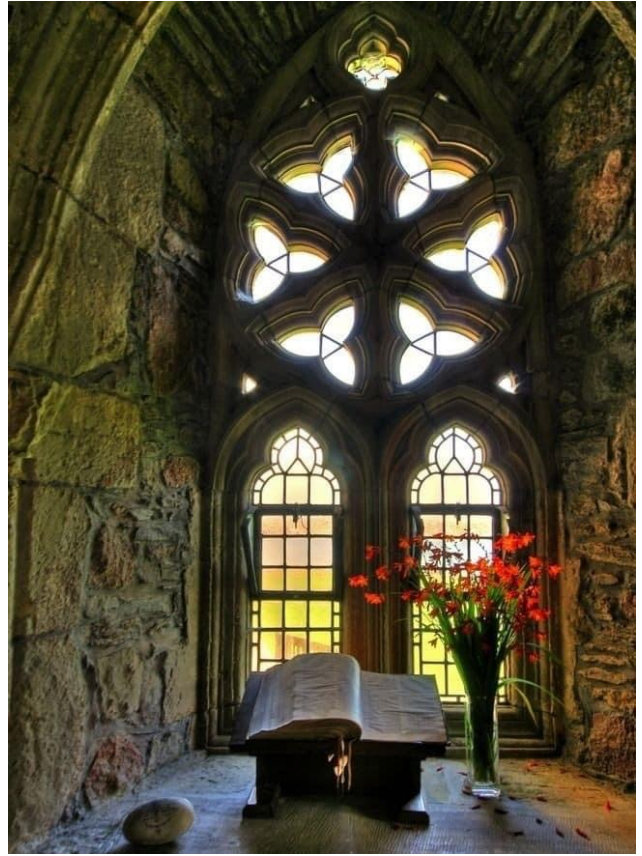
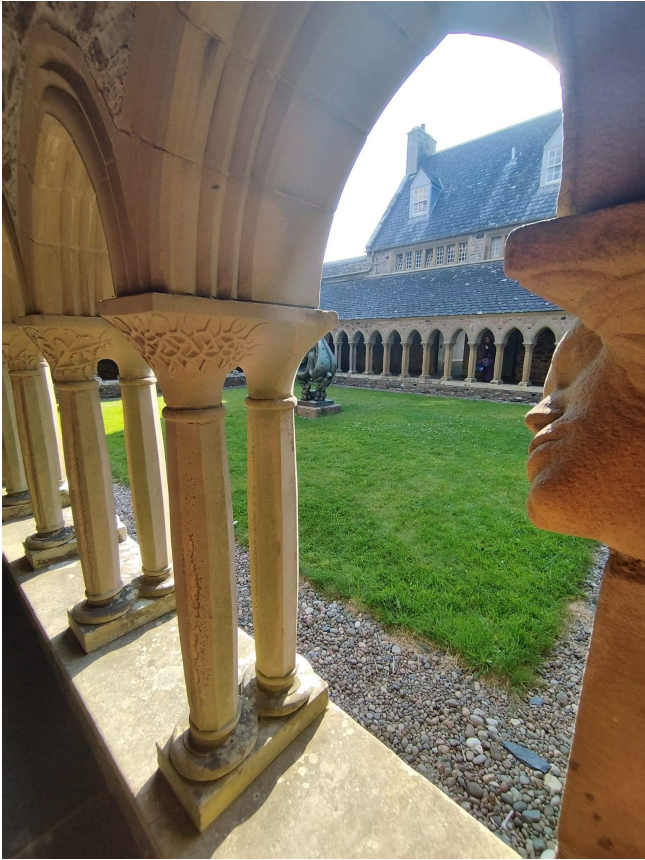


# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Iona**

## Image of the day - Iona



## People and places



### Well done St Katharine's

Well done to parishioners in St Katharine's, Belfast, who for the past 50 years have been donating toys, books games etc to the children of Newtownabbey to help make Christmas special for them and their families. More at <https://rb.gy/6n7wlf>

### Great efforts by Castlecaufield & Donaghmore



**St Michael's Castlecaufield and St Patrick's Donaghmore as the year draws to a close can to look back and "ask what we have achieved in this past year?"**

"Sometimes we fall into the trap of saying we are only two small village churches, what difference can we make?"

"Since September alone we have held three appeals for items - food for the foodbank at harvest, toys for 'cash for

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kids' in November, and toiletries for the Dungannon homeless shelter in December.

“We have also given and raised over £5,000 for other good causes: our mission partners (Rev Andrew and Joanne Quill) in South Sudan with CMS (collections from the Harvest and BB services), the Southern Area Hospice (envelope appeal in November), Teddies for Loving Care, Charis Cancer Care (Masonic Carol Service), Parkinsons (Carol Singing), The Zaccheus Project - the Church Army (Christmas collections). We might be small churches, but we have the power to make a big difference in many lives.

