

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Girls' Brigade Queen's Award

June 21, 2024

Image of the day

Girls' Brigade Queen's Award



Two parishioners of Derryvullen North and Castle Archdale who are members of the Girls' Brigade, Jasmine and Rebecca, were recently presented with the Queen's Award.

They belong to the Irvinestown GB Company meeting in the Presbyterian Church. This is a wonderful account of how inter-church co-operation enables individuals and the kingdom of God.

The GB Officers arranged a presentation evening for Jasmine and Rebecca and also prepared a very enjoyable buffet supper as well. It was all very enjoyable and much appreciated.



The Queen's Award is the highest honour that can be achieved in the Girls' Brigade and involves a great deal of commitment and work in church and community. We congratulate them on this wonderful achievement. Well done!

It aims to encourage girls and young women to make a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ while respecting other faiths. The award inspires them to greater endeavor in service within the general community and to contribute to the worldwide concept of The Girls' Brigade.

To earn the Queen's Award, girls must demonstrate various skills and qualities, including leadership, commitment, in-depth knowledge of the Girls' Brigade organization, community spirit, good citizenship, and faith in action. The award consists of six elements that girls must excel in, including spiritual development, service to the company and community, initiative tests, a project in a particular area of interest, a study paper covering topics such as the



monarchy and knowledge of Girls' Brigade, and a final assessment.

<https://gbni.co.uk/what-we-do/our-awards/queens-award>
<https://gbni.co.uk/>

News

Support for The Olive Branch by St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt

A total of £900 was raised during St Mary's Spring Concert and has been donated to The Olive Branch.

The Olive Branch offers a free, professional self-referral counselling service for anyone from the age of 11 years and



upwards and they have offices in Magherafelt, Coleraine and Ballymena. The Olive Branch is a self-funded organisation, funded by sponsorship, and by funds raised through events, competitions and individual personal challenges. St. Mary's is pleased to support the valuable work of this local charity.

Tributes to Portrush organist

A couple of tributes were made this week to wish Adrian Anderson, organist at Ballywillan, a happy 50 years as Organist there.

Wells - Kennedy, the organ-builders said "Adrian has been instrumental of all the wonderful music that takes place in Ballywillan. Many will remember the Summer Series of recitals which Adrian organised for 30 years.



“Without all the research and work from Adrian the present Organ would not have been installed in Ballywillan.

“Adrian, from all of us here at Wells Kennedy we congratulate you on your milestone and wish you many more years to come at Ballywillan”.

Holy Trinity Parish, Portrush, also upheld Adrian’s service to God and his people - “Congratulations to Adrian Anderson who celebrated a wonderful fifty years as organist of



Ballywillan Presbyterian Church. Adrian, who has played at Holy Trinity's evening services for over twenty years, has been the most faithful servant of God and his people and has inspired and encouraged countless numbers with his talented and sensitive playing of the organ. As he celebrates his Golden Jubilee, we wish him many more years of health to continue to lead God's people in praise". And the people

of God in those parts say Amen.

