

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Trauma Teddies gifts to PSNI**

## Image of the day

### Trauma Teddies gifts to PSNI

**Lisburn City Police  
Neighbourhood  
Team write -**

**We are  
overwhelmed at  
the generosity  
from members of  
the Harmony Hill Craft Group, based at Harmony Hill  
Presbyterian Church, who knitted a lot of trauma  
teddies for our officers to give out.**



Trauma teddies are designed to be given to young persons or vulnerable adults to distract them from crimes or traumatic events.

The idea is that officers will carry them in their patrol bags to then give to these groups to provide some comfort at the likes of a road traffic collision or domestic incident, but the list is endless.

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Keen knitters have been busy over the last few weeks and have dropped them into the station yesterday to be distributed.

Thank you again and we will put them to good use.

## People and places



### **D of E Northern Ireland Volunteers recognised on King's Birthday**

**Congratulations to all of the Duke of Edinburgh Northern Ireland Volunteers who were presented with Long Service Certificates at Hillsborough Castle after a 21 Gun Salute to mark HM The King's 75th Birthday.**



These Volunteers represent a number of Licenced Organisations across Northern Ireland, including: The Education Authority, The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade - BBNI, Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland, Scouts NI, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, Glastry Presbyterian Church. Bluestone and Queen Street Methodist Churches

Alison was invited to attend the volunteers long service award ceremony at Hillsborough Castle, where she was recognised for all her hard work and dedication to helping young people achieve this prestigious award at Bluestone and Queen Street Methodist Churches .

A church spokesperson said,“Congratulations. It’s most thoroughly deserved. A big thank you on behalf of all those who you've helped and encouraged to complete it. Alison has always very much stated that it's not just her, it's a team effort, so thank you to all of the Duke of Edinburgh Award

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leaders at Bluestone for giving up their time and leading the young adults in completing the award ... A great team”.

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To all recipients, thank-you for all you do to support young people in Northern Ireland taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

## 90 year old's puts together 50 boxes for shoe box appeal

Annie has been hard at work again this year in Maguiresbridge and Derrybrusk parishes. At the young age of 90 she has put together another 50 boxes for the shoe box appeal! What a wonderful achievement!



## Priest in call for new police unit to tackle gang beatings

**A Belfast priest has called for a dedicated police unit to tackle paramilitary-style attacks in Northern Ireland.**

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New figures reveal there were 48 paramilitary-style shootings and assaults in the year to October 31, compared to 36 over the previous 12 months.

Fr Martin Magill, who works with pressure group Stop Attacks, branded the figures “appalling”. He added: “I honestly think there should be a dedicated unit set up within the PSNI working solely on this issue.

“More attention needs to be given to this area. It is not normal behaviour for any civilised society, but it has become normalised because of how frequent these attacks happen.”  
Belfast Telegraph extract

## News reports

### Services of blessings for gay couples approved by Church of England

**Same-sex couples will be able to request a dedicated ceremony of blessing in the Church of England, following a vote on the issue by the General Synod on Wednesday.**

The decision comes after two and half days of debating the Living in Love and Faith proposals authored by senior clerics in the denomination. The final motion achieved a narrow majority in all three houses which together make up the church's legislative body: the House of Bishops, Clergy and Laity.

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LGBT couples will be able to invite their friends and family to a special ceremony to celebrate their union.

While the plans originally proposed did allow priests to use same-sex prayers of blessing as part of an existing service, standalone services were initially tabled for further debate and a longer canonical process with possible implementation by 2025. However, as a result of an amendment proposed by the Bishop of Oxford, Rt Rev Steven Croft, same-sex couples won't have to wait until 2025.

Bishop Steven's request was that same-sex standalone services be trialled on a temporary basis while being considered for permanent use, under a canonical process known as B2. The amendment was narrowly approved. In the House of Bishops, 23 voted for, ten against and four abstained. Among clergy, there were 100 votes for and 93



against, with one abstention. Within the laity, 104 voted in favour and 100 against, with no abstentions.

Speaking to Premier News, the Bishop of London Rt Rev Sarah Mullaly said that while the Prayers of Love and Faith are expected to be ready for use by mid-December, it's unknown when the details and structure for standalone services will be in place.

"I'm almost certain that we would want to share again our progress with Synod in February, particularly around how the process will look for getting the standalone services authorised, probably more around the pastoral guidance, particularly related to ministry and also around how we listen, which is the other reassurance that people would want."