“Thank you all for your generosity, you have been a blessing to many, sharing the love of Christ with those in need”.



## Supporting Christian Aid

Rosamond Bennett, CEO at Christian Aid Ireland called by to see how the 2023 Black Santa Appeal was going. For the past 47 years Christian Aid has received a portion from the Black Santa Appeal for their work across the globe. This year some of the money from the Black Santa Appeal will be used to buy food and medicines for distribution in Gaza.

# January 2024

## DIARY FOR PRESIDENT & LAY LEADER

- 7 Seymour Street
- 11 Connexional Team\*  
Centring Prayer Meeting - Agapé Centre
- 14 Tandragee & Richill\*  
Seymour Hill\*
- 16 Visit BCM, Dungannon
- 18 Governance Board\*
- 19 Wesley College Board of Governors
- 21 Bangor & Holywood\*  
Belfast Central & South\*
- 23 - 25 Re:Call Stationed Ministers Retreat, Sligo  
Church Leaders' Group
- 28 Sydenham\*  
Belvoir  
Bluestone (Lay Leader)
- 30 CSR Northern  
Executive Meeting

*\* Lay Leader also attending*



## Busy January for Methodist leaders

As the new year begins, the President of the Methodist Church the Rev David Turtle and Lay Leader, Mr Tom Wilson have a busy January.

## Last link to General with firm links to Belfast Cathedral

**Sad news to relay that Mrs. Isobel Morse, the last surviving daughter of General Sir James Steele of Ballycarry, has passed away at the age of 90 at her home in England.**



This picture shows Isobel (on left) and Rachel, her sister with General Sir Roger Wheeler at the time of the memorial unveiling in the 1990s. The family continue to follow the work of the General Sir James Steele Trust Fund in Ballycarry, and to support it.

The service of Sir James Steele is remembered in St Anne's Cathedral Belfast. His personal standard and a brass floor

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plaque are located at the Royal Irish Regiment's Chapel of Remembrance.



**Record of General Sir James Steele Royal Irish Rifles.  
MC, MiD, GCB, KCB, KBE.**

**When war broke out in 1939 his hand signed the  
Mobilisation order for GB forces.**

James Stuart Steele was born at Leefield Farm, Ballycarry, Co. Antrim, in 1894. His mother was widowed. He was educated at the National School at Hillhead, and the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, before progressing to the Queen's University. James Steele was studying for the



ministry of the Presbyterian Church. War intervened and as a member of the QUOTC, he applied for a Temporary Commission in the army. On 26/09/1914 he was appointed Second Lieutenant in the Royal Irish Rifles. Towards the end of 1915 he was in France and saw service in the Battles of Messines, the Somme and Passendaele (Third Ypres). In June 1916, he was awarded a Regular Commission in the RIR. Mentioned in Despatches, April 1917, he was awarded an MC in August 1917. He served the rest of the war in India where he was mentioned in despatches again. He saw action on the North West Frontier in 1920/21 and also served in Egypt.

He attended Staff College at Camberley 1930 - 31. Promoted to brevet Lt. Colonel, he commanded the First Battalion, the Sherwood Foresters from 1937 - 39. He was promoted to Colonel in 1939. When war broke out in 1939 his hand signed the Mobilisation order for GB forces. However, Steele was not to delay long in the Mobilisation Branch of the War Office. He was General Officer Commanding 59th Staffordshire Infantry Division in February 1941 and went with it to France, subsequently being among those evacuated from Dunkirk. He commanded II Corps as acting Lieutenant General in 1942. Having served as Deputy Chief of General Staff in the Middle East (1942-43) he returned to the War Office, where he was deeply involved with the planning and operation of the D-Day landings in Normandy in 1944.

After the war, James Steele was appointed Commander-in-Chief and High Commissioner of Austria in 1946, signing an international treaty with Marshall Tito in that capacity during his term of office.

He was promoted to General in 1947. He was Adjutant General to the Forces from 1947 to 1950 when he retired from the Army.

Amongst his honours was his appointment as Aide-de-camp general to HM The King in 1946. He was awarded the CB in 1943, the KCB in 1949 and the GCB in 1950. He was also awarded the KBE in 1946.

In the post-war period James Steele continued his devotion to the army, undertaking vital and sterling work in helping the army cope with the new challenges of peace-time. He also firmly established the Army Benevolent Fund.

Retiring from the regular army in 1950, James Steele became Colonel of the Royal Ulster Rifles from 1945 to 1957. He was also a National President of the Dunkirk Veterans' Association and in 1966 became chairman of the Somme Committee established by the Northern Ireland government and that year led the 50th anniversary pilgrimage to France. Speaking at the time he underlined how the memory of the Somme would never fade in Ulster, because of the great sacrifice which had been undertaken there by so many of her sons.

