

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Armagh in Washington

March 18, 2025

Image for today - Armagh in Washington

News -

King's warm wishes to President on St Patrick's Day

St Molua's Sole Mates explore St Nicholas in Carrickfergus

Lambeth Call webinar on Mission and Evangelism

British churches 'vanishing' as 3500 shut in the last decade

Education -

GBNI Explorer Choral Speaking final

Slemish College see Les Miserables

BHS Biology Department attend Unistem 2025

Ballyclare High are hiring...

Cathedral Calls -

Southwark: Shroud of Turin at St George's Cathedral

Music at Patronal Festival Eucharist in St Patrick's Dublin

One Year of St Peter's Cathedral Girls' Choir

Clergy and ministry -

Service introducing Rev Colin Welsh (Priest in Charge) to Rathcoole and Whitehouse

Rector of Mullingar Union

Exploring Ordination in the Methodist Church

Events -

Epilepsy action

Find Your Dream Job in the Charity Sector

Brighter Communities programme

Cancer Focus dip at moonlit Portrush East Strand

Resources

FaithinKids new resources to use in your Toddler group

Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum, Schools' concerts here we come

Trocaire - The climate justice tree

Lent in a bag

Speaking to the soul -

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

March 18, 2025

Image of the day

Armagh in Washington

The Church of Ireland Primate, Archbishop John McDowell, on Sunday morning preached in Washington National Cathedral at the invitation of Dean Randolph Hollerith.



Archbishop McDowell is visiting Washington DC for a series of engagements which have included a townhall-style event on Capitol Hill with Archbishop Eamon Martin, and a visit to St Patrick's Episcopal Church and its adjoining school in the city.

In the course of his remarks, Archbishop McDowell outlined how Patrick's own character and discipleship was modelled on early Latin Christianity, a concern to avoid materialism, and a voluntary laying down of self in service to God and

March 18, 2025

others. Patrick's courage, he noted, is similar to that expressed by "those brave people who cross rivers and seas and mountains all over the world to live in a new country ... there is something very deep inside them that tells them they were made for freedom so they risk much to go on their pilgrimage."



As Lent continues, he suggested that to "travel a bit lighter and perhaps even a bit slower" can "condition our thoughts





to see through that mist of tears ... and to catch a glimpse of the Son of Man, the foregone conclusion of all history, drawing us towards himself”.



King's warm wishes to President on St Patrick's Day

His Majesty King Charles III, sent warm wishes to President Michael D. Higgins on St Patrick's day

Dear Mr. President,

My wife and I are delighted to send Your Excellency and the people of Ireland our warmest congratulations on your National Day. St Patrick and his extraordinary odyssey across these isles is one of the threads in a tapestry of historical links that hold us together. Our own visits to your wonderful country have forged memories we deeply treasure.

As our countries together face an increasingly turbulent and challenging world, our shared interests and values have never been more important. From the crisis of climate change to the importance of the international rule of law and justice, our cooperation is more crucial than ever.

My wife and I have the greatest pleasure in conveying our best wishes to you and to all Irish people in the year ahead.

Lá Fhéile Pádraig sona daoibh go léir.

Charles R.

Almighty God,
who in your providence chose your servant Patrick
to be the apostle of the Irish people,
to bring those who were wandering in darkness and error
to the true light and knowledge of you:
Grant us so to walk in that light,
that we may come at last to the light of everlasting life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and ever. Amen

News



St Molua's Sole Mates explore St Nicholas in Carrickfergus

'Sole Mates' walking group's first outing of 2025 was delighted to have a personal guided tour of the beautiful and historic church of St Nicholas in Carrickfergus, Co Antrim on Saturday 15th March.

After taking the Glider to Lanyon Station, they boarded the train to Carrickfergus. From the picturesque station there, it was a short walk to the Church where they were given a

March 18, 2025

warm welcome by the Rector, Reverend Dr Chris St John and their guide for the visit, Julie Irvine.