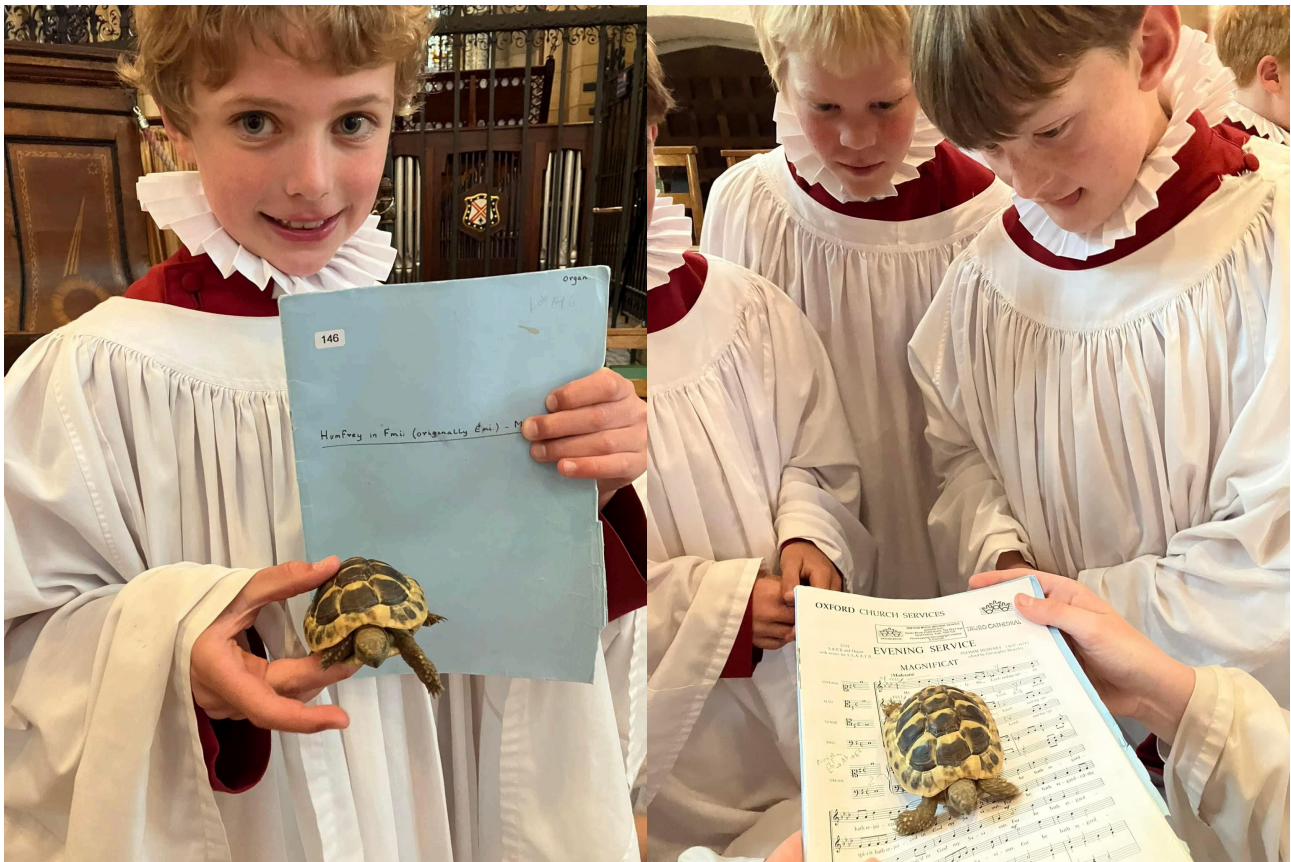


This aerial view of Ballintoy Church, captured by the talented Ken Cox,

highlights its historic charm and serene surroundings.

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Cathedral Calls



Truro Cathedral Tortoise

“Today, our choristers enjoyed reopening St Mary’s Aisle, the only parish church contained within a cathedral.

“Helping the team out was Humphrey, a chorister’s pet tortoise, who came along to check out the singing of today’s canticles ‘Hunfrey in E minor’ “

Ulster Project members heading to USA

The Dean of Derry, The Very Reverend Raymond Stewart and The Reverend Father Michael McCaughey, conducted the Closing Service of The Ulster Project in St Columb's



Cathedral on Wednesday 12th June 2024. They are pictured with the teens who will be heading to America in July.

New Dean of Worcester

The Revd Canon Dr Stephen Edwards has been appointed by HM The King as the new Dean of Worcester.

Stephen has been Interim Dean since the retirement of the Very Revd Peter Atkinson.

He will be installed as Dean on Sunday 15 Sept.



Remembering Stephen Hawking

The ashes of Professor Stephen Hawking were buried in Scientists' Corner in Westminster Abbey during A Service of Thanksgiving on June 15th in 2018. The Hawking family placed flowers and a medal in the grave. The Dean of Westminster Very Rev Dr John Hall. officiated.