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When asked about the difference between standalone services and marriage ceremonies, Bishop Sarah told Premier: "The Church of England is not offering same-sex marriage services. This is about offering a standalone service to a couple in a stable, lifelong relationship with one another, who want to come in, give thanks for all those things that are good about their relationship and to ask for God's blessing. A standalone service is one where that is

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the only focus of the service. Therefore, we've agreed that we will work with Synod to authorise those services."

Following the debate, Rev John Dunnet, the national director of the Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC), said the organisation was "grieved and saddened" by the decision and described it as "a watershed moment...it appears that the Church of England no longer sees Scripture as our supreme authority".

For those on the other side of the debate though, it was a moment to celebrate the "small progress made". Charie Bell, an LGBT anglican priest wrote on X: "Te Deum Laudamus! (We Praise you God). After all the delaying tactics, the talk of our being outside the grace of God, after endless scapegoating of queer people, after years and years of bearing our souls, the glass has cracked and grace is seeping out. In te Domine speravi! (In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust)."

### **The motion passed, as amended, was:**

The Bishop of London to move:

'That this Synod, conscious that the Church is not of one mind on the issues raised by Living in Love and Faith, that we are in a period of uncertainty, and that many in the Church on all sides are being deeply hurt at this time, recognise the progress made by the House of Bishops towards implementing the motion on Living in Love and Faith passed by this Synod in February 2023, as reported in GS 2328, encourage the House to continue its work of implementation, and ask the House to consider whether

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some standalone services for same-sex couples could be made available for use, possibly on a trial basis, on the timescale envisaged by the motion passed by the Synod in February 2023.'

The voting on the final motion was:

Bishops: 23 for, 10 against, 4 abstained

Clergy: 100 for, 93 against, 1 abstained

Laity: 104 for, 100 against, 0 abstained

## **Priest bashed for having tattoos gets new ink representing God's protection**

**A priest who was in the centre of a social media storm due to having tattoos covering her arms, has revealed a new tattoo of a feather, signifying "God's protection".**

In July, the Archbishop of Canterbury defended Rev Wendy Dalrymple after a photo shared by her husband led to intense criticism of her appearance and faith.

At the time, she was an incoming precentor and residentiary canon designate for Canterbury Cathedral.

Rev Dalrymple blamed it on misogyny and said she wouldn't have received the same treatment if she were a man.

Very Rev Dr David Monteith, Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, also came to her defence, and pledged to "root out" the misogyny she had experienced.



Rev Dalrymple told BBC News she would be happy for visitors to the cathedral to ask her about her tattoos.

"They can be a real conversation piece and often people have tattoos that tell stories, as mine do," she said.

She added: "Everyone is different and it doesn't matter what you look like, what clothes you wear, inked or not inked, dreads, no dreads, piercings, no body piercings.

"Whoever you are, whatever background you are from, you are welcome in Canterbury Cathedral.

# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## Fire in the Heart: An online Church Times Advent Retreat with Julian of Norwich

First broadcast is on Saturday 25 November, 10 am



CHURCH TIMES AND CANTERBURY PRESS PRESENT:

**Fire in the Heart:**  
An Advent Retreat with  
Julian of Norwich

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER  
2023, 10AM-1PM GMT

With Rachel Mann, Claire  
Gilbert, Richard Carter, Julia  
Mourant and Malcolm Guite.

CHURCH TIMES  CANTERBURY  
PRESS

Church Times writes - Join us live for an online retreat as we enter the sacred and transformative season of Advent, a time of reflection, anticipation, and preparation.

Accompanying us through the morning will be Julian of Norwich, one of the most influential figures in Christian spirituality.

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Join us from 10am or set your own time for quiet retreat and watch the recording later. The same link to the event, which is provided with your ticket, can be used at anytime afterwards to watch the broadcast at a time of your choosing. Speakers include Claire Gilbert, Julia Mourant, Malcolm Guite, Rachel Mann and Richard Carter. In association with Canterbury Press. Book a ticket below to access the event.