“Julie explained that the church was originally built in the early 1180’s and guided us very knowledgeably, through its various additions and alterations in successive centuries. One of the more recent (1952) being the St Nicholas window in the Baptistry which includes images (maybe not surprisingly) of Santa Claus in his sleigh!

“After our tour of the church, we took the opportunity to have lunch in one of the many cafés in the town and then, reminding ourselves that we are first and foremost a ‘walking group’, we took a brisk stroll along the seafront before catching our train back to Belfast.

PS: subsequent research has confirmed a link between Carrickfergus and Stormont parishes in that the rebuilt (1962) War Memorial Bell Tower at St Nicholas’ was designed by Denis O’D Hanna, the architect of St Molua’s church and hall.

Lambeth Call webinar on Mission and Evangelism

Join the upcoming Lambeth Call Webinar on Mission and Evangelism to explore the many ways churches are engaging in evangelism, church planting, and mission across different contexts.

Held on May 14 and 15, this webinar will bring together voices from across the Communion to discuss practical



approaches to evangelism, including the impact of Thy Kingdom Come—a global prayer movement marking its 10th anniversary this year.

This webinar is part of an ongoing series supporting the Lambeth Call on Mission and Evangelism, issued by bishops at the 2022 Lambeth Conference, which invites every Christian to embrace their calling as a witness to Christ.

Find out more and register here: <https://bit.ly/4bvsGub>

British churches 'vanishing' as 3500 shut in the last decade

Over 3500 churches have closed in the last 10 years – with many being converted into spas, residential buildings, and even nightclubs.

March 18, 2025

The National Churches Trust reports around 3000 to 5000 parish churches are either closed, or used intermittently without a permanent vicar.

South Shropshire, along with Louth and Horncastle, are the areas of the country with the highest number of at-risk churches, according to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register indicates. Each region has 19 buildings facing the risk of closure.

There is one rural dean in South Shropshire who has taken on a rota of services across six churches in addition to his own parish, due to dwindling funds and congregation numbers.

Yet with many buildings having Grade I listed status – there are restrictions on how they can be renovated.





Whitehead, County Antrim

representative from the Church of England told Premier that the situation may not be as dire as it seems, saying: “Only 15 to 20 church buildings are sold each year – and we are proud to have over 15,000 buildings across the country.

“There are rules – our buildings can’t be turned into mosques, for example.” This was the case in Stoke-on-Trent last August, when the CofE blocked a disused church in Stoke-on-Trent from being transformed into a mosque.

However, St Thomas’ United Reformed Church in Woking tells a different story, as it has been purchased by an Islamic group with plans to turn it into a community centre and mosque.

March 18, 2025

The Daily Mail reports several churches being turned into nightclubs, such as The Chapel Nightclub in Salisbury, Wiltshire - once a Pentecostal church – and Sanctum nightclub in Bournemouth, which was once St Andrew's United Reformed Church.

The National Churches Trust says it is aiming to combat similar transformations happening elsewhere – and was able to help seven churches come off the Heritage At Risk Register in 2023.

Education



GBNI Explorer Choral Speaking final

A brilliant morning was had on Saturday 8th March at the GBNI Explorer Choral Speaking Final.

March 18, 2025

Well done to all the teams who took part and congratulations to the winners:

1st Place- 202nd NI Knocknamuckley Parish A

2nd Place- 282nd NI Woodlands Presbyterian

3rd Place- 106th NI Ballygowan Presbyterian A

Slemish College see Les Miserables



Year 11-14 Music students visited the Grand Opera House to see Les Miserables.

This was an incredible production by Belfast Operatic and we were blown away by the talent on stage. Brilliant evening had by all and we even managed to grab dinner in Victoria Square before heading home.

BHS Biology Department attend Unistem 2025

Ten of Belfast High School's Year 13 pupils had the opportunity to attend Unistem 2025 at the Wellcome Wolfson Institute of Experimental Medicine at QUB.

