

Church News Ireland



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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

Image of the day

Fitzroy 150



Fitzroy Presbyterian Church in Belfast this week celebrated 150 years on the present site. Front page - Rev Steve and



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Mrs Stockman. Steve is well known for his broadcasts, his Soul Surmise blog and his key role in the ecumenical and multi faith Four Corners festival.

The celebration event included “tabulae” which identified fey moments and movements in the congregations witness over the years.

News



Dunmurry Warm Space for Choir of Malone Integrated College

Dunmurry NSP Church is looking forward to welcoming back to their Warm Space Coffee Morning the Choir of

November 30 2024

Malone Integrated College under the direction of their Head of Music, Mrs Mitchell.

The Choir will be coming to our Warm Space Coffee Morning between 10.00 am and 12.00 Noon on Thursday, 5th December to sing their varied and exciting programme. Everyone is very welcome.

Advent Sunday in St Peter's, Belfast

10.30 Advent Procession with music by Palestrina, Ravenscroft, Gibbons and Chilcott.

3.30 Choral Evensong : Matin Responsory (Palestrina), Ayleward Responses, Psalm 150 (Stanford), Dyson in D, This is the record of John (Gibbons).

Director of Music : Robert Thompson, Organist : Tristan Russcher .

Tea and coffee after the morning service, Sherry and Shortbread after Evensong. All welcome

MU The Souls of our Shoes Exhibition launched

The Souls of our Shoes Exhibition was launched on Friday evening 15th November by the All-Ireland President Mrs June Butler in the Cassandra Hand Centre in Clones.

This Exhibition links stories of resilience from victims and survivors of domestic abuse to the shoes they would have worn.

A short service took place before the launch which was led by the Rt Rev Ian Ellis, Bishop of Clogher.

The Diocesan President, Heather welcomed everyone to the launch. A special hymn was sung called '16 Days' led by members of the local community.

The Reading was read by Linda Keating a Mothers' Union Trustee and Heather Ellis read a poem entitled 'A Woman's Psalm'. A short reflection was offered by Bishop Ian and June Butler shared the early origins of the Souls of our



EQUIPPING THE CHURCH

Changing the Story of Domestic Abuse

A 5 week programme - playing our part.....

Join *Equipping The Church To Take Action and End Domestic Abuse*

**on Tuesday mornings
11am - 12.30pm**

14th January - 11th February 2025

Contact muchangingthestory@gmail.com



Respond... Inform... Support... Empower... Unite... Pray...

November 30 2024

Shoes Exhibition. Roy Crowe led the prayers of intercession.

Members were pleased that Mrs May Leech aged 90 was present at the event as she was the last Branch Leader of the Clones MU branch.

Members of Safe Ireland (formerly Tearmann), Garda, Branch Leaders and their representatives from the Southern Branches also attended.

The Killeevan Mothers' Union provided refreshments.

Souls of our Shoes Exhibition now in the Library in Enniskillen

The Souls of our Shoes Exhibition continued in Clones until Friday 22 November when it moved to the Library in Enniskillen from Saturday 23 November remaining there until Saturday 7 December.

Please do try to come along and see this wonderful moving display.

Methodist Ecumenical visit to Rome

The Board of the Methodist Ecumenical Office visits the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity.

On Wednesday 27 November, the oversight board of the Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome (MEOR) – known as The Forum – visited the Dicastery for Promoting Christian



Unity. MEOR has been the representation office and ecumenical formation centre of the World Methodist Council in Rome since 2014. The Forum, which supervises and directs the work of MEOR, meets under the joint presidency of the Revd Dr Reynaldo Ferreira Leão-Neto, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council, and the Revd Michaela Youngson, Assistant Secretary and Ecumenical Officer of the Methodist Church in Britain.

