

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

Remembering Ukraine

Ukrainian Catholic Icon Procession

Sunday 9th March is the First Sunday of Lent. In the Byzantine tradition this is marked as the “Sunday of Orthodoxy”.

This commemorates the end of the ‘Iconoclast Controversy’ in the 9th Century when the Byzantine Church affirmed the legitimacy of Religious Art.

To mark this, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic community of Belfast during their monthly Worship at St Patrick’s Donegal Street, will include an icon procession in the Church.

All are welcome to come and take part with icons and religious pictures.

Start Lent experiencing the unique Catholic traditions of the East!

Sunday 9th March St Patrick’s Donegal Street 1pm



UKRAINIAN DIVINE LITURGY in Belfast

13:00 - Divine Liturgy
(second Sunday of the month)

Celebrant:
Fr. Taras Khomych

Address: St. Patrick's Church
199 Donegal street
Belfast BT1 2FL



News

Ukrainian Archbishop addresses Washington, as Trump U-turns on Zelensky

Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is visiting the United States, as president Trump continues to make controversial remarks about the country's leadership.

In a surprise twist, Donald Trump has called for Zelensky and Putin to meet for peace talks, days after calling the



Ukrainian president a “dictator” on his Truth Social platform, insisting that he had no need to be present in negotiations with Russia.

“He refuses to have elections. He’s low in the real Ukrainian polls. How can you be high with every city being *Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*

demolished?” Trump wrote, “He claimed the Ukrainian president only had a 4% approval rating - yet recent BBC polling shows 57% of Ukrainians support Zelensky as their leader.

Shevchuk used the spotlight of his US visit to bolster his country’s leader. He also warned against propaganda, and Russian claims about NATO being a security threat.

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Speaking in Washington DC, the Archbishop said: “If someone believes that NATO expansion is the cause of the war, they are blindly following Russian narratives and propaganda.

“NATO did not exist in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, nor were security concerns an issue for the Soviet Union during the Holodomor [famine].”

“I am neither a politician nor a public figure; I am a clergyman entrusted with the custody, prayer, and guidance of God’s people – the suffering, yet dignified children of God who seek peace and demand justice,” Shevchuk said.

He was joined by the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia, Borys Gudziak, who added: “Don’t worry about politicians. Don’t worry about meetings somewhere far away. Believe that the Lord is where it hurts.”

“He wipes the tears of those who cry. He supports those who are persecuted. God’s truth will prevail. We, Ukrainians, have experienced too many miracles not to believe.”

Faith groups use courts to oppose Trump executive orders

President Trump’s executive orders are mobilising faith groups. Action includes suing the administration over the reintroduction of immigration raids in places of worship and the freeze of the federal refugee-resettlement programme.

Twenty-seven faith groups, including the Episcopal Church, other Protestant denominations, and several Jewish organisations, have filed two lawsuits this month in response to the orders signed by the President the day after his inauguration on 20 January (Analysis, 24 January). The actions have been filed against the US Department for Homeland Security.

They argue that the administration is violating freedom of religion and freedom of association, on the grounds that congregations have reported that worshippers from immigrant communities are staying away for fear of arrest and detention, and faith organisations are unable to fulfil their faith's mandate to welcome and serve immigrants.

In some places, even church members with documented legal status are choosing to stay at home, for fear that they may be mistakenly arrested on the basis of their appearance, the lawsuit says.

One arrest has so far been reported, at a place of worship in Tucker, Georgia, as the sermon at the Iglesia Fuente de Vida church was ending. The daily newspaper Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that an asylum-seeker, Wilson Velasquez, was attending church when his Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) ankle monitor beeped. When he stepped outside the church, he was arrested by ICE agents.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Dr Sean Rowe, said that, in God's Kingdom, "immigrants and refugees are not at the edges, fearful and alone, but are the

**THE TAFT
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA
& JAZZ BAND**
Connecticut, USA

Monday 10th March 7.30pm
St Joseph's Church, Glasthule

Beautiful music for Chamber Orchestra
by Bach, Piazzolla and others, plus
funky jazz standards by Stevie Wonder,
Bill Withers and Oscar Hammerstein.
A musical feast for all tastes!

