

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Bray churches welcome Ukrainian families**

## People and places



### **Bray church communities unite to welcome Ukrainian families**

**St James's Church, Crinken, was a hive of activity as Ukrainian families gathered for a Family Fun Week recently. The summer camp was coordinated by volunteers from Crinken, Liberty Church and Cornerstone Church (both located in Bray).**

About 80 Ukrainians availed of the camp on one day or another and a team of 75 volunteers helped bring the plan to fruition and came to welcome those from Ukraine.



The week was the first time many of the Ukrainians had been able to meet and spend time with each other outside the walls of the hotel in which they are staying. The organisers aimed to provide a space to be able to forget about the troubles and hardships at home in Ukraine for a while and be able to relax, have fun and to eat and cook their own Ukrainian food.

“As a team it was a joy to see the Ukrainians relax more and more each day, treat our church like a home, and yet with such respect and appreciation,” commented the Revd Trevor Stevenson and Olly Adams, who were part of the organising team. “The Ukrainians’ highlights of the week were seeing their children so happy, eating and cooking Ukrainian food and they felt more bonded with each other, especially the teens. The Irish team’s highlights were to



have made such good friends and enjoy their company and friendship going forward.”

Archbishop Michael Jackson visited Crinken to see how the camp was going. He arrived to find children and adults chatting and playing after lunch with many wearing bright yellow t-shirts.

“The very open plan of St James’s Church with foyer, hall and fully equipped kitchen together with multi-purpose worship space was being guided by skilled volunteers from both Ukraine and Ireland to provide a holiday experience for Ukrainian neighbours living in a nearby hotel,” he said.

“The lunch, in which I participated by the generosity of those who had cooked it, was traditional Ukrainian and very delicious. It was cooked on site with local ingredients. The upper and lower floors of the Parish Centre showed the positive signs of art and pottery, creative writing and interactive friendship.”

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The outdoor and indoor spaces were utilised with rooms set aside for mothers and babies to rest and the old vestry room was available for someone to sleep. There was plenty of space for people to sit in comfort.

“The Ukrainian people I met were most resilient people who had fled their homeland leaving behind everything and everyone who mattered to them including their pets. There were also people local to Shankill and from elsewhere who were giving these same Ukrainian people scope to express themselves, to enjoy themselves and to share their culture and their personality in a trusting and joyous environment,” the Archbishop remarked.

“My hopes following my visit were that members of the Church of Ireland community in these dioceses might give this sort of happiness a go and meet people who, while they never intended to be in Ireland, felt a strong embrace of human friendship coming to meet them. My personal thanks go to everyone who is making this happen and my encouragement to others is to go and do likewise,” he added.

## **Down & Dromore Bible Week theme**

**The theme for this year’s Bible Week is Forward, Together when the speaker, Revd John Coles, will look at four ways the mission of God advances.**

Bible Week will also be an occasion to celebrate leadership in the diocese with short acts of commissioning and an



invitation to the clergy of the diocese to reaffirm their ordination vows.

On Friday it is hoped that choirs and worship teams will make a special effort to come along to 'Let's Sing', an evening of worship with teaching from John.

Tuesday 30 August: Revelation Becomes Revolutionary (Nehemiah 8)

With the commissioning of Parish Readers

Wednesday 1 September: Mission Impossible Becomes Mission Possible (Acts 2)

With the commissioning of Diocesan Readers

Thursday 2 September: Opposition Becomes Opportunity (Acts 8)

Diocesan Clergy will reaffirm their ordination vows

Friday 3 September: Presence Becomes Powerful (Joshua 6)

With a special emphasis on worshipping together – 'Let's Sing'

## About John

John is Chair of Trustees for New Wine which he led from 2001–2014. John oversaw the development of New Wine from a summer conference to a network of leaders and churches, and then to a movement with a vision not only for renewal but church planting and social transformation. He continues to be involved in teaching and training church leaders. John and his wife Anne help lead a missional congregation who meet in a home in North London, with a vision to start other similar congregations.

Bible Week will begin each evening at 7.45 pm in Willowfield Church, 149 My Lady's Road, Belfast, BT6 8FE.

## Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme Coordinator sought

**The Church of Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore seeks to recruit a Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme Coordinator (full-time). The post is based in Church of Ireland House, Belfast.**

The Diocese of Down and Dromore is a vibrant and growing diocese of 111 church communities and 9 church plants. It is focused on making disciples, raising up and empowering Christian leaders and birthing new ministries and churches.

The Diocese is commencing FORGE, a new Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme to enable young Christians (aged

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18–25) to develop a strong and enduring faith through training and service in the church. This new scheme provides an opportunity for young disciples to work and learn in an apprenticeship model with church leaders and their teams in host churches and church plants within the diocese. Apprentices will be fully involved in the life and witness of their host church and participate in the ministries of the church, especially children's and youth programmes. They will also contribute to diocesan-wide ministry programmes.

The Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme Coordinator, in conjunction with the diocesan team, will be responsible for managing the application process for Apprentices, allocating Apprentices to their placement host, organising a welcome and commissioning event, delivering a formal induction, organising development days and other training events as well as supporting Apprentices and placement hosts.

For details about the applications process see -

[[] <https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2022/07/ministry-apprenticeship-scheme-coordinator-> ]

## **New Minister in Muckamore**

**Rev Stephen McNie is settling into the community of Muckamore Presbyterian Church following his installation last month.**

Stephen, (35), arrived there from Ballyalbany & Glennan Presbyterian Churches in the Monaghan Presbytery where he had ministered since 2014. Joining Stephen in his new





‘charge’ are his wife, Sarah, a native of Monaghan and their delightful little daughter, Beth who will be two years old in October.

For most of his life, Stephen was raised in Ballymoney with his parents and older brother.

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His father, Ian, was in the Presbyterian ministry, having served in Trinity Presbyterian, where the future minister experienced a warm and living testimony of the gospel through Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, midweeks, and Holiday Bible Clubs.

Certainly, Stephen is quick to acknowledge the blessings that came from being raised in a 'Christ-centred home. He said: "My parents displayed a living-faith in Jesus Christ, which shaped not only their ministry but their own lives, friendships, and outlook on life. It was clear that Jesus was welcome to direct their entire lives, and it was at the age of seven that I came to see my need of a Saviour.

"It was following a service of worship in Ballymoney that a visiting preacher explained the way of salvation and I knew that God's Spirit was speaking to me, so that afternoon I sought the Lord, asking Him to take away my sin and to come into my life."

"From a young age, I knew that Jesus did not die to make us good, but to make us His own by taking our sin, and as the years went on, I came to a fuller understanding how, in faith, we receive Christ's perfection due to His perfect life and atoning death", continued Stephen.

Originally, Stephen aspired to become a schoolteacher after finishing university. but the Lord had other plans.

Looking back, Stephen recalls: "I sensed God's call into ministry from the age of 14, yet I suppressed that call as I did not want to become a minister! Having been raised in the home of a minister and I got to see what that life was

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like from behind closed doors, I thought to myself, “Who would want to be a minister?” Obviously, the encouragements and blessings far outweigh the challenges, yet as a young man watching my father, at times I chose to witness the latter.”

“However, as time went on, it was through the reading and teaching of God’s Word, the encouragement of mature Christ-followers and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, I answered God’s call at the beginning of my final year of my undergraduate degree. It was at that time I began to enter into the application process of ministry training – fully believing that the door would be closed to me due to my age.

“During that time, the Lord was confirming that sense of call, which was realised when I was accepted to enter into the Presbyterian College in 2009.”

Stephen served as Assistant Minister at Killead & Loanends Presbyterian Churches before moving to Monaghan. His first impressions of Muckamore have been entirely favourable:

“It is clear to me that anyone who walks through our doors will experience a genuine welcome and would be made to feel ‘at home’ instantly. From my first interactions, it is clear that the leadership (the elders) are united in purpose, and this excites me for the future in working & serving alongside them.”

A keen musician, vinyl record collector and paddle-boarder, Stephen is excited about the future in his new home.