Having earlier attended the weekly General Audience of Pope Francis in St Peter's Square, the members of the Forum were welcomed to the Dicastery by the Secretary, Archbishop Flavio Pace. The visitors then had a meeting with Fr Martin Browne OSB, the Dicastery official responsible for relations with Methodists. The meeting included an extensive discussion of the work of the

Methodist-Roman Catholic International Commission and on the reception of the fruits of ecumenical dialogues more generally, as well as a discussion of the recent Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

Pope renews call for solidarity with Ukraine and Holy Land

At the end of his Wednesday General Audience today in St Peter's Square, Pope Francis renewed his heartfelt appeal for peace and solidarity for those suffering war, especially in Ukraine and the Holy Land.

His appeal came just a few hours after a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah came into force early Wednesday.



"Let us not forget the martyred Ukrainian people, who suffer so much," he said. "And let's also pray for peace in the Holy Land, Palestine, and Israel, where people are also suffering so much."

In his greetings to Polish pilgrims, the Pope urged everyone to be "charitable and peacemakers" by supporting the suffering people in Ukraine.



The poster features a purple-to-pink gradient background with three white four-pointed stars. In the top right corner, there is a small icon of a church tower and the text "St. Anne's Church Shandon Tower & Bells". The main title "Advent @ ST ANNES" is written in a mix of white script and bold sans-serif fonts. Three rounded rectangular boxes list the following events:

Date	Event
15/12	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10:15 AM MORNING PRAYER
15/12	LESSONS & CAROLS 7PM WITH CARRIGTWOHILL GOSPEL CHOIR & ST LUKES NS
22/12	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10:15 AM HOLY COMMUNION

At the bottom, it says "VISIT WWW.STANNESHANDON.IE FOR MORE INFO".

Millions of people are facing another freezing winter without heating, following ongoing waves of Russian strikes on Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

"In our world immersed in the sadness of wars and multiple crises, let us announce the joy of the Gospel through our lives transfigured by the presence of God."

He asked a group of Italian children attending the audience not to forget to pray, especially for Ukrainian children and young people.

"Think of the Ukrainian children and young people who suffer at this time without heating in a very harsh winter," he said.

Read the prepared text of Pope Francis Audience address: <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2024/11/27/241127d.html>

Archbishops' letter urges prayer for Middle East

Anglicans have been called to pray during Advent that God will “soften the hearts of the oppressor”, in a pastoral letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of Jerusalem which laments “a deliberate strategy of harassment and intimidation to force Palestinian families from the land”. Madeleine Davies writes in The Church Times.

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The letter was published on Thursday, after a five-day pilgrimage through Palestine and Israel which began three days after Archbishop Welby's resignation. This included visits to Palestinian families battling to retain ownership of their land, and to the family of Layan Nasir, a young Palestinian worshipper at St Peter's Anglican Church, Birzeit, who has been detained since 4 April without legal proceedings.



DUNGANNON CHORAL SOCIETY

DUNGANNON CHORAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

'CAROLS OLD AND NEW'

Sunday 1st December 2024

**Dungannon Presbyterian Church,
Scotch Street**

7.30 PM

Facebook: [dungannonchoralsociety](https://www.facebook.com/dungannonchoralsociety)

”We thank all the families we met for their peaceful resistance and costly witness,” the letter says. “These are not isolated cases, but part of a deliberate strategy of harassment and intimidation to force Palestinian families from the land. Reducing Palestinians to a position of despondent surrender, where they must either live under the yoke of occupation or emigrate, is deeply wrong and unjust. It will bring neither peace nor security.”

The Archbishops write of being “profoundly shocked and shaken to hear from Palestinian Christians . . . about their daily struggles to survive the ongoing occupation . . .

“We heard repeatedly that many indigenous Christians of the Holy Land feel abandoned by the global Church’s response to the war and the challenges they face. This must change. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we must be united in saying there can be no Gospel justification for denying people their God-given human dignity and the rights that flow from this. . . Please join together in prayer against these injustices, appealing both to God to intervene and enact justice, and to soften the hearts of the oppressor.”

The letter follows a series of increasingly strongly worded interventions by Archbishop Welby concerning the rights of Palestinians, condemning “systemic discrimination” and warning that the Israeli government is “not above the law and must stop acting otherwise” (News, 24 September).