Musical Director **T.J. Thompson**

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very centre of God's story. . . We believe their struggles reveal the heart of God, and we cannot worship freely if some among us live in fear. We are seeking the ability to fully gather and follow Jesus's command to love our neighbours as ourselves.

“We are told by the rulers of our day that the rich shall be first; that compassion is a weakness; that we should regard the migrants and strangers among us with fear and contempt. But I ask us all to see that our true citizenship is

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in God's Kingdom, where the meek shall inherit the earth, the merciful shall receive mercy, and the captives shall go free."

Another lawsuit has been filed by the Quakers, with support from the Co-operative Baptist Fellowship and a Sikh temple, arguing that the administration has violated freedom of assembly.

Churches are also raising funds to continue their work supporting migrants, despite the freezing of the migrant-resettlement scheme, which has already led to the winding down of Episcopal Migration Ministries operations, for lack of funding.

The Bishop of Minnesota, the Rt Revd Craig Loya, has created a new migrant-support fund to continue the work and offer support to other organisations left without insufficient funds.

Bishop Loya told the Episcopal News Service (ENS) that he set up the fund because the diocese has nine congregations in which migrants form the majority or a large minority. "We are richly blessed by this diversity. We really feel as a diocese we have to provide a response."

The diocese had donated \$10,000, and more than 100 individuals had since donated, he said.

Apology by Down diocese over alleged abuse by priest

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Catholic bishop apologises for failing five people including minors who reported being abused by a now deceased priest and acknowledged that a new allegation is “entirely credible”.

Bishop Alan McGuckian has confirmed that last year he was made aware that the Diocese of of Down and Connor had recently received an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor against the late Fr Patrick O’Neill.

CONCERT FOR PEACE 

LED BY

*The Island Of Ireland
Peace Choir*

WITH MUSICAL DIRECTOR DR PHIL BRENNAN
CHRIST CHURCH CELBRIDGE
ON
SATURDAY 1ST MARCH.2025
AT 7.30PM

 **SPECIAL GUEST**
DAVID CALDWELL
PIPER

 **Tickets €25**

DOORS OPEN 6.30PM

Tickets available 087 795 2271 or Eventbrite

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It followed a similar “credible” allegation In October 2004 relating to the alleged sexual abuse of a minor by the same priest, who was suspended from ministry in the Parish of Arkeen to allow a police investigation to take place.

Despite the PPS’s decision not to prosecute, Fr O’Neill remained out of ministry on a permanent basis until his death in 2009.

“A statement was drafted by the Diocese at this time but was not issued,” a letter from Bishop McGuckian issued to parishes within the Diocese reads.

“This statement would have empowered other victims to come forward

"This failure to issue a statement has also compounded the hurt endured by his victims and their families. This omission to issue a public statement is a matter of deep regret by the Diocese.”

In addition to the two allegations of the sexual abuse of a minor, three other credible allegations of sexual abuse of adults, manipulation and abuse of power were made against Fr O’Neill in 2003, 2005 and 2006.

They relate to alleged abuse spanning the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s when Fr O’Neill was ministering in Down and Connor.

Bishop McGuckian said all of the cases in relation to the adults were reported to the PSNI and said the diocese is




formerly known as
THE REGAN SINGERS

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50 years
founded 1975

PRESENTS

Sperrin *Gold*

an evening of sacred, gospel and popular music



Portstewart Presbyterian Church
Enfield Street, Portstewart

Saturday 22nd March 2025

Doors open 7:00pm / Concert 7:30pm

Tickets from Church Office 028 7083 4529 (10:00am - 1:00pm Wed-Fri)
or phone Cathy on 077 4375 1478

Subscription: £10
Proceeds in aid of Church funds. Reg. N.I. Charity No. 105562

“fully committed” to protecting people and “bringing healing to the victims of abuse”.

"The Diocese is committed in working to support those individuals who have been abused by Fr O’Neill. I would also extend this support to their families who have been so anguished by the abuse of their loved ones,” he concluded.

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“On behalf of the Diocese of Down and Connor, I extend my deepest sorrow and unreserved apology to all those who have courageously come forward and to each of their families. I fully accept that no apology can undo the damage, hurt, trauma and pain that has been caused to the victims and their families.

“I also extend my deepest sorrow and unreserved apology to anyone who suffered abuse at the hands of a priest of the Diocese in whom they had placed their trust.

