsible for organising the Opening Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the St Patrick's Day Ecumenical Service met regularly throughout the year. Meetings were held both in person and online, in the hope of enabling a broader participation and engagement.

The Ecumenical Bible Week took place across Dublin from 7–14 September, bringing together Christians from different traditions, to read, pray, and explore the Bible together.

The Council was delighted to celebrate significant milestones within member churches. On 21 September 2025, the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church marked twenty years of ministry in Ireland and celebrated the acquisition of land and a building in Kilcoole. Another notable occasion was the consecration of St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church in Palmerstown, which took place from 3–5 October 2025. On 14 November St Mary's celebrated the bicentenary of its opening and its designation as the Cathedral Church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin.

The Dublin Council of Churches was represented by Council members at these celebrations, affirming the strong bonds of fellowship within our ecumenical community.



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026

The Opening Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held on Sunday evening, 18 January, at St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church. The theme of the service was "One Body, One Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4)

The theme, prayers, readings, and intercessions were prepared by members of the Armenian Apostolic Church in collaboration with their brothers and sisters from the Armenian Catholic and Evangelical Churches, and were adapted for the service by the DCC working group.

Fr Stanly David James warmly welcomed the congregation to St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church. The sermon was delivered by Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland. The youth choir of St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church enhanced the celebration through their singing and musical accompaniment.

The service concluded with a blessing offered by the leaders of the participating churches, symbolising the unity of all Christians. Following the service, those in attendance shared refreshments generously provided by the management committee and members of the St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church community. The DCC extends its sincere gratitude to all who contributed to the planning and organisation of this celebration, and especially to the clergy, volunteers, choir members, and congregation of St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church for their warm hospitality and welcome.



(The Opening Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)

The world does not need perfect Christians. It needs united Christians. Christ did not pray that we would think alike. He prayed, "That they may all be one."

St Patrick's Day Ecumenical Service 2026

The annual St Patrick's Day Ecumenical Service was held in St Patrick's Cathedral on 17 March 2026, bringing together Christians from across Dublin and beyond to celebrate the feast day of St Patrick.

The theme of the service, "*St Patrick Talks About God*," invited those gathered to reflect on the life, faith, and their continuing witness of St Patrick. The prayers, readings, and intercessions were prepared by members of the DCC working group, whose efforts helped create a meaningful and inclusive act of worship.

Dean Morton extended a warm welcome to all in attendance. The sermon was delivered by Rev Cheryl Meban, whose thoughtful words encouraged the congregation to consider how St Patrick's understanding of God continues to speak to Christians today.

The service provided a valuable opportunity for fellowship and shared prayer, strengthening the bonds between churches and offering a visible expression of Christian unity in the heart of the Dublin City. We are grateful to Dean Moton, Rev Cheryl Meban, the Cathedral staff, musicians and all who contributed to the planning and the distribution of leaflets for this important annual service.



A number of additional Ecumenical Services and Events were held during the year, which members of the DCC attended. These events included:- the Ecumenical Way of the Cross on 3 April 2026 ; SOLAS "An Ecumenical celebration of light in a time of darkness" on 18 December 2025; an Ecumenical Workshop on Church Music in May 2026. Other services may have taken place which the DCC were not made aware of. This highlights a need to ensure better cooperation, communication and engagement between the DCC and local Churches.

O Christ our Lord, the source of peace, guide the Christians living on this island in all our diversity, to walk joyfully in your path of righteousness as pilgrims together to the heavenly city Jerusalem where you reign.

DCC Survey 2026

In 2025 the DCC planned to design and circulate a survey in order to discover the extent of ecumenical activity beyond our own sphere. The design work of the survey was undertaken by Rev. Philip Heak and we thank him for undertaking this work. The purpose of the survey is to -

- evaluate current ecumenical activity and collaboration among local churches,
- identify opportunities for greater cooperation and engagement,
- understand the importance of ecumenism to church members and leaders,
- highlight barriers to interdenominational collaboration
- collect feedback on how the DCC can support ecumenical efforts.

The link to the survey was circulated in January 2026, after the week of Prayer for Christian Unity to patrons and members of the DCC. People were invited to complete the survey on-line. The response to the survey was disappointing, to date, we have only received eight replies, which does not really give a clear picture of ecumenical collaboration in and around the Dublin areas. The survey was reissued in May 2026 in the hope that we may receive a better response.

DCC Finances

The DCC relies on annual subscriptions from member churches as its primary sources of income. Due to the increase in costs the council has recently had to supplement this source of income with retiring collections¹ taken at our principal ecumenical services. Additionally, Council members have secured donations to offset associated expenses.

The cost of hosting the St Patrick's Day Ecumenical Service in 2026 exceeded €1,000, including expenses for musicians, cantors, and the printing of flyers. These costs were met by donations. The DCC remains deeply grateful to the Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, who generously makes the Cathedral available for the service and provides staff support at no cost.

The cost of printing the congregation booklets for the Opening Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, was covered by a donation. The DCC extends its sincere gratitude to the clergy, volunteers, choir members, and congregation of St Thomas Indian Orthodox Church for their warm hospitality on the night.

Going forward the DCC cannot rely on external donations, as it cannot be assumed that this support will be available in the future. The annual maintenance cost of the DCC website is currently under review, with the aim of reducing expenditure while maintaining an online presence. The balance in the bank at the end of the year is €1,240.

¹ Retiring collections Week of Prayer service €325.50, St Patrick's Day Service €427

This report can be viewed as a pdf version which can be downloaded and printed from our web site www.dubincouncilofchurches.ie/documents

Member churches are encouraged to share this report within their churches as they deem appropriate.