On Tuesday, the Dean of St George’s College, Jerusalem, Canon Richard Sewell, said that this shift had been commented on during the Archbishop’s visit. “People said: ‘We have seen a change and we appreciate the turning

around from some early comments which caused us . . . pain. . . Your humility in realising that and in changing to become an advocate for us and our suffering is greatly appreciated.”

He had sensed “a shift of the centre point”, whereby the Archbishop, having tried to hold many factors in balance, had come to recognise the need to “listen first to the pain of the Christians of the Holy land and to allow that to drive everything else”.

He agreed that the visit had marked a “healing” of that relationship. “It was extraordinary that a Church in pain could receive an Archbishop in a time of difficulty for him and actually reach out to provide comfort and care for him. He was not looking for it or asking for it at all; he kept the focus relentlessly on them . . .

“Anyone who suggests he was running away . . . I would really contradict very, very strongly. What he did was to come to listen and care for them. What he found was they were caring for him.”

Christians in the region would take a strong interest in who succeeded the Archbishop, he said. “There are not very many international heads of Churches that have been speaking out strongly for us . . . For that to disappear would really leave us without an important voice of advocacy.”

On Monday, the UN deputy special co-ordinator for the Middle East peace process, Muhannad Hadi, told the Security Council: “As winter approaches, the horror in Gaza continues to grind on with no end in sight.” The UN special

co-ordinator for the Middle East peace process, Tor Wennesland, has described the scale of the conflict as unprecedented since the establishment of the State of Israel: “We have never had a conflict that has lasted for 14 months. We have never had any conflict of this intensity and with the losses and destruction we are seeing now.”

“People are not looking for the hope on the horizon, what they are looking for is what is going to sustain us through the suffering,” Canon Sewell said. “That is the grace of the



**THE ADVENT
PROCESSION**

ST. COLUMB'S CATHEDRAL

**SUNDAY 1ST
DECEMBER**

7.30PM

FREE ADMISSION

Follow the Cathedral Choirs of Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers and Lay Clerks, as they process through the darkened Cathedral, culminating in a breathtakingly illuminated space filled with candlelight.

presence of Christ with us in our suffering, this solidarity that comes from being together and caring for one other.”

He pointed to a statement issued by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem on Sunday, which encouraged their congregations to “fully commemorate the approach and arrival of Christ’s birth by giving public signs of Christian hope”. Their statement last year, which advised “foregoing any unnecessarily festive activities” (News, 1 December 2023), had been “misinterpreted” as a “cancellation of Christmas”, diminishing their witness, they wrote.

The new message spoke of the need to celebrate “in ways that are sensitive to the severe afflictions that millions in our region continue to endure”. On Saturday, Louise Wateridge, senior emergency co-ordinator for UNRWA, said that, in Gaza City, where 300,000 people remained, “as far as the eye can see, every building is damaged and destroyed.” So far this year, UN trucks have been looted 75 times, while looters have broken into UN facilities 34 times.

On Thursday of last week, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and a former defence minister of Israel, Yoav Gallant. Judges said that there were “reasonable grounds” to believe that they bore criminal responsibility for “the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare; and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts”. A warrant was also issued for a Hamas military commander, Mohammed Deif, alleging crimes against humanity and war crimes, although

Israel has said that he was killed in an air strike in Gaza in July.

The ICC depends on its member states to implement its orders. Israel is not a member state, nor is the United States, where President Biden described the arrest warrants for Mr Netanyahu and Mr Gallant as “outrageous”. The Israeli Prime Minister has criticised “biased judges motivated by antisemitic sentiment against the Jewish state”.

A spokesman for the British Prime Minister, when asked whether arrests would be made in the case of the individuals coming to Britain, said that the Government would not comment on “hypotheticals”, but said: “The UK will always comply with its legal obligations as set out by domestic law, and indeed international law.”

Cathedral Calls

Belfast Choral Christmas Cards for sale

These wonderful new choristers have their own Christmas card this year, on which they're pictured all dressed up and busily practising for the carol services.

Buy yours at the front desk:

- Pack of six: £5
- Individual cards: £1



All proceeds go to support the music department and the children's choir.