They learned about research into stem cells and their applications in medicine, had a tour of the labs and saw a transmission electron microscope in action.

Ballyclare High are hiring...

...We are seeking a passionate and dedicated Teacher of Geography to join our collaborative and supportive team at Ballyclare High.

With a strong tradition of academic excellence and pupil success, this is your opportunity to become part of a school where creativity, care, and respect are at the heart of all we do.

For more information on this post and to apply, please follow this link:

<https://eani.taleo.net/careersection/jobdetail.ftl?job=25001074&lang=en>

The closing date is midnight on the 24th March.

March 18, 2025

Cathedral Calls

Southwark: Shroud of Turin exhibition at St George's Cathedral

A replica of the Shroud of Turin is on display at St George's Cathedral as part of an exhibition.

The exhibition of The Cross, the Resurrection and the Shroud of Turin is displayed at St George's Cathedral until 21 April.

At the exhibition, visitors will be able to see a life-sized photographic replica of the Shroud of Turin.

The Shroud in Turin is a length of linen cloth that bears a faint image of the front and back of a crucified man. It is believed by many to be the actual burial Shroud used to wrap the body of the Lord Jesus after his crucifixion, and upon which his bodily image is miraculously imprinted.

The exhibition will also feature other displays and information boards, which cover evidence revealed by historical and scientific research, explaining how the Shroud's image and bloodstains align with Gospel accounts of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Visitors can see the exhibition, for free, until Monday 21 April.

March 18, 2025

St George's Cathedral is open Monday-Friday from 7:15am-5pm, Saturday from 9am-7pm, and Sunday from 7:30am-7pm.

Music at Patronal Festival Eucharist in St Patrick's Dublin



The Patronal Festival Eucharist was sung by the choristers (boys and girls) and Lay Vicars Choral. The music included -

Introit: Christ be with me (Stanford)

Setting: Hadyn Little Organ Mass

Gradual: Beati quorum via (Stanford)

Motet: O Sacrum convivium (Eoghan Desmond)

[March 18, 2025](#)

Motet: Ave Maria (Rachmaninoff)

Try the cathedral's livestreaming page.

One Year of St Peter's Cathedral Girls' Choir

It is just over a year since their first rehearsal as the Girls' Choir at St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast.

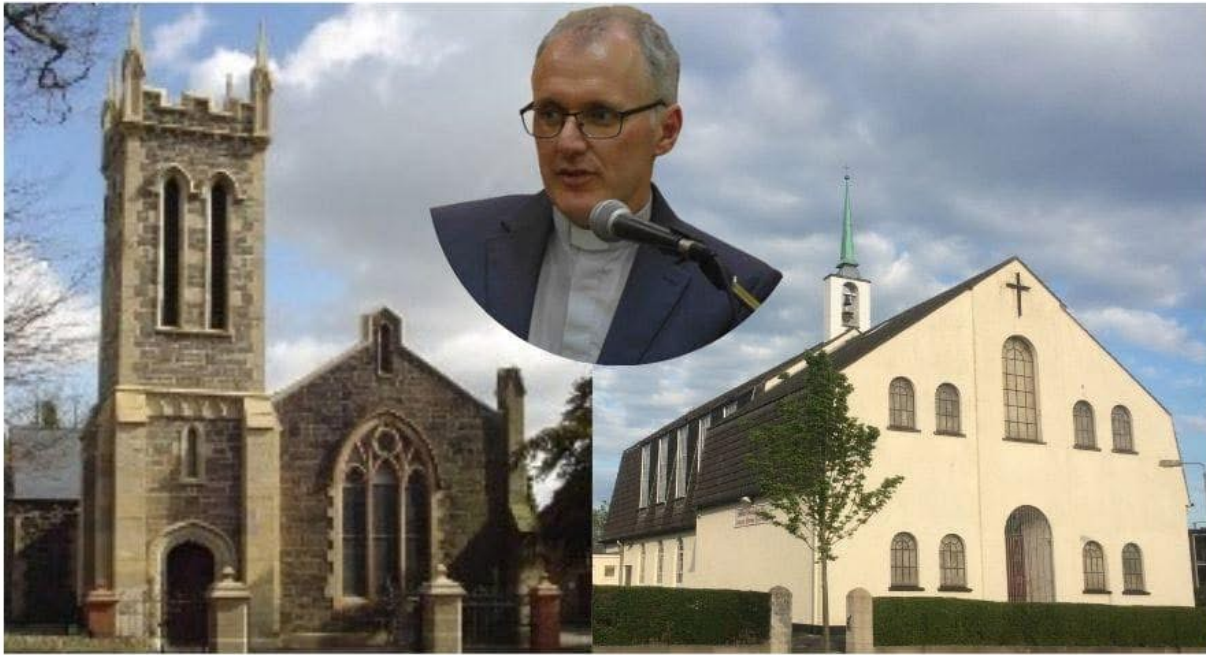
“We're so proud of how far we've come, with some members celebrating a full year and wonderful new voices joining along the way. It's been an amazing year, and we can't wait to see what the future holds!”