The General's scrapbooks are deposited in the Royal Ulster Rifles' Museum. Contained therein are photographs of Steele with the Rifles; receiving the Freedom of the City of Belfast; photographs with Marshal Tito; with Lord Brookeborough and touchingly enough a snapshot of the General walking along the main street in Ballycarry

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surrounded by children and wellwishers, on one of his visits home.

In March 1950, Sir James Steele became Larne's fourth Freeman. Three years earlier, unable to extend such an honour, the people of Ballycarry and district presented him with an illuminated address as a token of their esteem. The photograph was carefully placed into the General's album and the address given a place of honour over his desk at his other home in England.

James Steele died in 1975. The news of the death of the man known affectionately as 'Daddy Steele' was relayed to the 5th Battalion of the Royal Ulster Rifles as pipers were playing The South Down Militia at a guest night in their camp.

There were many within the army who wanted to put on record their appreciation of his service. Writing in the London Times, Major-General Eric Goldsmith said that: 'Daddy Steele' was truly a father to those who served him. He demanded high standards and he attained them by guidance, by kindness and by good humour. He will be remembered.'

The funeral was impressive. 1,000 men escorted the coffin. In its scale the event was similar to the funeral of Winston Churchill. But the final chapter had not yet been written. They did not bury James Stuart Steele in England. They brought his ashes home... home to Ballycarry.

(Acknowledgment - based on an article by David Hume, Spring 1993 issue of "New Ulster".)

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General Sir James Steele was President of QUB Services Club in 1950.

## News reports

### Entrust 2024 to the Mother of God - Pope Francis

**Pope Francis began the new year by urging his fellow Catholics to entrust 2024 to the Mother of God, who “knows our needs” and always intercedes to “make grace overflow in our lives.”**

The pope made his appeal during Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica on Jan. 1 for the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. He called upon Catholics to consecrate their lives to Mary, noting that “she will lead us to Jesus, who himself is ‘the fullness of time.’”

“All of us have our shortcomings, our times of loneliness, our inner emptiness that cries out to be filled,” Francis said in his homily. “Who can do that, if not Mary, the mother of fullness?”

Throughout his homily, the pope reflected on Mary’s significance as the Mother of God, a title first attributed to the Blessed Mother at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. in order to underscore the divinity of Christ.

Given Mary’s role as the “means chosen by God” for entering into human history with the birth of Christ, Francis

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said it is “fitting that the year should open by invoking her.”  
[bit.ly/4aABMFf](https://bit.ly/4aABMFf)

## In the media



## 'Getting ready for the next thousand years': What to expect from conclusion of the Church's Synod - Journal.ie

The second phase takes place in October and a decision will then be made by Pope Francis on whether any proposed changes will become official Church teaching.

An excellent contribution -

<https://www.thejournal.ie/synond-vatican-catholic-church-pope-francis-6247987-Jan2024/>

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## Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



**FODEN'S BAND**  
(BRITISH OPEN CHAMPIONS 2023)  
IN  
**ARMAGH GALA  
CONCERT 2024**

**ADMISSION:  
£20**

**Saturday 3rd February 2024 @ 7.45pm  
in 1st Presbyterian Church, Armagh**

This event is sponsored & supported  
by Armagh Old Boys Silver Band  
(Charity no. NIC101904)



Armagh City  
Banbridge  
& Craigavon  
Borough Council

All donations towards our  
**Summer School 2024**



### Concert in aid of Armagh Old Boys Brass Band Summer scheme

Delighted to announce the return of the Foden's Band to Armagh on Saturday 3rd February 2024 for their annual gala concert and young/young at heart soloist/ come and play with Fodens masterclasses.

Concert Sat 3rd Feb 2024 at 7.45pm

Soloist Masterclasses Sat 3rd Feb 2024 at 10.30am

Where - First Presbyterian Church Armagh

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Currently ranked No 1 Brass Band in the World, 2023 British Open Champions and 2023 Brass in Concert Champions. This is an opportunity not to be missed and promises to be a great weekend of music, fun and friendships.

Concert Tickets can be purchased at £20.00 and further information on the Soloist Masterclasses from:

Ivor Stevenson 07734303005 ([ivorbob@hotmail.com](mailto:ivorbob@hotmail.com))

Gordon Stewart 07889286427

Julie-Anne Stevenson 07841716841  
([jastevenson4@hotmail.com](mailto:jastevenson4@hotmail.com))

A big thank you to the ABC Council and Arts Council of Northern Ireland for their continued support.