“The Diocese encourages anyone who has concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse to come forward and to report that abuse to the statutory authorities or to the Diocese of Down and Connor Safeguarding Office on 028 9049 2798.” Courtesy Brett Campbell, The Belfast Telegraph, 23 February 2025

Education

NI Young Musicians' Platform Awards

Six exceptional musicians from Northern Ireland have been awarded the NI Young Musicians' Platform Award, supported by The National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and BBC Northern Ireland.

The six award recipients include three classical awardees, harpist, Rosie Murphy, soprano, Zoë Jackson and violinist and composer, Samuel Kane; traditional folk music awardee, uilleann piper, Maeve O'Donnell; contemporary

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singer-songwriter awardee, Becky McNeice, and jazz awardee, Timothy Boomer.

Read more about the awards: <https://artscouncil-ni.org/news/six-exceptional-musicians-awarded-young-musicians-platform-awards>



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MCB Easter Concert

Tickets are selling fast for our Easter Concert on Thursday 13 March at the Waterfront Hall featuring our

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Choirs, Orchestras, Big Band, Swing Band & Trad. Group in an eclectic programme of music to suit all tastes.

In the second part of the concert, the Senior Choir and Orchestra will present excerpts from composer Karl Jenkins' newest work 'One World'. The soprano soloist will be Susan Shepherd and the mezzo-soprano soloist will be Jenny Bourke.

Tickets are available directly from the Waterfront Hall Box Office

<https://ow.ly/E3V250V55Yc>

Scripture Union Northern Ireland schools roadshows

Scripture Union Northern Ireland are hosting 3 local 'Roadshows' this March designed for anyone working or serving in schools to consider how we can be present as Christians in our school communities in a whole variety of ways. (The content will be the same at each gathering).

Irish Society Primary School, Coleraine
– Thursday 6th March | 7pm - 9.30pm

Richmond Primary School, Ballygawley
– Tuesday 11th March | 7pm - 9.30pm

Ballymacash Primary School, Lisburn
– Saturday 15th March | 10am - 12.30pm

→ Register at:
suni.jotform.com/250072073605044

Henry Brothers host pupils from Belfast High School and Nagle Community College, Cork

As part of their social value commitments at the Queen's University Belfast led Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre, Henry Brothers was delighted to host pupils from Belfast High School and Nagle Community College, Cork for site tours/workshops as a Co-operation Ireland Business Ambassador engagement initiative at the Factory of the Future site.

This cross-border initiative forms an important part of its achievement of the Bronze Peace Award delivered by Co-Operation Ireland Future Leaders Programme.

The programme aims to empower the next generation of young leaders and peacebuilders with the skills to make a positive contribution to the future development of their own communities, while working with others from diverse backgrounds.

Royal Academy of Culinary Arts (RACA) event at the Belfast Met's Titanic Quarter Campus

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Sysco, Ireland's leading foodservice specialist, along with its Classic Drinks, sponsored the food and drinks at the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts (RACA) event which took place at the Belfast Met's Titanic Quarter Campus recently.