Clergy and ministry

Service of introduction Rev Colin Welsh (Priest in Charge) to Rathcoole and Whitehouse

On Wednesday 19th March at 7.30pm a Service of Introduction for the new Minister (Priest in Charge) Rev'd Colin Welsh is being held in St John's Whitehouse.

If you've got a connection with St Comgall's Rathcoole or St John's and St Ninian's Whitehouse or live in the local area, you are invited to this special occasion on Wednesday 19th



Rev'd Colin Welsh

*Service of Introduction for St. Comgall's & St. John's & St. Ninian's
Taking place at: St. John's & St. Ninian's Parish Church,
Whitehouse
Wednesday 19th March @ 7.30pm*

March at 7.30pm St John's and St Ninians, Whitehouse, Shore road. No need to RSVP, just turn up.

There will be refreshments afterwards in St John's and St Ninian's church hall.

The parishioners would love to see you there. No need to RSVP, just turn up.

Rector of Mullingar Union

Bishop Pat Storey of Meath & Kildare has announced the appointment of Archdeacon Ian Horner as rector of Mullingar Union of parishes.



Archdeacon Horner is originally from Greystones in Co Wicklow. He has spent the last ten years serving in the Bailieborough Group of parishes in the diocese of Kilmore.

He is married to Jenny, and they have two boys called, Sam (12) and Leo (10). Ian loves music and is no longer ashamed to say that he is a big Aston Villa fan! He has a passion for the Scriptures, church renewal, youth and children's work, and he enjoys a good visit and chat over a cup of tea.

On his move to Mullingar Ian says, 'It is with mixed emotions that we set out on a new adventure in ministry. The last decade has flown by, and it will be very tough to say goodbye to the people of the Bailieborough Group, and to the people of the wider community. We have been loved, supported and looked after from day one, and we have been blessed to see God at work in the lives of young and old in the parishes. At the same time, we are excited to follow

March 18, 2025

God's call to the Mullingar Union, and we already have a strong sense God's hand in this move. So, while we are sad to be leaving the wonderful family home, hometown, and church family that we've been blessed with over the last ten years, we are very much looking forward to setting up in a new home later on in the year, to meeting new friends, and to seeing what God will do in our new church family." He continued, "I am grateful to Bishop Pat and to the people of the Mullingar Union for this new opportunity to love and serve the Lord and value your prayers as we prepare to make the move."

Exploring Ordination in the Methodist Church

Are you interested in finding out more about the candidating process?

If so, you can register now for one of the 'Exploring Ordination' events

→ <https://forms.office.com/e/NYg5vu3RH5>

Saturday 29th March: Edgehill House, Belfast: 10:30am - 12:30pm

Saturday 5th April: Mountmellick Methodist Church: 10:30am - 12:30pm

Thursday 9th April: Online: 7:30pm

Saturday 12th April: Fivemiletown Methodist Church: 10:30am- 12:30pm

March 18, 2025

Events

Epilepsy action

Parents of children with epilepsy, take a break and join us for the Epilepsy Action Family Support Service Wellbeing Retreat on March 22, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Navigation House, Lisburn.