You will hear the full choir make their debut on the radio soon, and at their carol service on Sunday 22nd December (3:30pm).

Thanks to Emmanuel, George, Lacey and Ruby for showing the cards off so enthusiastically



CHRISTMAS 101 at Belfast Cathedral

Join us on the 5th of December as we gather for Worship 101 - Christmas edition.

We're gathering in St Anne's @belfastcathedral and inviting all students of Belfast to come and join us for an evening of worship followed by some Christmas treats! Same time as

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always, 10:30pm! Invite your friends and spread the word.
We can't wait!

Advent and Christmas 2024 at Christ Church Cathedral Dublin

There is a huge variety of services, concerts and events taking place in Christ Church Cathedral Dublin this Advent and Christmas season.

They start on Sunday December 1, Advent Sunday, with the beautiful Advent Procession at 5pm to which all are welcome.

You can view the full range of events on the cathedral's website here:

<https://christchurchcathedral.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Advent-Christmas-2024-1.pdf>

Clergy and ministry

New district Lay Leader for Methodist North Western district

Welcome to Robert Colvin. Robert is Circuit Steward in Cookstown and South Derry Circuit, a member of the MCI Property Board Executive, and a local preacher.



He is Regional Coordinator in Northern Ireland of Mission Aviation Fellowship. Married to Frances with daughters, Rebekah and Elle. “We look forward to all the ways that God will use Robert in this role.”

Another successful Serve programme

Down & Dromore diocese reports it has had another very successful SERVE programme this year, with nine young people graduating at a recent celebration evening in St Philip’s & St James’, Hollywood.

Big congratulations to Daniella and Israel from Holy Trinity Glencraig Helen from Donaghadee Parish, Harrison and Isaac from St Philip and St James, Hollywood Parish Church and Bella, Sam, Chris and Jay (Jay sadly couldn’t be there) from Ballyholme Parish Church. Thanks to Simon and the



worship team and to Hollywood Parish for hosting us. Pray for these young leaders! DDYC

Synodal training at Knock



The facilitative leadership training programme continues to grow in popularity.

On Thursday in Knock Shrine with the priests of the Diocese of Limerick, exploring all the different ways Christian leaders lead, and how we can facilitate gatherings where we pray together, listen to one another, and discern God's will together.

There was a great input from Professor Michael Conway from St Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth. A morning session provided the theological context for synodality. Jim Deeds - Gym For The Soul and Julieann followed up with models of discernment, and listening as a core leadership skill.



What's Your Call?

Could you be called to...

Parish visiting? Leading worship? Youth ministry?
Preaching & teaching? Ordained ministry?

We ALL have a call... What's yours?

Exploring Ministry Group - Armagh Diocesan Fellowship of Vocation

Are you in the habit of making New Year Resolutions?

Maybe it's a bit early to be thinking about what you might change in 2025!! But here's something to think about now, to pray about, and to respond to early in 2025.

Is God calling you to serve in some way in his Church. Do you sense that you would like to return the love of Jesus by following him into his service? If so, even if you have only started thinking this way, come along to our 'Exploring Ministry Group', the Diocesan Fellowship of Vocation.

It's a bit of a mouthful, but basically its an opportunity to come together with other like minded people to chat about ministry in your parish, our diocese or indeed the wider Church of Ireland.

You may sense a call to ordained ministry, to lay ministry, to pastoral ministry, or just aren't sure. Come along to Castlecaulfield Parish Hall on Thursday January 9th at 7:15pm. We know this may mean putting yourself out a little, but ministry is about serving God and others, and involves a little sacrifice.

A request was made for these meetings also to be held via zoom, but perhaps an online gathering would present less opportunity to get to know people, chat intimately and support each other. So this ,meeting is in-person. But please do make it known if the absence of a zoom gathering is preventing your attendance

If you've queries, speak to your Rector or contact Colin Darling, Diocesan Director of Ordinands or Gary McMurray, Warden of Readers. Contact details are on the diocesan website: <https://armagh.anglican.org/Contacts.html>

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

What can I do to make life better in my community?