Churches unite to defend Newry Cathedral - Newry Democrat report

Newry's Catholic, Anglican and Methodist church leaders have joined together to defend the city's cathedral, Peter Bayne reports in the Newry Democrat, Monday June 17.



Newry Cathedral Parish Administrator Canon Francis Brown (Centre above), Church of Ireland Rector Canon Scott McDonald and Rev Louise Donald of the Methodist Churches of Newry, Bessbrook and Warrenpoint are united in their concern over council plans to overshadow the Gothic granite grandeur of Newry Cathedral with a vast concrete office block known as the ‘Civic and Regional Hub’,

The city cathedral was the first opened in Ireland after Catholic emancipation. The building was constructed in 1829 – just as most restrictions were lifted from Roman Catholics across the UK and Ireland. The Catholic diocese dates back to the sixth century.

Believing their listed place of worship to be under threat, more than 2,500 Catholic parishioners have signed letters of protest objecting to the council offices. Their complaints were presented recently to the planning department of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

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Canon Francis Brown – who has just celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination – feels the Council should listen to the community and put a halt to this ‘expensive, unpopular and unnecessary project’ that parishioners feel will eclipse the Cathedral’s bicentenary celebrations in 2029. ‘Newry people are asking the Council not to blight its appearance with a wholly inappropriate modern building,’ he said. ‘Surely this is not too much to ask?’

Canon Scott McDonald – who is Rector of St Patrick's and St Mary's, Newry – said, ‘I fully support Canon Brown and his parishioners as they seek to protect the environment around the Cathedral. I would hope that their entirely legitimate concerns are not just noted – but also addressed respectfully and diligently. As a faith community they must be heard seriously and their protests upheld’.

Revd Louise Donald said, ‘The congregations who form the Newry Circuit of the Methodist Church in Ireland would urge Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to give serious consideration to all options in relation to the siting of the new Civic Hub – and in particular to give due deliberation to the concerns raised by parishioners of Newry Cathedral.

‘The impact of any new construction on the buildings which surround it must be adequately assessed, but surely particular regard must be given to a structure with the historic and aesthetic significance of the Cathedral. There should also be attention given to any potential constraint on the life of the worshipping community of the Cathedral, which has been present there for almost 200 years.’



Centenary visit to Derry Cathedral parishioner

This week as she and her three children celebrated her 100th birthday. Bishop Andrew Forster arrived with the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart.

They brought birthday greetings from her fellow parishioners and from elsewhere in the Diocese. Etta is a lifelong member of St Columb's Cathedral.

Bishop Andrew said he and the Dean enjoyed their visit to Etta's home immensely. "We had a fascinating conversation about her life growing up in the city, and her memories of life here during the Second World War. It was lovely to be with her and her three children at her home."

Independent review of Winchester Cathedral music department

The Bishop of Winchester has commissioned an independent review of Winchester Cathedral, it was announced late on Tuesday.

The review comes after weeks of allegations about the conduct of the cathedral's music department, and the resignation of the senior non-executive member of Winchester Cathedral Chapter, Mark Byford, a former head of the BBC World Service and its former deputy director-general.

A brief statement by the Bishop, the Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, refers to this resignation, saying: "In the light of that significant development in the cathedral's governance, the Bishop has decided to commission an independent review, under the terms of the Cathedral's Measure 2021, into the events that have led to this."

The Dean of Winchester, the Very Revd Catherine Ogle, said this week that the cathedral's music was "fundamental to our worship".

Last week, Winchester Cathedral appointed an interim director of music, Andrew Lucas, from St Albans Cathedral, to succeed Dr Andrew Lumsden, whose unexpected resignation on 2 May triggered allegations about the management of the cathedral's music department.

