

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – George is on the road again**

## Image of the day

### George Jones is on the road again

George Jones, musician, artist, and entertainer will be touring with his newbook. George says - Looking forward to some interviews, testimonies and book discussions in the coming weeks..would love you to join me. Dates of George's tour are in the section later in CNI on Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## People and places



### Icon of Saint Fin Barre for Cork Cathedral



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**On Monday  
in St Fin  
Barre's  
Cathedral at  
the first  
Evensong of  
Saint Fin  
Barre's Day  
the Bishop  
of Cork, Rt  
Rev Paul  
Colton  
consecrated  
an icon  
especially**



**commissioned for this 1400th anniversary of the death  
of St Fin Barre of Cork by the English/New Zealand  
Orthodox iconographer Aidan Hart.**

In addition to our icon, Aidan's icons are in churches, cathedrals and private collections throughout these islands, throughout Europe and in the USA. He also designed the anointing screen used at the recent coronation of King Charles III.

“Although our churches are full of iconography, generally speaking, this is the first commission of an icon for a church in the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross,” the Bishop commented.

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The clergy were on retreat throughout the day in St Fin Barre's Cathedral. In the evening the Bishop ordained the Reverend Martin Steele to the priesthood. The preacher was the former



Primate, Bishop Richard Clarke. Above - the new icon and the new priest.

## **Confirmation of faith at Belfast C of I and Methodist Chaplaincy**

**Five young adults from The Church of the Resurrection made a public declaration of their faith, were confirmed and received into membership at the chaplaincy to Queen's University.**

The Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev. George Davison and South and Central Belfast Circuit Superintendent Rev David Campton were present to lead the service, as the



## The confirmed members with the clergy

chaplaincy continues to live out the covenant partnership between the Church of Ireland and the The Methodist Church in Ireland

The Chaplains commented. “We’re so thankful for these five and for the ways they live out their faith and discipleship, among us and in the world”.

## Ordination of Rev Lynda Kane

The Ministers, Kirk Session and Congregation of All Souls Church, Belfast joined in congratulating Rev Lynda Kane as she was ordained and installed as Minister of Ballyclare, Ballymoney and Cairncastle. “May God bless your work and ministry in the denomination”.



## Lisburn Community Choir and Children's Choir is back with a bang

They are working away to prepare a feast of Christmas music this December at Lisburn Cathedral. More details coming soon.

They have a few more spaces in the men's section of the adult choir and a few more places in the children's choir as well. Get in touch!



## Methodist North West lay leaders meet

**For the first time a group of about 30 lay leaders from the Methodist Church's North West district met in Fivemiletown to share, learn and pray with each others.**



“A great day and excellent initiative by their Lay Leader David Best”. “Tom and Louise Wilson’s presence was appreciated”.

## Appointment to Ardmore

**Bishop David McClay of Down & Dromore has appointed Revd Andrew Baldock as Minister-in-charge of the Parish of Ardmore in the Diocese of Dromore.**

Andrew studied theology at Northumbria Bible College and Durham

University. He was ordained in the Church of England in 2000 and subsequently served in parishes in the North of England, Oxfordshire, and South Ayrshire.

Andrew has a particular passion for exegetical preaching and teaching and has also served in independent evangelical churches, most recently in Scotland and Northamptonshire.





He is married to Gilly and enjoys travel, ornithology, and watching Cricket, American and Rugby Football in his spare time.

The date for the service of introduction will be announced in due course.

## **Heritage - Ministry in Ebrington Londonderry**

**A native of the Garvagh area, Leslie Rankin, after some years in business, decided to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church.**

After six years of study in Magee College was licensed by the Presbytery of Coleraine in 1894. In the same year he began the work, which would lead to the establishment of the Ebrington congregation, in a small Temperance Hall, which was later enlarged into the Victoria Orange Hall, Londonderry.





Two years later, on March 3, 1896, he was ordained to the pastorate of Ebrington. Within that two-year period accommodation inside Victoria Hall had also become overcrowded and a decision was taken to erect a church building, which was opened for public worship on October 3, 1897, when the Reverend George Davidson of Edinburgh was the special preacher.