With 1 in 4 in our churches affected by domestic abuse, 'Equipping the Church To Take Action and End Abuse' has been developed to empower you with encouragement, knowledge and skills to help support victims and their families with care and empathy.

We, in the church, are on the ground in our communities – together we can be a part of the solution.... join us to begin a journey of exploration and empowerment... it is time to change the story of domestic abuse in our communities.....

Contact muchangingthestory@gmail.org for further information. See also Shoes in the News section above.

It's Back....The BBNI Podcast continues

Season 3 of The BBNI Podcast continues with Danny Roberts from LMI (Logos Ministries International).

Danny leads the Youth and Schools department and shares about the work they are involved with, in schools and Church youth groups across Northern Ireland, and their recent summer mission trip to Kenya.

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This year BBNI have partnered with LMI, who have created 'The Anchor' resource which is a full night programme for all sections.

Season 3: Episode 8 Podcast with Danny & Deborah: Prosperity Gospel, cold showers and a goat out tomorrow at 10am.

Watch & Subscribe or on YouTube:

<https://lnkd.in/ehSM5cX6>

Listen & Subscribe on Spotify:

<https://lnkd.in/erBUhUD6oJgoSLkKahQT...>

Listen & Subscribe on Apple:

<https://lnkd.in/e5mQ8Gzi1706341863>



Christmas
Great events for the whole community

Kids Messy Christingle
Saturday 14 December @ 2pm

A fun-filled craft session making Christingles followed by a short carol service where we hear the Christmas message and light candles. Perfect for primary aged children and their parents/grandparents.

St Brigid's
GLENGORMLEY & MALLUSK

In the media

Mount Melleray and two other abbeys closing in effort to save Cistercian life in Ireland

Waterford News reports - The Irish abbey of Mount Melleray will be closing in January along with two other abbeys, with their respective monks transferred to another location on an interim basis.

The tough decision comes after “much reflection and soul searching” and as part of consolidation efforts to ensure a future for Cistercian life in Ireland, Waterford News reports

“We have been confronted with these difficult decisions as we address the reality of falling numbers and ageing communities; issues which other similar communities are also addressing at this time,” says Dom Rufus Pound, Superior *_ad nutum_* at the Abbey of Our Lady of Silence, where the monks from the three closing abbeys will coalesce for the time being.

Noting that the decision comes after “much reflection and soul searching as an order”, Fr Rufus explains:

“We will be continuing our presence in Ireland into the future, but to achieve this, regretfully, we must consolidate in accordance with the restrictions of our present resources.”

Regarding the future of Mount Melleray, in County Waterford, and the other vacated abbeys, Fr Rufus said: “No

final decisions have been taken at this stage regarding any of the properties, which may be vacated in the near future, however as decisions are made further announcements will be forthcoming.

More at Catholic Herald -

[\[https://catholicherald.co.uk/mount-melleray-abbey-closing-in-effort-to-save-cistercian-life-in-ireland/\]](https://catholicherald.co.uk/mount-melleray-abbey-closing-in-effort-to-save-cistercian-life-in-ireland/)

Methodists' Dublin city centre building has gone sale agreed

A Dublin city centre landmark, Dublin Central Mission at 9 Lower Abbey St facing the Luas stop and Wynn's Hotel, has gone sale agreed - Irish Independent reports.

Estate agent Lisney had been guiding €2.75m for the property which is being sold by The Methodist Church in Ireland.

It is believed to be earmarked for a new cultural venue, but a Lisney spokesperson declined to comment.

The property extends to about 998 sqm and retains original features including the coloured stained glass windows.

Above the double-height church on the ground floor sits an unexpected double-height event hall with a seated mezzanine gallery which has been used as theatre space. The church plans a new city centre base. More at -

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[\[https://www.independent.ie/business/commercial-property/methodists-dublin-city-centre-building-has-gone-sale-agreed/a1575460412.html\]](https://www.independent.ie/business/commercial-property/methodists-dublin-city-centre-building-has-gone-sale-agreed/a1575460412.html)

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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