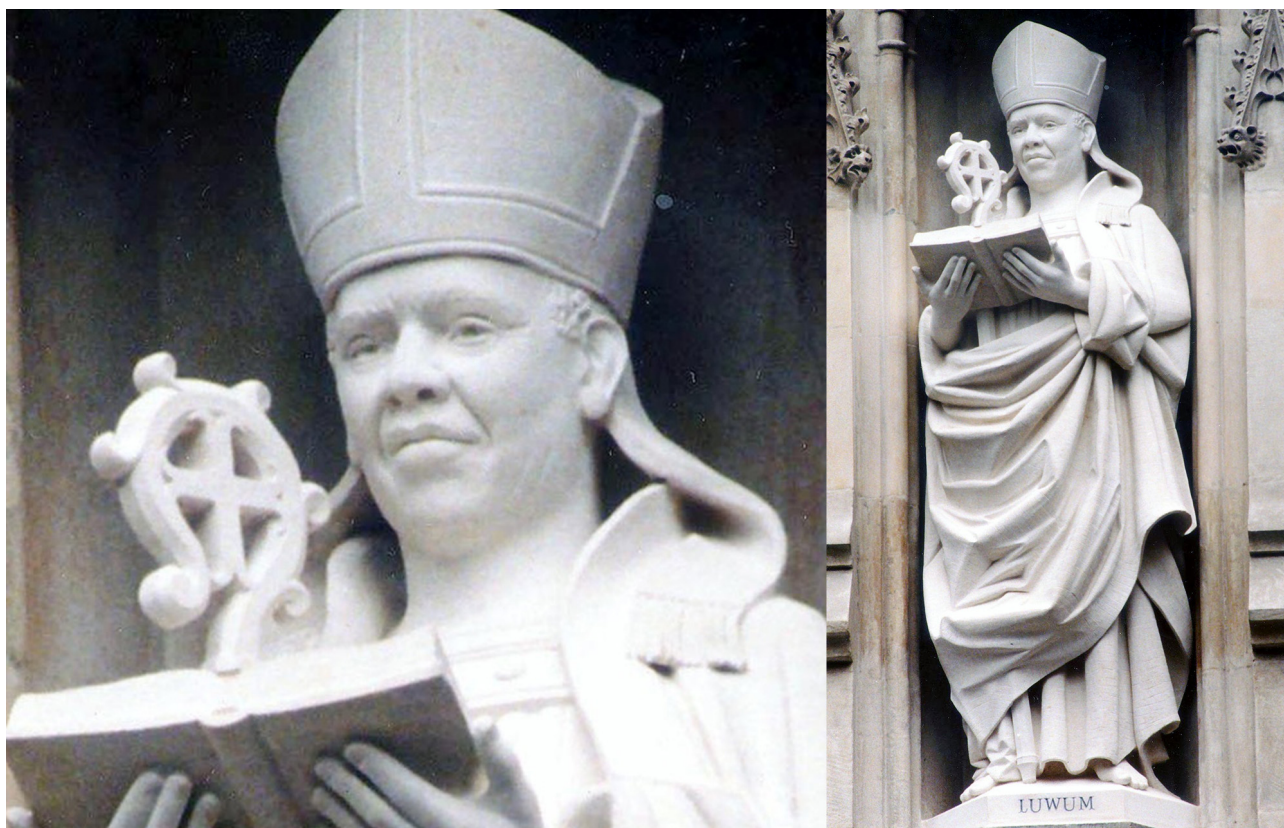
As part of the event hospitality students from South Eastern Regional College had the opportunity to work alongside renowned chefs Connor Johnston, Head Chef at Deanes Meat Locker, Great British Menu contestant, Chris McClurg and Head Chef of the Royal Household Mark Flanagan LVO. Speaking at the event, Sysco's Jeff Ewart commented: "We are delighted to support the RACA event which aims to encourage more students to get into and advance their career in the hospitality sector. It was great to see the students working with top chefs to provide a delicious meal from the products we supplied." Courtesy Farming Life.

Pictured (l-r) are: Jeff Ewart, Sysco, Johnny Grant, Classic Drinks, Connor Johnston, Chris McClurg and Mark Flanagan LVO.

Cathedral Calls

Ten 20th century martyrs memorialised at Westminster Abbey

Janani Luwum - Archbishop and Martyr



On 17th February, the Church of England commemorates Ugandan Archbishop Janani Luwum, who was martyred in 1977 by Idi Amin's regime.

On 6th January 1948 a young school teacher, Janani Luwum, was converted to the charismatic Christianity of the East African Revival, in his own village in Acoli, Uganda. At once he turned evangelist, warning against the dangers of drink and tobacco, and, in the eyes of local authorities, disturbing the peace. But Luwum was undeterred by official censure. He was determined to confront all who needed, in his eyes, to change their ways before God. When training for ordination and in his first decade of ministry, Luwum won a reputation for creative and active leadership, promoting a new vision with energy and commitment. He was consecrated bishop of Northern Uganda, on 25th January 1969. In the midst of Idi Amin's violent regime in 1974,



Luwum was elected Archbishop of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Boga-Zaire.

He pressed ahead with the reform of his church in time to mark the centenary of the creation of the Anglican province. But he also warned that the Church should not conform to "the powers of darkness". Amin cultivated a relationship with the archbishop, arguably to acquire credibility. For his part, Luwum sought to mitigate the effects of his rule, and to plead for its victims.

