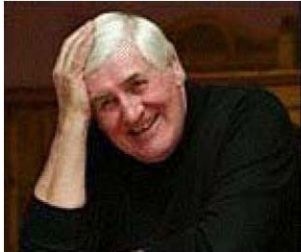




## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Irish Presbyterians choose hyper-ecumenist as leader



Ken Newell of Fitzroy  
Presbyterian Church

**The new Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rev. Ken Newell of Fitzroy church, is an ardent ecumenist with close ties with the Roman Catholic church. Since the early 1900's the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been marked with a deepening spirit of ecumenical apostasy. The exoneration of Professor J E Davey by the General Assembly in 1926, despite clear evidence of heresy, signalled a departure from God that has gathered pace and continues to this present time. Observers of the Presbyterian Church have no difficulty in noting that it is a denomination that has turned away from the doctrines and standards of Holy**

#### **Scripture.**

The ecumenism within the Irish Presbyterian Church was once again clearly highlighted with the election of Rev. Ken Newell as the next Moderator. He was elected to this prestigious position by a majority of 12 to 9 of the voting Presbyteries. The election of Rev. Ken Newell in preference to Dr. Harry Uprichard of Ahoghill, while coming as no surprise, underscores the spiritual bankruptcy within the Presbyterian Church. Rev. Ken Newell is a thorough-going ecumenist, who unashamedly promotes union with the Roman Catholic church. He has never hidden his ecumenical preferences. He has been at the forefront of joint services and is presently involved in a group called, "The Clonard/Fitzroy Fellowship." This is a fellowship formed in the 1980's, between members of Clonard Roman Catholic Monastery and Fitzroy Presbyterian church of which Ken Newell is the minister. The official "fellowship" website states: The aim of the Clonard/Fitzroy Fellowship is to promote contact, mutual understanding, respect and common witness between people from the various Christian traditions in Northern Ireland, beginning with our two local Belfast congregations of the Church, the Presbyterian congregation at Fitzroy and the Roman Catholic congregation at Clonard. The members of the Fellowship are drawn from the congregations who worship in Clonard Roman Catholic Church and Fitzroy Presbyterian Church. The group began in 1981 as an inter-church Bible study group set up under the inspiration of the late Fr Christopher McCarthy of Clonard Monastery and Rev. Ken Newell, Minister at Fitzroy Presbyterian Church. The number of people who take part in the group activities of the Fellowship in any year is never more than about 30 from each congregation. According to the same website it was formed for the following reasons:

- As a school of Christian spirituality where each one can gradually learn about the other tradition, its spiritual strengths and weaknesses.
- As an organizer of Reconciliation Services for large congregations of the church at both Fitzroy and Clonard.
- As a forum for re-examining the traditional doctrinal differences that have divided Christians and created mistrust.
- As a forum for genuine dialogue about the conflicting political loyalties in our society.
- As a witness to other congregations of the Church, Catholic and Protestant, of the value of such a local fellowship between the two traditions.
- As an explorer quietly searching for the Reconciled and Reconciling Church that is coming to be and helping to make that Church more visible.



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- As a gathering of friends who are able to socialize together and enjoy one another's culture.

### **No social group!**

This is not a social group. Ken Newell has been going to Clonard Monastery for over 20 years and has on occasions exchanged pulpits with the Roman Catholic priest. On his election as Moderator he stated, "This year ahead is a great opportunity to serve Christ and the Church and strengthen the bonds of unity within the church." Decoded, that simply means, he wants his church nearer Rome at the end of his year in office, than it already is! These facts cannot be denied. Ken Newell has never concealed his true character. Therefore, when the Presbyterian church voted for him as their Moderator, they voted for a man they knew to be an unashamed ecumenist; a man who by his actions and ambitions, wants to undo the Protestant Reformation.

Dr. Henry Cooke, the great champion of Presbyterianism opposed false religion, fought against heresy, stood against those who stood against the Lord, and campaigned for a return to the Word of God, but with the election of Ken Newell the Irish Presbyterian Church has voted a Bible denying ecumenist into its highest office.

### **What of the evangelicals?**

What about the evangelicals in that denomination? The comment has been made over recent years that "the evangelical wing" of the Presbyterian Church has been growing stronger. Apparently, there is an increasing number of younger ministers who are Bible believers and strong Protestants. I find that amazing! It is very remarkable given this supposed arrival of strong evangelicals that things are going from bad to worse. In the past years, the Presbyterian Church has welcomed Sinn Fein/ IRA spokesman, Alex Maskey as a guest of honour to its General Assembly, and now they have elected Ken Newell as Moderator – it begs the question, what would be happening if there were no evangelicals?! The reality is, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church is saturated with members who are more interested in ecumenism than evangelism. It is a denomination that has departed from the faith. It actively seeks union with the Church of Rome with many of its congregations involved in the week of prayer for Christian unity. Many of its ministers preach another gospel, which is not the gospel of Christ. Under the moderatorship of Ken Newell, they now lead the church. It has ministers, elders and other office bearers who have never experienced the new birth. It is a denomination in spiritual apostasy. The election of Ken Newell presents an urgent and undeniable challenge to every believing Presbyterian. The gospel according to the new Moderator is not the gospel of Christ and therefore he and his message are condemned by God (Galatians 1:8, 9). God does not bless apostasy. He does bless those who obey His word and He has promised that He will honour them that honour Him. It is time for professing Christians to obey the call of scripture, separate themselves from this unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6:17, Revelation 18:4) and be set for the defence of the gospel (Philippians 1:17).

*This article was written by Rev. Colin Mercer, minister of Mourne Free Presbyterian Church (Tel. 028 4176 2712). It is based upon a sermon he preached on this subject.*