

# ABOUT US



The congregation dates its origins back to 1676. A few years after that we know of the appointment of the first minister, the Rev Alexander Glass, who came over from Scotland and was appointed in 1683. The church has a continuous existence from that time to this and an unbroken sequence of ministers.

Our congregation is part of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, a long-established denomination of which we were founder members. You can be sure of a warm welcome if you would like to join us on any Sunday.

# REV DR HENRY MONTGOMERY



The church is particularly notable for the ministry of the Rev Dr Henry Montgomery (1788–1865) theologian, educator, radical thinker and supporter of Catholic Emancipation, for 56 years the minister of this church. He is especially remembered for his struggles with his conservative opponent within the Synod of Ulster, the Rev Henry Cooke, which led to Montgomery leading the Non-Subscribers out of the Synod of Ulster and into the new Remonstrant Synod in 1830. He is commemorated by a blue plaque on the outside wall of the church. An advocate of civil and religious liberty he made his stand on a rejection of the imposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith as he refused to be confined by humanly manufactured creeds, hence the term Non-Subscribers.

# VERY REV WILLIAM MCMILLAN

In more recent times the church has been especially identified with the ministry of the Rev William McMillan, MBE, whose fame in the areas of horticulture and floral art spread all around the world. The 'Rev Mac' was minister at Dunmurry from 1970 to 2016 and continued as minister emeritus until his death in 2020.

He was a recipient of the Albert Schweitzer Award for his work during the Troubles his expertise in the world of flowers helped him raise over £1 million for charity. He was also a respected historian and copies of his biography of Henry Montgomery, *A Profile in Courage*, are available in the church. He is commemorated by a memorial garden in the grounds and by his library.





# OUR FAITH

We continue in this tradition of being open and liberal and seek to give a welcome to all who will come. Our ethos is 'faith guided by reason and conscience' and we encourage all to engage in this life-long quest unfettered by creeds or narrow doctrines. For us everyone has the right to read the scriptures for themselves and to exercise their own judgement in the context of a community which is defined not by creed but by love and by a shared sense of being part of the people of God. We continue as 'non-subscribers', refusing to confine God to a limited human understanding enshrined in what can only be a partial statement. As George Rawson wrote in the nineteenth century, in words based on those of Pastor John Robinson's address to the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620:

***We limit not the truth of God  
To our poor reach of mind,  
By notions of our day and sect,  
Crude, partial, and confined."***



# WORSHIP



We meet for worship every Sunday at 11.30am and at other times as announced. On Sundays we also have a Sunday School and a Youth Group, and children and young people come in to the start of the service and leave for their own activities after about 15 minutes.

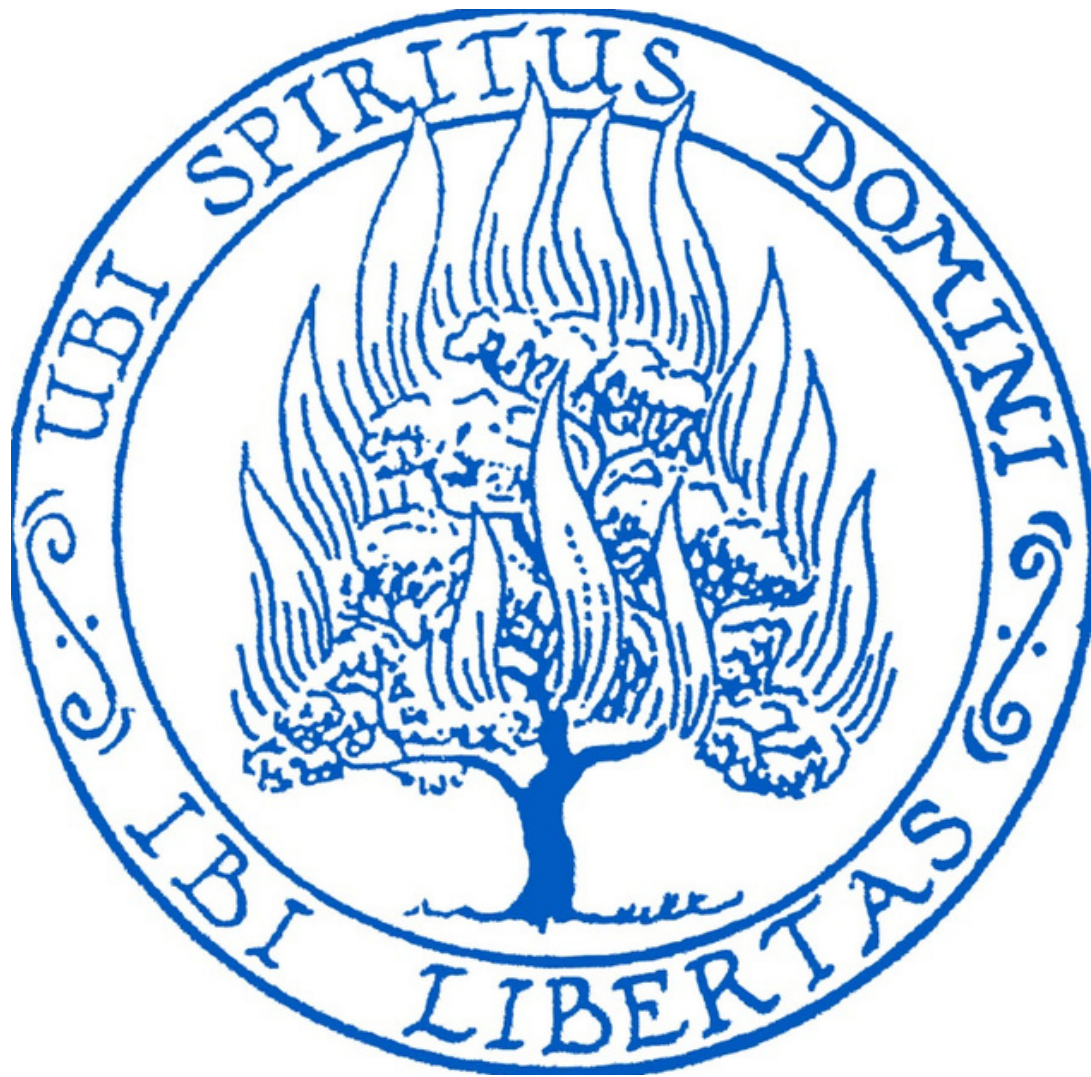
Our worship services usually last about an hour and include four hymns, two readings, prayers and a sermon. We also have recorded services and shorter reflections available for viewing on our YouTube channel.



# OUR LIFE

Next to the church is the McCleery Hall which is used for a variety of activities throughout the week, these are listed on our website, but include the Glebe Gardening Club, regular yoga classes and other organisations as well as discussions and illustrated talks. On Thursdays we have a coffee morning from 10.00am to 12 Noon which is open to all and provides a time of fellowship. This runs from September to June. We seek to be ecumenical in our church life and co-operate closely with the other churches in the vicinity. We are also aware of our responsibilities to wider society and to the environment, supporting various charitable causes and projects at home and around the world, and currently have a programme, in conjunction with the RSPB, to encourage the swift, an endangered species, to re-establish in our locality.





*"Where the spirit of the Lord is,  
there is liberty."*

2 Corinthians 3:17



# STAY IN TOUCH



## Services

### Sunday Worship

Weekly, 11.30am – 12.30pm

### Sunday School & Youth Group

Weekly from September to June, 11.30am – 12.30pm

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[www.firstchurchdunmurry.com](http://www.firstchurchdunmurry.com)

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