

# Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Restored

## **Image for today - Restored**

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Survey of Presbyterian Mission History in Africa presented to the Gamble Library  
Economy and church environment survey  
Notre-Dame rejects government fee charging  
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Understanding the legacy of institutions for mothers and babies

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Recent Archaeological Excavations in County Down free lecture  
Boosey & Hawkes Shop at Boosey.com is closing

## **Speaking to the soul -**

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site



## Image of the day



## Restored

**Caption attached stated - “Many thanks to Rev Louise Stewart for the dedication, skill and hardwork she put into restoring the Frontal at Tamlaght O’Crilly”.**

Louise is the Rector of St Polycarp’s Church, Finaghy, in the Diocese of Connor.

# News

## President of the Methodist Church visit to Stranmillis

**The Principal and Senior Management Team along with Dr Anita Gracie and the Students' Union President, Andrew Irwin met the Rev Dr John Alderdice, who was making an official visit to the College in his capacity as President of the Methodist Church in Ireland for the year 2024-2025.**

John is no stranger to the college having been the Methodist Chaplain to Queen's University and Stranmillis between 2008 and 2014.

Over lunch the President discussed education policy and the different forms of relationship which currently exist between churches and schools in Northern Ireland.

He also heard from Andrew Irwin about the support for students provided by the college Chaplains and the many social events run by the Christian Union which are well-attended by students every week – not only those from Northern Ireland but also many international students on their study abroad programmes.

After lunch, John met with some members of the Christian Union Executive in the Prayer and Reflection Room in Stran House where they told him about the theme of the CU for this Year which is 'Beyond Belief .....' and how they hope they will get students to grow beyond their comfortable and



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perhaps lukewarm faith into a deeper connection with God this year.

He also heard about the College Commencement service which had taken place the previous week in the Drama Theatre and the great numbers of students and staff who had attended to hear about 'Growing Beyond Complacency'.



## Survey of Presbyterian Mission History in Africa presented to the Gamble Library

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**A copy of A Survey of Presbyterian Mission History in Africa: Historic Beginnings (c. 1790s to c. 1930s) was presented to the Gamble Library by its editor, Dr Jack Whytock, on Monday 28 October.**

The Gamble Library holds the Presbyterian Mission Archive which was used for the research for this book. The book is dedicated to the memory of Dr Paul Bailie who was a Recognised Teacher of Union Theological College.

## News Briefs

**Economy and church environment survey** - Churches are generally eager to take steps to reduce their impact on the environment, but the costs in straitened times are holding them back, a survey from Ecclesiastical Insurance and the Bible Society has found

**Notre-Dame rejects government fee charging** - The Chapter of Notre-Dame de Paris have rejected government plans to introduce an entry fee when the restored cathedral officially reopens on 7 December. The French government owns all church buildings dating from before 1905 so, in theory, could impose an entry charge at N.D. de Paris regardless of the Diocese's view. But... they don't do it in Reims, Rouen, Chartres, Beauvais, Laon & every other French cathedral, so why Paris?

**Roman Catholic Britain is getting a medical school** - "We are delighted to announce plans to open a new School of Medicine at St Mary's University on our Strawberry Hill



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Campus. We plan to welcome our first cohort in September 2026. Find out more at [stmarys.ac.uk/news/2024/st-m...](https://stmarys.ac.uk/news/2024/st-m...)



## Flute support for Poppy Appeal in Ballyclare

The pop-up Poppy Appeal stall hosted by Asda Ballyclare had the added support of an evening's presentation by the superb local Victoria Flute Band.

The stall manned by volunteers of the RBL will remain open until Remembrance Day.







## **Understanding the legacy of institutions for mothers and babies**

**Professor Leanne McCormick, who co-chairs the Truth Recovery Independent Panel examining the history and legacy of Northern Ireland's mother and baby institutions, Magdalene laundries and workhouses, invites readers to share their experiences of four institutions.**

Can you help us understand more about Hopedene Hostel, Thorndale House, Malone Place or Kennedy House?

A 10-person Truth Recovery Independent Panel has been appointed by the Northern Ireland Executive Office and is carrying out an independent truth recovery investigation into the workings of mother and baby institutions, Magdalene laundries and workhouses and their pathways and practices. These include the adoption and care system as well as private nursing homes and the cross-border movement of children. The panel's report and findings will help to inform the future statutory public inquiry. As part of this process the panel is asking for anyone who spent time in any of these institutions (the full list is below) or who has been directly impacted by them (such as children now adult adoptees whose mothers were in these institutions) to come and give testimony about their experiences.

We are also keen to speak to anyone who worked or volunteered in the institutions, who might have been a social worker, probation or police officer or medical professional who might have had any involvement with women and girls who were in the institutions. The panel is also interested to speak to clergy who might have advised parishioners about the institutions or had knowledge of how they operated. Each person's experience is different, people will have had more difficult times than others, but all accounts are important.