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A call for an independent review of the department came from Toshi Ogita, a chorister and professional singer who deputises for the lay clerks of Winchester Cathedral Choir. Last week, he wrote to Bishop Mounstephen, as questions around the circumstances of Mr Lumsden's departure and the behaviour of the Precentor, Canon Andy Trenier, continued to surface on choral social-media sites and in sections of the press.

Clergy

Dublin ordinations

Ordination to the Priesthood



THE REVD DR
MATHEW
MCCAULEY



THE REVD
CAROLINE
BRENNAN



THE REVD
MIKE
BUCHANAN

Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin
Sunday 23 June 2024 at 3.30pm

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This Sunday, June 23, the Revd Mathew McCauley, the Revd Caroline Brennan and the Revd Mike Buchanan will be ordained to the priesthood in Christ Church Cathedral Dublin at 3.30pm.

Archbishop Michael Jackson will preside and the preacher will be Dean Dermot Dunne.

The Revd Mathew McCauley is being ordained for Curacy in Saint Bartholomew's Church (Self Supporting Ministry). The Revd Caroline Brennan is being ordained for Curacy in Kilternan Parish Church of Ireland. The Revd Mike Buchanan is being ordained for Curacy in @Rathfarnham Parish Church of Ireland.

Derry & Raphoe Pioneer Ministry Hub conversation

The Big House near Limavady was a serious venue for a serious conversation as members of the Derry & Raphoe Pioneer Ministry Hub team gathered to discuss and think through the possibilities for this new and evolving form of ministry.

They met for a 'Vision and Prayer Day' under the leadership and guidance of the director of the Church of Ireland's national Pioneer Ministry team, Rev Rob Jones.

The Pioneer Ministry initiative was launched last year and seeks to reach those with little or no connection with church or with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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The meeting was joined by Bishop Andrew Forster who said it was a really good opportunity to hear from Rob about the next steps we can take in our diocese to develop Pioneer Ministry and to think through and pray about what it might mean for those here with little or no connection with the Church.

“We thank Rob and his colleagues at Pioneer Ministry Col for their leadership in this exciting initiative. We were blessed to have him join us today and we look forward to seeing what the Lord has planned for us in the not too distant future”.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Triathlon of Pilgrimage

Dromore Diocese is holding a Triathlon of Pilgrimage to Lough Derg, Knock and Croagh Patrick.

Cost of the pilgrimage is £150. 28 places are available and a deposits of £30 will secure your place. Email youthdirector@dromorediocese.org for more information.

RCO Summer Course

There's still time to book your place on this year's RCO Summer Course in London (29 July – 3 Aug).

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The Royal College of Organist's flagship course for students of all ages and stages, from the UK and abroad, includes: skills classes in keyboard musicianship, improvisation or church music; daily morning Organ Studios; teacher-led workshops; optional daily services played and sung by course participants; and individual lessons from our exceptional teaching team.

Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/3uxS15t>

In the media

Belfast Telegraph - Case of parish minister accused of £10,000 theft is about 'downright dishonesty', court told

A parish minister has gone on trial accused of abusing his position to steal over £10,000 from both his church and a hospital grouping, Paul Higgins reports in the Belfast Telegraph. June 19 2024 3:55 PM

Opening the trial concerning 50-year-old Reverend Adrian McLaughlin, Crown counsel Joseph Murphy told the jury today that according to the prosecution "this case is not about bad bookkeeping — this case, we say, is about downright dishonesty".

He told the Craigavon Crown Court jury while they were duty-bound to consider each of the six counts separately, "we say there's a certain overlap between the counts, there is a central theme."

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“That theme is that the defendant abused his position as rector in order to serve his own personal interests,” declared Mr Murphy.

Rev McLaughlin, with an address at Church Avenue in Dunmurry, faces a total of six charges of committing fraud by abuse of position on dates between October 15, 2016, and October 1, 2018, with five of the offences relating to St Coleman’s Parish Church and the final charge relating to his role as a “constructive trustee” with the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) Liver Unit Group.