Enjoy gentle yoga, an aromatherapy workshop, and lunch. Connect with other parents and learn techniques to manage stress.

Free to attend, but booking is essential.

For more info, contact familysupportni@epilepsy.org.uk or call 02890184016.

Find Your Dream Job in the Charity Sector

Looking for a rewarding career where you can make a real difference? Join us at the 2025 Northern Ireland Charity Careers & Volunteer Job Fair and connect with 20+ top charities hiring for paid roles right now!



Date: 27th March 2025







Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM





Venue: Assembly Buildings Conference Centre, 2-10 Fisherwick Place, Belfast, BT1 6DW, United Kingdom

March 18, 2025

Why Attend?

-  Discover new job opportunities in the charity sector
-  Meet hiring managers from charities like NSPCC, Praxis Care & Extern
-  Get career advice & network with sector professionals
-  FREE entry – but tickets are limited!

 Secure your FREE ticket today!  [https://
www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-northern-ireland-charity-
careers-volunteer-job-fair-tickets-1111470892359](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-northern-ireland-charity-careers-volunteer-job-fair-tickets-1111470892359)

Brighter Communities programme

The Brighter Communities programme energises innovative and emerging community groups, teams and projects with £1000 of funding awarded each month.

Since 2018 it has contributed over £85,000 to our communities and its still going!

Brighter Communities is Power NI's community fund donating groups across Northern Ireland with £1,000 of funding. Applications for the month are now open!

Cancer Focus dip at moonlit Portrush East Strand

Join us under the stars and immerse yourself in the refreshing moonlit water of Portrush East Strand on Friday 25 April.

All monies raised will allow us to continue to support local people impacted by a cancer diagnosis.

Sign up today:

<https://cancerfocusni.org/event/northcoastdip/>

Resources

FaithinKids new resources to use in your Toddler group

There are two series - God Made Me and I Can Talk To God When I Feel.

These two six-week packages include adaptable plans for each session, with a Bible story time, song suggestions, an activity and a simple craft.

Check them out at www.faithinkids.org

Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum, Schools' concerts here we come

Join the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and storyteller Sean Chandler for Musical Storyland LIVE! An exciting, interactive show featuring three stories from the award-winning CBeebies television series Musical Storyland with full orchestra.



Book now at: <https://factoryinternational.org/whats-on/musical-storyland-live/>

Our musical stories are:

Jack and the Beanstalk – featuring harp, violin, piccolo and double bass

Hare and Tortoise – featuring clarinet, bassoon and cello

The Enormous Turnip – featuring horn, trumpet, trombone and tuba

Sean presents bilingually in English and British Sign Language and will teach children some songs in BSL.

Trocaire - The climate justice tree

Calling all Primary & Post-Primary Teachers! Discover our FREE interactive climate justice resource for your classroom!

Engage students with:

March 18, 2025

- An animation on climate change
- Quizzes, activities & lesson guides
- Real stories from kids in Guatemala

Curriculum links are provided at the start of each activity.

Access it here: <https://www.trocaire.org/journey/the-climate-justice-tree/>

Lent in a bag

CFM news: If you are looking for a last minute Lent activity, then 'Lent in a bag' is a wonderful way to encourage all ages in your congregation to connect with Lent in a meaningful way.

You can put the packs together as boxes or bags and have them available in your Church for people to take if they wish throughout the Lent period or you can take out to those who are house-bound.

Get all the info and downloadable sheets (courtesy of the ever amazing Lynn Storey) here: <https://cfm.ireland.anglican.org/lent-in-a-bag/>

<https://www.facebook.com/239169528439033/posts/679797881042860>

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

March 18, 2025

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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

Please recommend to your friends