There is a perception that institutions for mothers and babies were Catholic and run by nuns, but in Northern Ireland more Protestant women and girls spent time in these institutions than did Catholic females. There were also more Protestant-run institutions than Catholic ones. This makes it crucial that the Independent Panel gathers testimony from people who have experience and knowledge about these institutions.

We are aware that for many of those who have experience of the institutions, speaking about their experiences may be something they have never done before and is personal and painful. We know that while society has changed, for many the stigma and shame is something that has stayed with them and they may be reluctant to come forward and give testimony. We appreciate how difficult it is to engage with a testimony gathering process, but we have an experienced testimony team and excellent support is available at all stages. Testimony can be given in your home, at our offices in Belfast or at any location where you would feel comfortable. The process is confidential, and your privacy and consent are central to everything we do.



Testimony is vital to the process of understanding what it was like for those who passed through institutions as well as the impact they have had on lives since. We want to hear about lived experiences as they hold the key to what really happened. We also face challenges with archival records which are incomplete and in the case of some private nursing homes (where some unmarried women were sent to give birth) do not exist at all. We rely on testimonies to help us understand how institutions operated and to allow us to build as complete and wide ranging a picture as possible.

If you would like to help us by giving testimony or if you are unsure if your experience or knowledge is useful to the panel, please contact the Testimony Team. We know that some people may feel their experience isn't important or relevant or what we are looking for but please contact the team as all experiences, no matter how small, will help.

The Testimony Team can be contacted on 028/048 9052 0263 or by email at [testimony@independentpanel.org.uk](mailto:testimony@independentpanel.org.uk) or by writing to: Truth Recovery Independent Panel, 4th Floor, Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB.

Further information about the work of the Truth Recovery Independent Panel, can be found at:

[www.independentpanel.truthrecoveryni.co.uk](http://www.independentpanel.truthrecoveryni.co.uk)

Full list of institutions

Institutions

Mater Dei Hostel, Belfast

Marianville, Belfast,

Marianvale, Newry, Mother and Baby Institution

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Thorndale House, Salvation Army, Belfast  
Malone Place/Belfast Midnight Mission Maternity Home  
Belfast  
Hopedene Hostel  
Kennedy House/Church of Ireland Rescue League, Belfast  
Deanery Flats  
Mount Oriel  
Workhouses across Northern Ireland

Magdalene Laundries  
St Mary's, Belfast  
St Mary's, Derry/Londonderry  
St Mary's, Newry

Industrial Home  
Thorndale Industrial Home/Salvation Army, Belfast

Pathways and practices

The Independent Panel is also investigating other practices related to these institutions including (but not limited to): the care system, fostering and adoption practices, related institutions such as 'baby homes', private nursing homes, and cross-border and international transfers of women and children.

## Cathedral Calls

### Minor Canons team changes at Westminster Abbey





**Congratulations to the Reverend Robert Latham and the Reverend Helena Bickley-Percival, who will take up new roles in our Minor Canons team next month.**

The appointments follow the news that Reverend Mark Birch is to become a Canon of Westminster and Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons. Mark, who has been a Minor Canon at the Abbey since 2015, takes up his new appointment on 7th November.

He will be succeeded as Precentor by Robert, who has served as Sacrist since September 2021. Helena, who was appointed Chaplain earlier this year, becomes Sacrist.

The Minor Canons are responsible to the Dean of Westminster for all worship and liturgy in Westminster Abbey and in St Margaret's Church, including the

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celebration of the Eucharist and the provision of Sunday worship.

The Precentor is Head of Department, and the Sacrist assists him in working on the many special services that take place here. The Chaplain shares that responsibility, but has a distinctive role in a ministry to staff and volunteers.

Read more: [www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-news/new-appointments-in-the-minor-canons-team/](http://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-news/new-appointments-in-the-minor-canons-team/)

## Clergy and ministry





## Deaconess appointments to Fisherwick and First Holywood

**Presbyterian Women write - We would love you to join with us in prayer for our recently qualified Deaconess, Heather Healy and Cathy Smith who completed their final year of studies at Union Theological College, Belfast last May.**

Heather has just been appointed to Fisherwick and Cathy has been appointed to First Holywood PC

- Give thanks to God for sustaining Heather and Cathy over the last three years and for his provision and blessing.
- Praise God for opening new doors for both Heather and Cathy to serve as
- Please pray for them as they wait for the completion of the procedures and processes by presbyteries and as they begin this new chapter.

## From Kerala to Killaloe

**The latest Indian Priest to arrive in the Killaloe Diocese has been appointed to the Abbey Pastoral Area**





**with residency in the Cathedral House.**

Fr Jibin Jose PMI , a Missionary of Incarceration from Kerala, was ordained in 2019 . After Ordination he worked in parish ministry before undergoing studies in Media and Communications.

In October of this year he was assigned to work in the Killaloe Diocese and arrived in recent days.

“We welcome Fr Jibin and hope and pray that his ministry in our Diocese will bring many blessings.”