Church of Ireland  
United Dioceses of  
Cork, Cloyne & Ross  
Saint Anne's, Shandon

EPIPHANY EVE  
7PM,  
5TH JAN 2024

Candlelight Service of Evening Prayer  
*followed by*  
The Three Wise Men: Figments of  
Imagination?  
A Talk by Dr. Dagmar O'Riain-Raedel  
All are welcome

## Wise men in Shandon

St Ann's  
Shandon  
Candlelight  
Service of  
Evening Prayer  
followed by a  
talk on the  
Three Wise  
Men by Dr  
Dagmar  
O'Riain-Raedel  
this Friday, Jan  
5th at 7pm.

A poster for a Communion Healing Service. The background is a white, draped fabric. In the top right corner, there is a logo consisting of a golden cross with a flame above it, and the letters 'DHM' below it. The main title 'Communion Healing Service' is written in large, bold, golden letters. Below the title, the date and time '7.30pm Thursday 4th January' are written in bold black text. The address 'St. Patrick's Church of Ireland, 220 Newtownards Road, Ballymacarrett, Belfast' is listed in bold black text. On the right side, there is a circular inset image showing a golden chalice and a piece of bread on a white surface. At the bottom, the celebrant's name 'Celebrant: Br David Jardine' is written in bold black text, followed by the theme '*Surrendering 2024 into the Lord's hands*' in golden italicized text. The final line of text is 'Prayer Ministry and Anointing with Oil' in bold black text.

**Communion  
Healing Service**

**7.30pm Thursday 4th January**

**St. Patrick's Church of Ireland  
220 Newtownards Road  
Ballymacarrett  
Belfast**

**Celebrant: Br David Jardine**  
*Surrendering 2024 into the Lord's hands*

**Prayer Ministry and Anointing with Oil**

## Perspective

### Light to the world: Scots Moderator reflects on the season of Epiphany

In this article, which first appeared in the January 2024 edition of *Life and Work*, Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton reflects on the powerful message of the season of Epiphany.

Strange that when we are in the time of deepest darkness, we begin to celebrate the light.



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In Scotland, the shortest day was December 21, when the sunrise spilled out at 8.45am and sunset swept over us at 3.30pm. Since then, the light has been edging its way back - slowly and determinedly, it stretches out its shine.

We are entering the season of Epiphany – the season of light. January 6 marks Epiphany, and the church celebrates the visit of the Wise Ones who followed the starshine. We hold wisdom and light together, a beautiful synthesis of imagery! I cannot think of a more powerful season to participate in today and I call us into it.

Epiphany – the coming of the light into the darkness.  
Epiphany – the coming of wisdom into our most fear-filled, narrowminded and hard-hearted spaces. And poignant, that as we see around us so much pain, we hold to the promise.

As I write this article, a truce has been agreed between Israel and Hamas that will see a four-day pause in violence and the release of hostages and prisoners on both sides of the conflict. I pray that this moment of wisdom and restraint will bring lasting light. As I write this article, the UK government is set to announce its autumn statement.

I pray for decisions that bring light and relief to those struggling with a cost of living crisis that is crippling, and for policies that live out our call to care for the most vulnerable, and pay people fairly when they care for our neighbours and loved ones.

As I write this article, climate chaos continues to cause misery across the world, with those who have least to do with it suffering most and first. COP28 offers another

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opportunity for the world to come together and see sense, but the window is closing.

I pray for decisions that call those of us who have benefitted on the back of the rest of the world to account. We must turn in a different direction quickly if wisdom and light are to have a chance.

As we walk together into the new year, let us bring the light.

We celebrate the coming of wisdom. It sets you on a journey, compels you to offer gifts, takes you home a different way.

We celebrate the coming of wisdom. It compels you to heed dreams, to see strength in vulnerability...what could be more vulnerable than a homeless baby?

We are part of the body of Christ, the family of God, and we are called to be light to the world. Shine, then – shine where you are.

We are part of the Word made flesh – live then – live seeking and sharing the daring wisdom of love, hope, justice and forgiveness.

As we walk into 2024, let the Prince of Peace lead us.

# Church News Ireland

## Poem for today

### Funny January Poem by Anon

T'was the month after Christmas, and all through the house,  
nothing would fit me, not even a blouse;  
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I had to taste,  
at the holiday parties had gone to my waist;

When I got on the scales there arose such a number!  
When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),  
I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared,  
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared;

The wine and the rum balls; the bread and the cheese,  
and the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."  
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,  
and prepared once again to do battle with dirt,  
I said to myself, as only I can,  
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So, away with the last of the sour cream dip.  
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.  
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished,  
'til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.  
I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.  
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,  
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore,  
But isn't that what January is for?

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Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.  
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

## Speaking to the soul

Daily on this site

## Contact with CNI

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