

Church News Ireland

Image
of the
day -

Living
Advent
Calendar





Image of the day

Ballyholme's Living Advent Calendar

Love Ballyholme Community Association, which brings together Ballyholme residents, businesses, churches and schools, is running its first Living Advent Calendar.

Just like opening a door on a traditional Advent Calendar, a picture or display is being unveiled in a different window of a house, business or church each day.

The trail of windows starts in the Ballyholme shops, loops around the seafront and past St Columbanus Church of Ireland. A new window is revealed each day, with pictures of the windows shown on the Love Ballyholme Facebook page.

Once all 24 windows have been “opened”, the team will share a map of the locations so that people can spot them whilst out walking over the Christmas period.

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This is a fun and creative way for the business community and residents to join together to celebrate Christmas. Mel Martin, a local pharmacist and member of Love Ballyholme committee came up with this wonderful idea.

The families at St Columbanus' Café Church stayed behind to create the church's window, pictured below with three of the children at the "opening" on Day 10.

With thanks to Revd Jan Stevenson (Community Pastor & Chair of Love Ballyholme Community Association)

News reports

Connor Youth's SERVE graduates 2022

Congratulations to Connor Youth's SERVE graduates 2022. Included in the picture is Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Baillie, back right.

Congratulations to the seven young people who on Sunday evening graduated from the SERVE course 2022 at a service at Lisburn Cathedral.

SERVE, which was run by Engage Connor Youth for a second time over the past months, involved weekly meetings at the Hub Chaplaincy over seven sessions. The programme explores how young people can step into leadership, focusing on topics like the character of a leader and reflecting on their own gifts and skills.



Speaking of the SERVE class of 2022, Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Baillie said: “We are delighted to have these young people linked into this course to explore how they can serve and lead in their local parish. It is such an encouragement to meet with them and explore what they can offer and grow in.”

The 2022 group graduated during a contemporary Carol Service hosted by Mettle (Lisburn Cathedral’s youth group) in the Cathedral on Sunday December 11.

Civic Reception at Cork City Hall marks 150th Anniversary of Saint Luke's Home

The Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Deirdre Forde, accorded Saint Luke's Home Cork one of the highest honours the Lord Mayor of Cork may bestow on individuals or an organisation in the City: a Civic Reception.



The Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Deirdre Forde, presented Bishop Paul Colton, President of Saint Luke's Charity, Cork (accompanied by Mr Tony O'Brien, CEO) with Cork silver to mark the 150th anniversary of Saint Luke's Home.

Volunteers of the Charity, which marks its 150th anniversary this year, together with management, staff, fundraisers, board members, and the President of the Charity, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, were welcomed to the Council Chamber on Tuesday 6th December. In her speech, the Lord Mayor paid tribute to the work of the Charity, since its foundation in 1872 by Miss Frances Fitzgerald Gregg, in caring for older people, in daycare services, in education, and in specialist dementia and Alzheimer care.

To mark the occasion, on behalf of the City and its citizens, the Lord Mayor presented the Charity with Cork silver embossed with the arms of the City of Cork and especially engraved to mark the anniversary. Bishop Colton, thanked the Lord Mayor and City Council and said that he wished, in that civic context, to thank all the stakeholders and partners for all their work for the Charity throughout the years. The CEO of Saint Luke's Charity and Home, Tony O'Brien, paid tribute to today's residents and their families, as well as all the team at St Luke's for their untiring and faithful work.

Presbyterian Church's WDA22 focus on Lebanon

A centre that is supported by the Lebanese Society for Education and Social Development (LSESD) in a deprived and rundown suburb of Beirut, which has been described as 'a lighthouse in a dark place' and 'a haven of hope', is the focus of this year's Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) World Development Appeal (WDA).

RBL presentations

Officers of Limavady Branch of the Royal British Legion made a visit to Portrush this week to present gifts to Canon Sam Mc Veigh and his wife, Joan, to mark the Canon's retirement.

The Branch commented, "Canon Mc Veigh has been a great friend to our Branch throughout his ministry in Limavady, supporting the Branch in various different ways. We look forward to seeing him from time to time back in the town and we wish him and Joan a long and happy retirement and more time to spend with family."

Thanks to Comrade Billy Dickson for photography duties.



Major (Retd) Philip Morrison, President of The RBL NI, presented Dame Fionnuala O'Boyle, HM Lord Lieutenant for Belfast, with a beautifully carved walking stick by veteran Brian McKee as a token of appreciation for her support for the Legion.

Bark! The Herald Angels Sing – Dogs enjoy the First Howell at Peata Carol Service



Archbishop Michael Jackson blesses the dogs at the annual Peata Carol Service in Christ Church Cathedral.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing and The First Nowell were among the festive favourites enjoyed by dogs of all sizes who attended the Peata Therapy Dog Carol Service in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Tuesday December 13.

The annual service celebrates the joy pets bring, and in particular the gifts that therapy dogs bring to patients and staff they visit in caring institutions.

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The service was led by Dean Dermot Dunne and sung by singers of the Christ Church Choirs. The pet blessing was delivered by Archbishop Michael Jackson.

Speaking over the enthusiastic barks of some of the congregation, Dean Dunne welcomed everyone to the much loved service. “This is a service for dogs so there will be barks,” he said adding that pets are very close to people’s hearts.

Thanking the cathedral for hosting the event, Ian Sutton, chair of Peata Therapy Dogs, said the service marked the start of Christmas for them. He said he was delighted to look down at all the friendly faces after a strange couple of years. He was also delighted that visiting had resumed for Peata volunteers to caring institutions and that the organisation had also started to assess new members and visiting teams once again.

Archbishop Jackson brought the service to a close in prayer and thanked Peata volunteers for the joy they and their dogs bring to those whom they visit.

The collection during the service was in aid of Peata and the Peter McVerry Trust. The congregation enjoyed Mince pies afterwards hosted by the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral.

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Carol Service at Mary Sumner House

Join the Mothers Union for their Carol Service in the Mary Sumner House Chapel.


To download the programme so you can follow along and join in with the carols, please visit:

https://www.mothersunion.org/sites/default/files/resources/public2022%2012%20Mothers%27%20Union%20Carol%20Service_1.pdf



Uhambo blog

In the first in a series of 3 blogs, Rev Fiona McCrea reflects on her visit to South Africa as part of Christian Aid Church Leaders trip.

Read 'Uhambo' here 
irishmethodist.org/world-developm...

Poem for today

Advent by Patrick Kavanagh

We have tested and tasted too much, lover-
Through a chink too wide there comes in no wonder.
But here in the Advent-darkened room
Where the dry black bread and the sugarless tea
Of penance will charm back the luxury
Of a child's soul, we'll return to Doom
The knowledge we stole but could not use.

And the newness that was in every stale thing
When we looked at it as children: the spirit-shocking
Wonder in a black slanting Ulster hill
Or the prophetic astonishment in the tedious talking
Of an old fool will awake for us and bring
You and me to the yard gate to watch the whins

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And the bog-holes, cart-tracks, old stables where Time begins.

O after Christmas we'll have no need to go searching
For the difference that sets an old phrase burning-
We'll hear it in the whispered argument of a churning
Or in the streets where the village boys are lurching.
And we'll hear it among decent men too
Who barrow dung in gardens under trees,
Wherever life pours ordinary plenty.
Won't we be rich, my love and I, and
God we shall not ask for reason's payment,
The why of heart-breaking strangeness in dreeping hedges
Nor analyse God's breath in common statement.
We have thrown into the dust-bin the clay-minted wages
Of pleasure, knowledge and the conscious hour-
And Christ comes with a January flower.

World Cup Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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