A Lecture Hall was added in 1901, and a manse in 1903.

Through the efforts of the Reverend Rankin the Ebrington congregation grew steadily, and when he had completed forty years as minister of the Church the congregation installed a new pipe organ and pulpit, which bore the following inscription:- 'This organ and pulpit was provided by

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members and friends of Ebrington Church and dedicated to the Glory of God as a token of respect to Rev. Leslie Rankin on the completion of forty years devoted service in the interests of the congregation. 1894-1934.'

A decade later, in November 1944, after half-a-century in the ministry, the Reverend Rankin applied to the Derry Presbytery, of which he was then Moderator, for leave to retire. He died on Monday, January 24, 1949, in Londonderry City and County Hospital at the age of eighty-eight. His wife predeceased him by several years, and three daughters, Mrs David Morris, Miss Florence Rankin, and Miss Violet Rankin survived him.

See Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, p374; Obituary, Londonderry Sentinel, Tuesday Morning, January 25, 1949.

## News reports

### Isle of Man to get first Catholic cathedral

**The Isle of Man will receive a Catholic cathedral for the first time in the predominantly Anglican island's history.**

The church of Saint Mary of the Isle, located in the city of Douglas, has been granted cathedral status, and will be a co-cathedral for the Archdiocese of Liverpool alongside the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King.



There are 84,000 people on the Island of Man, about 53 percent of whom are Christian, and only a small number are Catholic, attending six churches.

Though not belonging to the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man forms part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool, with most Catholics either being Irish or of Irish descent, thanks largely to historic trading routes.

## **Bishop of Argyll & The Isles dies, aged 66, after short illness**

**The Bishop of Argyll & The Isles, Dr Keith Riglin, has died after a short illness, the Scottish Episcopal Church has announced.**

Dr Riglin, who was 66, died on Sunday, with his family beside him, at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, in Paisley.

The Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Most Revd Mark Strange, has paid tribute to Dr Riglin. “Bishop Keith first came to the Scottish Episcopal Church in 2012 as part of a long journey through ordained ministry across the UK.

“He brought many gifts to the Church, primarily the joy he took in his ministry, as well as his love of engaging everyone he met in conversation, which brought him close to so many of us”.

## In the media

### **Dana Scallon leads pilgrimage in the footsteps of St Patrick, where she describes him as saint for today**

**Singer Dana Rosemary Scallon joined pilgrims to walk St Patrick's Way near Downpatrick, describing the 6th century figure as "truly a saint for today", someone who was trafficked and lived in abject poverty, John Breslin reports in The Irish News**

The six-mile route around the Co Down town, established by the St Patrick Centre, takes in his reputed first church and Inch Abbey, where the legend of the country's patron saint banishing snakes from the island was reportedly concocted.

The Derry-born Eurovision winner, who launched her new single Light the Fire at the centre earlier this year, led the pilgrimage along the way with guides Martina Purdy and Elaine Kelly.

Ms Purdy, a former BBC NI political journalist and Ms Kelly, a former lawyer, gave up their careers in 2014 to become nuns.

The pair moved to Co Down after leaving the Adoration Sisters convent in 2019 before taking final vows.



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Dana said she was drawn to walk in St Patrick's footsteps because she feels "it would be a way to get to know him better...a way to deepen my faith and increase my courage, so that like him, I can stand for and share the faith, hope and love that I believe in".

She added: "I've learned that he is truly a saint for today; he suffered human trafficking, lived in abject poverty in a pagan country, where human sacrifice was practised.

"Yet in this suffering, he found a true relationship with God and after escaping, he found the courage to return and risk his own life to bring faith, hope and love to the oppressed people of Ireland."

Centre director Tim Campbell said: "The pilgrimage is a great opportunity to follow in the footsteps of Saint Patrick and learn about his journey from a poor slave with no faith to a man of faith and a great missionary."

Pilgrim guide Martina Purdy, describing the draw Patrick as universal, added: "Whether somee come for faith, or an adventure, while others come for a walk in the beauty of County Down, all go home refreshed and more aware of who Patrick was."

