

22nd February 2017

TO ALL MINISTERS AND CONGREGATIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Dear Colleagues,

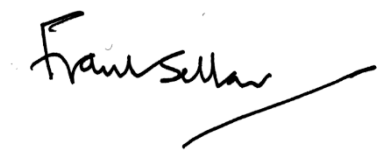
On Thursday 2nd March people will once again make their way to polling stations across Northern Ireland to elect a new Assembly. Following May's election few of us expected a return to the ballot box within such a short space of time. In these circumstances we could easily be cynical and pessimistic about politics, but as followers of Christ who are called to pray for our political leaders (1 Timothy 2:2) we take comfort in the knowledge that He is able to make things work for good in the brokenness of our lives and our world.

Since becoming Moderator I have had the privilege of meeting many wonderful people across the island of Ireland who are serving the Lord Jesus in different ways. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the vital work that you do helping people in need and coming alongside those who are struggling. You will be well aware of the spectrum of difficult and complex issues facing individuals and local communities – issues in which government often has responsibilities and a definite role to play.

Engaging and participating in the democratic process is, therefore, one of the ways that we may seek 'the peace and prosperity of the city' to which we have been called (Jeremiah 29:7). So can I encourage you and your congregation to approach the upcoming election prayerfully and to vote, in the hope that the people we elect will work with integrity, generosity of spirit and a commitment to the common good?

As we do so, let us always have in mind the words of Scripture and the example of Jesus, which teach us to love our neighbours; to love our enemies; to care for the weak, poor and most vulnerable; and, above all, to love God with all our heart and soul and mind.

Yours in His service,



FRANK SELLAR

Moderator