

4 December 2019

TO ALL MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Dear Colleagues,

For the third time this year, we are being asked to cast our vote in an election. I am sure that it hasn't escaped your notice that this is also the third time since 2015 that we have been given the opportunity to do so in a General Election. Unlike most elections, when the polls open in sunlight and close before twilight comes, in this first December election in nearly a century, they will open in darkness and close in darkness.

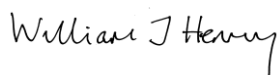
For younger members of your congregation this may be an exciting time as they engage and participate in their first General Election. However, given the ongoing stagnation in Northern Ireland's political situation, or the stalemate over Brexit at Westminster, which precipitated this very election, and other more seasonal reasons, some may feel a little reluctant to go out and vote.

Even so, may I encourage you and your congregation to approach this General Election prayerfully and to vote in the hope that those we elect will work with a commitment to the common good and with generosity of spirit towards one another?

Polling Day, Thursday, 12 December, may provide additional opportunities to demonstrate in both a practical and personal way the love of Christ through offering a lift to those who may have difficulty in getting out to vote, or may be a little apprehensive about venturing to a polling station in the cold or the dark.

As my predecessors have reminded us in the run up to other elections, engaging and participating in the democratic process is one of the ways that we seek 'the peace and prosperity of the city' to which we have been called (Jeremiah 29:7). At the same time please remember to pray for those in political authority, and for those who seek it.

Yours in Christ



Rt Rev Dr William Henry
Moderator