Organiser Elaine Kelly added: "This past year we have had pilgrims not just from Ireland and the UK but from as far away as the United States and Korea."

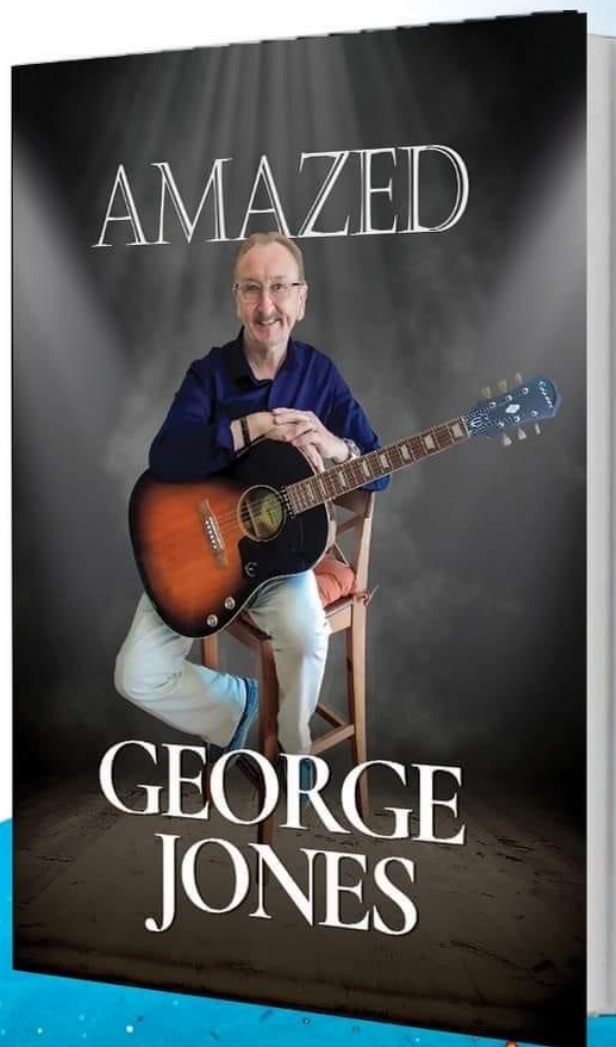
The Irish News 24/09/2023

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# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## Amazed - new book by George Jones

Northern Ireland's own celebrity tells what it was like to be gifted with awards, lose it all, then rise again. Plus he shares insight into NI leading showband Clubsound and Belfast Sadie. Laughter, drama, tears and God calling all within the pages of his autobiography.



**GEORGE JONES**



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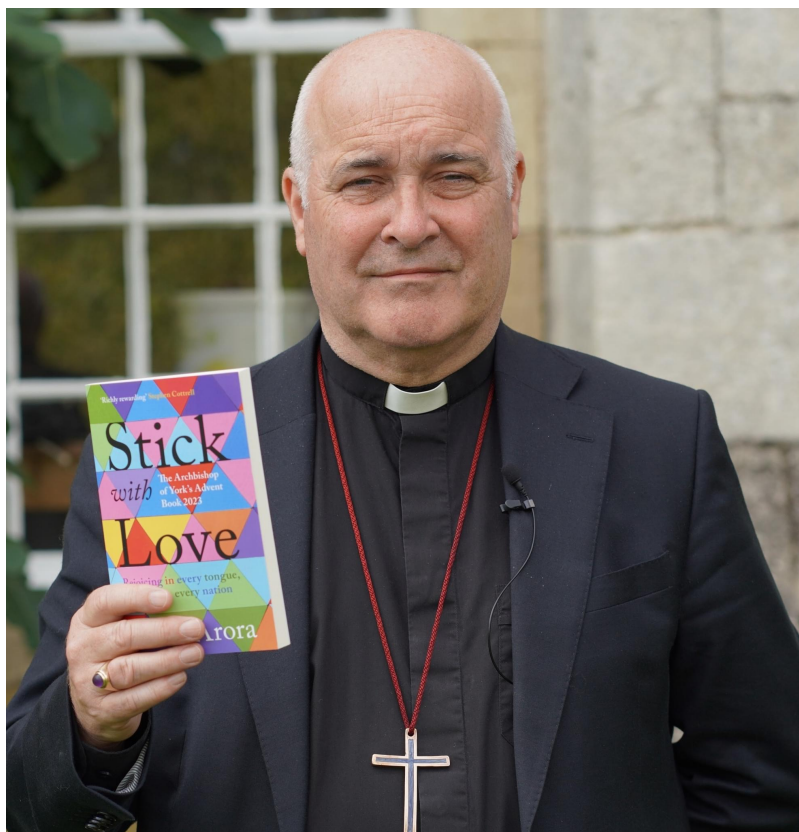
**George says - Looking forward to some interviews, testimonies and book discussions in the coming weeks..would love you to join me if you're in the area friends!**