There are now six priests from Kerala ministering in the Killaloe Diocese in Ennis, Nenagh, Castleconnell, and Toomevara

## Ministry Associate sought for Seapatrick Parish

Seapatrick Select Vestry seeks to appoint a Ministry Associate with special responsibility for Pastoral Care, Discipleship and Worship.

This is a full-time post. CLOSING DATE: Friday 15 November Banbridge Church of Ireland

[https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2024/10/ministry-associate-seapatrick-banbridge?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=facebook](https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2024/10/ministry-associate-seapatrick-banbridge?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook)

## Minister with Belfast accent starts a new life in Argyll

**Alex feels blessed to be back home in Argyll. Starting a new life as a minister in Argyll is also a homecoming for Oban minister Rev Alex MacCallum.**

Despite the Belfast accent which is a legacy of growing up in his mother's home city across the water, Mr MacCallum has deep family roots in Argyll – even if he was actually born in neighbouring Dunbartonshire.

He was baptised in Inveraray, his father's home town, and would return to visit from Northern Ireland each summer.



So, when he saw the opportunity of taking on his first parish as minister of Word and Sacrament in Argyll, accepting the call was the obvious choice, despite his initial resistance.

"We came up to Oban just to have a look, and from the first meeting, we felt it was a good fit for everybody," Mr MacCallum said, speaking as part of the monthly Talking Ministry feature on the Church of Scotland website.

"A large part of that was the welcome we received as a family. The congregation made us feel as if this was our home, even before we set foot in the church. There was a sense of belonging and a sense that some of the ideas and visions that I was looking at were what they were yearning for.

"I think that even on the way home, my wife, myself and the kids knew this is where we would end up. We got a real sense of calling and just coming back to Argyll through Inveraray, it felt like coming home for me."

Called from an early age

Now resident in the Oban manse as minister of Kilmore and Oban, linked with Tiree, where he lives with wife Adele and Eva (13) and Finn (9), he has come a long way since his first experience of preaching a sermon at the age of just 16.

"Which was awful and still haunts me to this day," he confessed.

"But that just reaffirmed that sense of calling for me. That came about because one of the caretakers at my school,

who was a really devout Christian, asked if I would say a few words at his church about faith from a young person's perspective. That was the first time that someone had really affirmed that there was something there."

His ministry ambitions were put on hold as he decided he needed more life experience before he embarked on a career in ministry, so he returned to Scotland to study at the University of Paisley, which led on to an almost two-decade career in various roles in the care sector.

Life was good. He was married, with a good job, a home and a family, but still that call to ministry was there in the background.

"I realised I wasn't happy and there was something missing, so I told my wife I was going to apply for ministry," Mr MacCallum recalled.

"It was a huge leap of faith, to jump into the unknown and become a student again with two young kids depending on you, but throughout the training process, God always provided, and not just financially. There have been answers to prayers in many different ways.

"It was about having that bravery and willingness to acknowledge it. And, when you do acknowledge it, you are just letting God take control. Once you do that, you realise that God will open doors for you and it's up to you to step through them."

To be continued...

# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## The Magic of Christmas featuring the incredible Margaret Keys

**Get into the holiday spirit with an enchanting evening of music at "The Magic of Christmas" featuring the incredible Margaret Keys, a world-renowned classical singer, who has performed with Andrea Bocelli, for Pope Francis and the Royal Family.**

On Friday, December 20th at Christ Church in Derry, Northern Ireland come listen to the magical performances with a string orchestra, choirs and very special guests. This is always an unforgettable Christmas experience and sells out so get your tickets soon!

## Recent Archaeological Excavations in County Down free lecture

Recent Archaeological Excavations in County Down (Includes Whiterock and Comber) plus more! By Katy McMonagle, Junior Project Manager with Northern Archaeological Consultancy.

Down County Museum, Downpatrick. 6 November 7.30pm



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# Boosey & Hawkes Shop at Boosey.com is closing

## Correspondence received -

Dear customer,

We are letting you know, as a valued customer, that The Shop at Boosey.com is closing on 2 December 2024.

Boosey & Hawkes has been pleased to provide a service through our online shop over the past 20 years, shipping to customers worldwide. Although we have decided to withdraw from direct-to-customer retail activities, we will be continuing to produce high quality music publications for sale in print and digitally.

We will fulfil all orders placed up to 2 December, subject to product availability. For any enquiries relating to orders please email [musicshop@boosey.com](mailto:musicshop@boosey.com). For digital download support please email [digitalsupport@boosey.com](mailto:digitalsupport@boosey.com).

Music published by Boosey & Hawkes will continue to be available worldwide from all good music retailers, including a new selection of preferred partners.

Information on our Boosey & Hawkes publications, including our imprints Sikorski, Bote & Bock, Anton J. Benjamin and Simrock, will continue to be viewable on our website. For a list of new publications please visit [www.boosey.com/publications](http://www.boosey.com/publications).

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We'd like to express our thanks to you as a customer of The Shop at Boosey.com and wish you success with your future musical activities.

The Shop at Boosey.com

Email: [marketing.uk@boosey.com](mailto:marketing.uk@boosey.com)

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## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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