On 12th February 1977, Luwum delivered a protest to Amin against all acts of violence that were allegedly the work of the security services. Church leaders were summoned to Kampala and then ordered to leave, one by one. Luwum turned to Bishop Festo Kivengere and said, "They are going to kill me. I am not afraid". Finally alone, he was taken away

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and murdered. Later his body was buried near St Paul's Church, Mucwini.

A memorial service for the Archbishop was held in Westminster Abbey on 30th March 1977.

In his chapter for Luwum in The Noble Army (2024), The Rt. Reverend Anthony Ball, Archdeacon and Canon Steward at the Abbey writes:

“In both his actions and his speech, Luwum was an uncompromising witness for what he saw as God’s justice and love. Our own times are rife with complex issues that do not immediately present themselves as specifically religious ones - refugees, ceasefires, international aid, the environment, social inclusion. In each, our individual



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response needs to be informed by our Christian faith. What will cause us to say, 'so far and no further'?

May Janani Luwum inspire us not to conform to the powers of darkness but rather to seek to transform the world for 'the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come' (Revelation 1:8)."

Events



ALL SAINTS CHURCH CLOONEY

07
MARCH

AFRICAN
CHILDREN'S
CHOIR

7PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM PARISH OFFICE
ADULTS £5/CHILDREN £3/ FAMILIES £12

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African Children's Choir at All Saints Clooney, Derry

In less than 2 weeks The African Children's Choir will join All Saints Clooney, Derry, for a spectacular evening of singing. These children are rooted in their faith, have big dreams and produce voices of hope and change.

They will be accompanied by local primary school choirs and we encourage you to get your tickets to come along and support all these young talents.

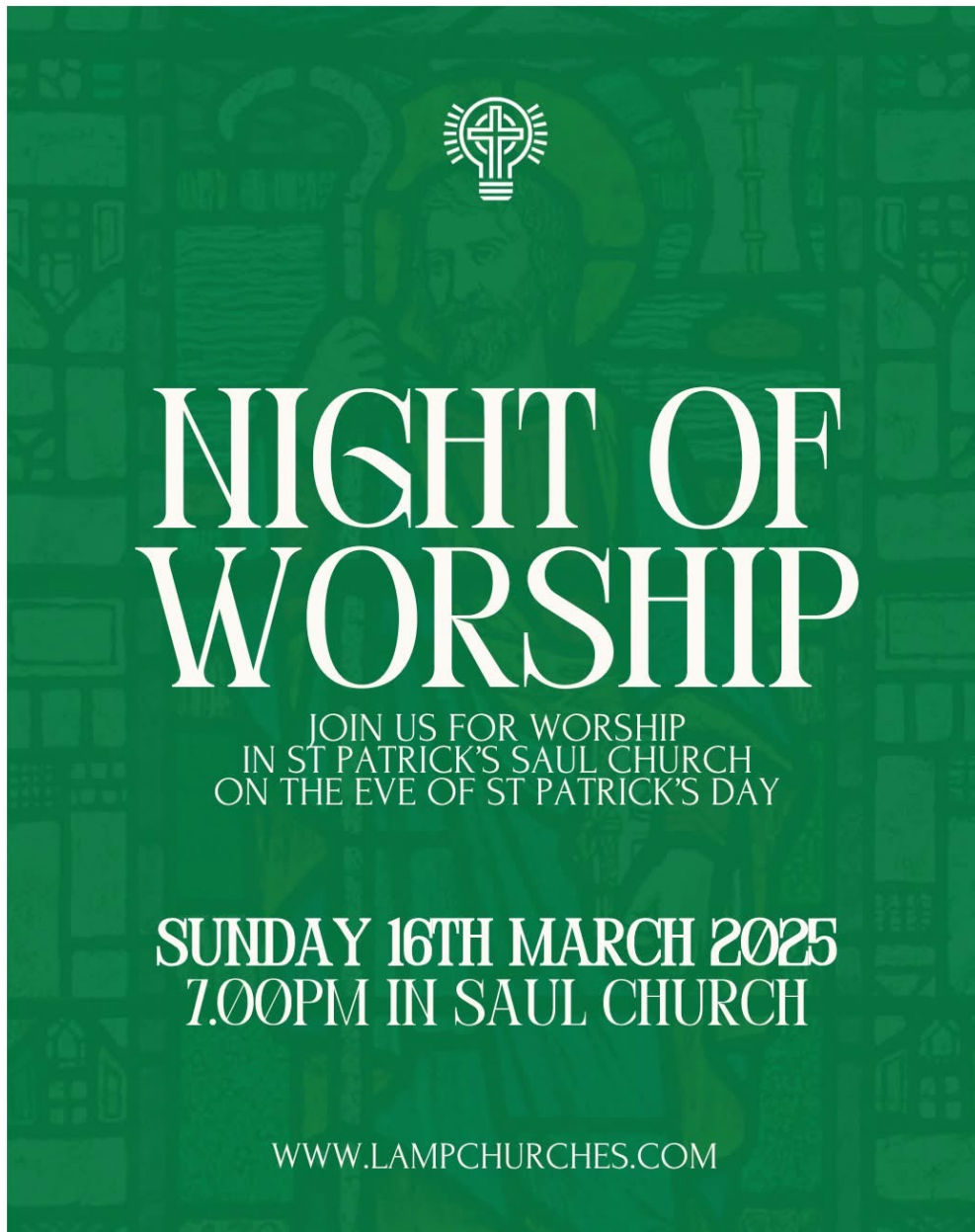
Friday 7th March. 7pm. Tickets: Adults £5, Children £3 or Families £12. Tickets available from parish office or ReLoved charity shop.