Sunday 1st October  
Carnlough Presbyterian church.

Friday 6th October  
Rathfriland Presbyterian church. (With Heart and Soul praise band)

Sunday 5th November  
Ballygowan Presbyterian church..

Sunday 26th November  
Annaghmore Parish Church..



**Archbishop of York's chosen book for Advent this year is 'Stick with Love'**

Author, the Rt Revd Arun Arora, guides us through Advent with daily readings, richly reminding us of the love of Christ that unites every tongue, tribe and nation.

Find out more at

## Perspective



### **C.S. Lewis' work continues to gain popularity 60 years after his death**

**In a rambling red-brick house on the western edge of Oxford, England, a melancholy desk sits at a bay window looking out over tangled woodland, Jonathan Livermore writes in *The Pilot* - America's oldest Catholic newspaper.**

In the foreground, an ancient ashtray stands broodingly against a worn leather armchair, surrounded by wall maps and pictures depicting a fantasy landscape.



When Clive Staples Lewis bought The Kilns, a former brick factory, in 1930, he used its quiet remoteness to produce a stream of literary and spiritual masterpieces that are still quoted with reverence today.

But he achieved most fame with stories for children that contained deep Christian echoes, the best known of which, "The Chronicles of Narnia," has sold 100 million copies in more than 40 languages.

Until recently, paradoxically, C.S. Lewis had been largely ignored at Oxford University, where he taught for three decades until his early death from bone cancer Nov. 22, 1963. He gained greater recognition in the United States, which he never visited.

With popular interest continuing to grow, however, and three Narnia books -- "The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe," "Prince Caspian" and "The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" -- now blockbuster films, things could be changing.

"Like his close friend, J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis expressed his Christian faith through narrative and imagination which chimes in well with the needs of our contemporary culture," said Father Michael Ward, a Lewis expert at Oxford..

"People pick up intuitively on the timeless religious element in his books, even if they're not directly aware of their fundamentally Christian message," he said.

Lewis won an Oxford scholarship from his native Northern Ireland in 1916, graduating in classics and English after

fighting in World War I, and becoming a fellow of Magdalen College in 1925.

Oxford city landmarks include the Eagle and Child pub, where his informal literary group, The Inklings, met to discuss ideas; the walkways where he nurtured his fascination for Nordic, Celtic and Greek legends; and the Anglican Holy Trinity Church where he lies buried with his brother, Warren Lewis.

Despite his prodigious output, however, Oxford's academic establishment had traditionally been dismissive of Lewis.

The English faculty, which he did much to develop, considered him too preoccupied with Christianity, while the university's theology faculty viewed him as a literary intruder.

As a new generation is introduced to the world of Narnia, Judith Wolfe, editor of Oxford's Journal of Inklings Studies, said a decade ago that Lewis' Christian vision was then gaining a new relevance.

Lewis was writing at a time of profound change, she said, when the universal acceptance of humanity's sinfulness was breaking down under the impact of modern Freudian analysis, and the traditional answers offered by Christian apologists no longer carried conviction.

He saw how Christianity's witness to the world was diminished by denominational rivalries, and believed his role was to show what united Christians rather than divided them.