## Programme

10.00 Welcome and introduction - Christine Smith

10.05 Opening worship – Rachel Mann

10.30 Following Julian into the cell of the heart - Claire Gilbert

11.00 Beholding: ‘His will is to be seen’ (Julian of Norwich) - Richard Carter

11.30 Break

11.45 Mothering God: Prayer in the heart of God - Julia Mourant

12.15 Tell me again: Returning to Julian - Malcolm Guite

12.45 Closing worship – Rachel Mann

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/fire-in-the-heart-an-advent-retreat-with-julian-of-norwich>

## **New carols and seasonal songs from Salisbury Cathedral Choir, Christmas 2023**

**Released in November 2023, this is a new collection of carols, seasonal songs and music, performed by**

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**Salisbury Cathedral Choir, with Director of Music, David Halls and Assistant Director of Music, John Challenger (organ).**

Music includes God rest you merry (Willcocks), Candlelight Carol (Rutter), Sing Lullaby (Howells) and Tomorrow shall be my dancing day (Gardner). The album also includes the first recording of Errollyn Wallen's Salisbury Carol, commissioned by Salisbury Cathedral in 2022.

[<https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/worship-and-music/choirs-and-music/recordings/>]

## **BBC Choral Evensong at St Giles' Cripplegate**

The Choirs of Pembroke College, Cambridge Girls' Choir recording of Choral Evensong this week at St Giles' Cripplegate, conducted by Artist in Association Anna Lapwood. Listen on BBC Sounds now.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001rz66>

## **Perspective**

### **Weeping over Jerusalem - Rowena Francis**

“As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things

that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.”

Jesus was referring to his death and resurrection offering new life to all as the visitation from God which Jerusalem didn't recognise. Many of the people did not recognise Jesus for who he was. Jesus is still present in the 'living stones' of indigenous Palestinian Christians but they are under pressure to leave. They too are not recognised for who they are. They are verbally and physically assaulted in the street and their human rights to travel, work, gain a livelihood, and access health care and education are curtailed because of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

The current situation in the Holy Land is devastating for its people and the world; it demands tears. The things that make for peace remain hidden to many regardless of faith.

Twenty one years ago the Churches of Jerusalem approached the World Council of Churches asking for a greater show of solidarity. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) was born. In 2022 I was privileged to be able to serve as an Ecumenical Accompanier. Based as part of an international team in Bethlehem for three months I monitored check points, provided a protective presence for shepherds and children



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going to and from school, and reported on incidents such as home demolitions. <https://www.eyewitnessblogs.com/> Locals expressed how good it was to have this international solidarity back after the pandemic.

As part of the Church we are to weep over Jerusalem now, pray for eyes to be opened, and the way to peace be seen. The way of Christ sees the humanity of the other rather than simply seeing the other as a terrorist or an enemy. The way of Christ sees full life emerging from the tomb. The way of Christ weeps for the things of peace to be recognised.

## Prayer

We thank You, O God,  
for weeping which purifies and purges, cleanses and heals.  
As we weep for Jerusalem, the land of Israel, and occupied Palestine  
grant us sight and wisdom,  
to work through EAPPI and our churches,  
our governments and political processes,  
our loves and our lives  
to bring peace.  
In the name of Christ  
the Prince of Peace. Amen.

The Rev'd Rowena Francis is a minister in the Wells and Mid Somerset Group of the South Western Synod of United Reformed Church

# Poem for today

## Autumn

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, (1807 - 1882)

With what a glory comes and goes the year!  
The buds of spring, those beautiful harbingers  
Of sunny skies and cloudless times, enjoy  
Life's newness, and earth's garniture spread out;  
And when the silver habit of the clouds  
Comes down upon the autumn sun, and with  
A sober gladness the old year takes up  
His bright inheritance of golden fruits,  
A pomp and pageant fill the splendid scene.

There is a beautiful spirit breathing now  
Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,  
And, from a beaker full of richest dyes,  
Pouring new glory on the autumn woods,  
And dipping in warm light the pillared clouds.  
Morn on the mountain, like a summer bird,  
Lifts up her purple wing, and in the vales  
The gentle wind, a sweet and passionate wooer,  
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs up life  
Within the solemn woods of ash deep-crimsoned,  
And silver beech, and maple yellow-leaved,  
Where Autumn, like a faint old man, sits down  
By the wayside a-weary. Through the trees  
The golden robin moves; the purple finch,  
That on wild cherry and red cedar feeds,  
A winter bird, comes with its plaintive whistle,

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And pecks by the witch-hazel, whilst aloud  
From cottage roofs the warbling blue-bird sings;  
And merrily, with oft-repeated stroke,  
Sounds from the threshing-floor the busy flail.

O what a glory doth this world put on  
For him who, with a fervent heart, goes forth  
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks  
On duties well performed, and days well spent!  
For him the wind, ay, and the yellow leaves  
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teachings.  
He shall so hear the solemn hymn, that Death  
Has lifted up for all, that he shall go  
To his long resting-place without a tear.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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