The particulars of the offences accuse Rev McLaughlin of writing out a £10,000 cheque to himself; taking a £1,000 donation for himself, taking £520 from two complainants who had made donations and one who paid to use the church hall.

They also include an accusation that Rev McLaughlin pocketed donations from a funeral held at the church but intended to go to RVH Liver Unit Group at a time when he was a “constructive trustee of the said monies for the benefit of the RVH Liver Unit Group”.

Emphasising that his opening was not evidence in the case, Mr Murphy told the jury how Rev McLaughlin was appointed as the rector of Dunmurry Parish Church in June 2014 and he, along with his then-wife Christine, lived in the rectory.

In January 2016, “the church building suffered significant damage in a fire” and the jury heard that in the aftermath, “much of the governance” of the parish and its rebuild was down to the rector and the “select vestry” but with no

treasurer in place for a few months from August 2016, cheques had to have two signatures.

Taking each charge in turn, Mr Murphy said the first count related to what he termed as the “organ cheque” and told the jury that according to the Crown case, Rev McLaughlin asked John Williams, a member of the select vestry, to sign a cheque for £10,000 claiming that it was to buy a replacement organ from a church in Glasgow.

The defendant allegedly told Mr Williams “he needed to pay for it soon or they would miss this great bargain” and although the payee line was blank, “the defendant told him he needed to get the correct name of the organisation” and when he got that “he would write it in himself.”

“Mr Williams, trusting the rector of his church, co-signed that cheque,” said Mr Murphy adding however that the cheque “did not get to any organisation selling an organ — it was lodged into the defendant’s own personal bank account six days later.”

As the cheque stub had been filled out that the payee was NI Organs Ltd, the “irregularity went unnoticed” for some time but by November 2018, “some of the parishioners complained to police about financial irregularities involving the defendant.”

When the reverend was asked by police about the £10,000 cheque, he admitted lodging it into his own account but initially claimed “he had permission of the select vestry to do so” with £4,000 of it for expenses he had personally incurred and the remainder for “future church expenses.”

Later on, however, Rev McLaughlin's "account changed" and he claimed that instead of that being agreed at a formal meeting where there would have been minutes taken, he claimed there had been an informal agreement with Mr Williams and his wife Lynn who would become church treasurer.

Count two, he told the court, related to a cheque for £1,000 written out by a lady whose husband had sadly died and she wanted to make a donation.

She left the payee line blank but handed the cheque to the defendant "making it clear that this was a donation to the church in memory of her late husband" but subsequent enquiries revealed that the cheque "was lodged not into the church bank account but into the rector's personal account on 17 October 2016, the day after Mr Williams co-signed the £10,000 cheque."

During police interviews, Rev McLaughlin claimed he had used £800 of it to buy two antique candlesticks from a shop in Saintfield and that he remembered lifting £800 from an ATM to pay for them and that his wife was there.

Police investigations however showed there had been no such withdrawal from his account and also that "his ex-wife has no memory of that ever happening".

Count three related to a slimming world group paying £120 every week, in cash, to Rev McLaughlin but according to the Crown case, none of that money was ever lodged into the church's bank account.

The new treasurer asked the defendant where the cash was or for the receipts but he told her “he had been using it as petty cash to discharge expenses.”

The last three counts related to payments for funerals being conducted and also a collection taken at one of them, money which the Crown say was never properly lodged but instead was taken by the defendant.

Explaining that it is for the jury to decide what evidence they accept and what they reject, Mr Murphy told the jury they may feel sympathy for the congregation of Dunmurry Parish Church who “placed blind faith in their rector” and found that faith was abused or they may feel sympathy for Rev McLaughlin that as a man of God “his reputation is on the line.”

He told them however they must approach the trial, set to last until the end of next week, “coolly, calmly and dispassionately” and when they do, “we will ask you to return verdicts of guilty.”

The trial continues.

Poem for today

Music

By Percy Bysshe Shelley

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—

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Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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