Be part of this vibrant evening celebrating the power of music and community.

N.B. All funds raised will go towards supporting Africa's most vulnerable children, helping to shape a brighter tomorrow for Africa

Night of Worship in Saul Church - Eve of St Patrick's Day

We invite you to a Night of Worship at Saul Church, just outside Downpatrick on Sunday 16th March 2025 at 7.00pm.



Saul Church is known as the Cradle of Christianity in Ireland. St Patrick was gifted the site in 432AD and founded the church.

From Saul, Patrick traveled extensively sharing the message of Jesus Christ and he died at Saul on 17th March 461.

Come and join us on Sunday 16th March 2025 at 7.00pm as we worship together and pray for our nation.

Live-streaming for churches

What is live streaming, why does it matter, and how can you get started with it?

One of the best ongoing resource is the C of Es Digital Labs blog

Find out in Digital Labs blog at -

[<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/blogs/livestreaming-2025-and-top-3-beginner-friendly-live-streaming-platforms-churches>]

C of E webinar Supporting Church Volunteers

How Supporting Church Volunteers. Register for this C of E webinar on Feb 24, 2025 at 02:00 PM

NI Libraries Learn @ Lunch series

If you missed NI Libraries most recent Learn @ Lunch series, you can watch every Photography session with Catriona Corrigan on their YouTube.

Watch now at. <https://tinyurl.com/LNIYTLaL2>

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In the media

Stakeknife and the IRA's murder of Jean McConville



Over last weekend **The Irish News** crime and security correspondent Connla Young produced a series of reports around Stakeknife and the IRA's abduction and murder of Jean McConville, based on the newly published book **The Sorrow and the Loss - The Tragic Shadow Cast by the Troubles on the Lives of Women** by author and journalist Martin Dillon.

Starmer has done nothing to end Ukraine war, says Trump

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Asked about a visit by Sir Keir Starmer and French president Emmanuel Macron to Washington next week, Donald Trump said: “They didn’t do anything either [to end the war](#). The war’s going on, no meetings with Russia, no nothing.”

Speaking to Fox News, the US president said the only reason Russia had joined talks on ending the war was “because of me”. Mr Trump also doubled down on his criticism of Volodymyr Zelensky, saying he was “sick” of the Ukrainian president as he made it “hard” to make deals - Daily Telegraph

Alex Kane:commented : The secret to understanding Trump is that he views everything like property

Heritage

Irish needlework instruction book from 1833

This rare Irish needlework instruction book from 1833 contains samples of sewing, darning, embroidery, knitting and miniature clothing, and was used at the Female Model school in Kildare Place, Dublin.

It is called 'A Concise Account of the Mode of Instructing in Needle-Work', and was printed by Thomas I. White of Dublin in 1833. The cover is inscribed 'Sarah Darby 1837'. These



are normal needlework instruction manuals that the students would paste their work into.

In May last year this book was auctioned by Freeman's Hindman of Philadelphia, PA, with an estimate of \$3,000-\$5,000!

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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