"Although Lewis wasn't a professional theologian, his acute sense of the world Christianity portrays was just as profound as the best modern theologians," Wolfe said. "He also realized Christian literature was failing to present good and holy characters who were also interesting -- the evil ones were always more compelling. By portraying Christ as the lion Aslan in the 'Narnia' stories, he hoped to reveal the attractiveness of the good in real life."

Born at Belfast in November 1898 into the Anglican Church of Ireland, Lewis abandoned his faith at school, but was reconverted to Christianity at Oxford by the devoutly Catholic J.R.R. Tolkien, author of "The Lord of the Rings."

In "Surprised by Joy," he recalled being brought back to Christianity "kicking, struggling, resentful, darting my eyes in every direction for a chance to escape."

"That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me," he wrote. "I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England."

Lewis disappointed Tolkien by declining to become a Catholic, and instead remained a "high church" Anglican. But he was sympathetic to the Catholic doctrines of purgatory, mortal sin and prayers to the saints, and retained an ecumenical focus -- perhaps in reaction to the bitter religious divisions of Northern Ireland.

His book "Mere Christianity," based on acclaimed wartime broadcasts for the BBC, tackled popular objections to Christianity from a skeptical viewpoint.



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Diarmaid MacCulloch, Oxford professor of church history, said Lewis' nondenominational approach to Christianity, which predated ecumenical attitudes at the 1962-1965 Second Vatican Council, explained his popularity in the United States.

"Lewis tends to attract more conservative Christians, both Protestants and Catholics, at a time when religion is undergoing a realignment between the forces of tradition and change," said MacCulloch, a fellow of the British Academy, whose monumental 2009 "History of Christianity" was accompanied by a BBC series.

Walter Hooper, a Catholic American who lived with Lewis at the time of his death, told *Our Sunday Visitor* in 2013 that he saw other reasons why interest in Lewis looks set to grow, particularly among Catholics.

Hooper, who died in 2020 at age 89, recalled then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger citing Lewis' 1943 book, "The Abolition of Man," during a 1988 lecture at Britain's Cambridge University, and praising its defense of natural law and rejection of "destructive relativism."

Hooper also remembered St. John Paul II revealing a deep knowledge of Lewis' works when he met Hooper at the pontiff's request after a Rome general audience, particularly lauding his 1960 work, "The Four Loves," and his devotion to a practical apostolate.

"Lewis owed it to his fans to avoid complexities and set Christianity's core beliefs in place," Hooper said around the 50th anniversary of Lewis' death. "I think he's being taken

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much more seriously in the Catholic Church now, at a time when the way these core beliefs are presented is all-important but the sense of meaning must always stay the same."

All of this will add pressure for fuller academic recognition of Lewis, whom many now see as one of the 20th century's most important Christian writers.

Back at The Kilns, the rooms still exist where Lewis received Tolkien and other associates, where he played scrabble with his American wife Joy Davidman, a former communist and fellow convert before she succumbed to cancer at age 45, and where he died the same day as President John F. Kennedy.

The once-derelict house, restored as a study center by U.S. volunteers in 1993-2002, is now owned by the California-based C.S. Lewis Foundation, and stands in a suburban landscape much changed from Lewis' own days.

But visits are increasing as interest grows worldwide in this original and insightful Christian writer.

Jonathan Luxmoore covers church affairs in Europe from Oxford and Warsaw.

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## Poem for today

### Besides the Autumn Poets Sing by Emily Dickinson

Besides the Autumn poets sing,  
A few prosaic days  
A little this side of the snow  
And that side of the Haze -

A few incisive mornings -  
A few Ascetic eves -  
Gone - Mr Bryant's "Golden Rod" -  
And Mr Thomson's "sheaves."

Still, is the bustle in the brook -  
Sealed are the spicy valves -  
Mesmeric fingers softly touch  
The eyes of many Elves -

Perhaps a squirrel may remain -  
My sentiments to share -  
Grant me, Oh Lord, a sunny mind -  
Thy windy will to bear!

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site



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# Church News Ireland

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