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Muckamore's new Minister concluded by saying:

“Ultimately, I would seek that as a church we would be able to build real and lasting relationships. Relationship with God's Son, Jesus Christ, who came to seek and save that which is lost. Relationship with God's Word, the Bible, so that people can understand and apply God's word into their everyday lives. Relationship with God's Family, so that people will experience compassionate care and love through our words and actions. Relationship with God's Majesty, so that when we gather for worship, people will experience the power and presence of God. Relationship with God's Mission, as we want to train and equip Christ-followers for leadership within our fellowship and to send people out into the world with the good news of Jesus Christ. As a church, they strive to be Christ-centred, Bible-based and Spirit dependent who are committed to a whole-life and disciple-making Christianity.”

Find out more about the life of Muckamore Presbyterian Church on their website- [Courtesy the Church Page.](#)

## World News

### **Pope prepares for penitential pilgrimage to Canada**

**Pope Francis looked ahead to his upcoming apostolic journey to Canada, describing it as "a penitential pilgrimage" that will hopefully contribute to a process of healing and reconciliation with the country's indigenous peoples.**



Addressing pilgrims in St Peter's Square, after the Angelus, the Pope said: "Next Sunday, God willing, I will leave for Canada; therefore, I wish now to address all the people of that country

"Dear brothers and sisters of Canada, as you know, I will come among you especially in the name of Jesus to meet and embrace the indigenous peoples."

He went on to explain that "Unfortunately, in Canada, many Christians, including some members of religious institutes, have contributed to the policies of cultural assimilation that, in the past, have severely harmed indigenous communities in various ways."

The Pope recalled a series of meetings he held in the Vatican in April with delegations from Canada's First

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Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, during which he listened to their stories about life in the residential school system - a scheme for the forcible integration of indigenous children into Canadian culture by separating them from their families and communities and placing them in boarding schools.

On those occasions, he said, he expressed "his sorrow and solidarity for the harm they have suffered."

"Now I am about to make a penitential pilgrimage, which I hope, with God's grace, will contribute to the journey of healing and reconciliation already undertaken."

The Pope also expressed thanks for the preparatory work that is underway "and for the welcome you will give me."

"Thank you all! And I ask you to please accompany me with your prayers."

The Pope's journey to Canada is scheduled to take place from 24 - 30 July, and will visit the cities of Edmonton, Québec and Iqaluit.

## **Cardinal praises Mo Farah for revealing he was trafficked into UK**

**Cardinal Vincent Nichols, President of the Santa Marta Group and Chancellor of St Mary's University, has thanked Olympic star Sir Mo Farah for announcing publicly that he was smuggled illegally into the UK as a young child and held in domestic servitude.**



The Team GB athlete said in a new television documentary he was given the name Mohamed Farah by those who flew him over from Djibouti. His real name is Hussein Abdi Kahin. He was flown from Djibouti at the age of nine by a woman he had never met, and then made to look after another family's children, he said.

"For years I just kept blocking it out. But you can only block it out for so long," he said.

In the past the long-distance runner always said he had come to the UK from Somalia with his parents as a refugee. But in a new documentary Farah admits that his family have never been to the UK. His mother and his two brothers live on their family farm in Somaliland.

Cardinal Vincent said: "I salute the courage of Sir Mo Farah in coming forward to reveal his traumatic story of being

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trafficked into the UK as a young child and subsequently forced into domestic servitude. It was only with the considerable help of a teacher at his school that he was able to be freed and then go on to fulfil his potential as a human and an athlete, both at school and then at St Mary's University in Twickenham.

"His story demonstrates the tragic extent of human trafficking in our midst and how vulnerable children as well as adults are targeted and victimised. Sir Mo is one of many thousand victims of human trafficking in the UK and one of over 40 million victims across the world.

"As president of the Santa Marta Group, the anti-trafficking charity with its mandate from Pope Francis for the Church to work together with law enforcement officials and civil society leaders in moving to abolish modern slavery, I thank Sir Mo for his brave witness.

"This is a crime that permeates all countries and leaves a trail of misery as innocent victims are used as a disposable commodity by unscrupulous criminals. This is an evil crime and should not be acceptable.

"The UK has a Modern Slavery Act and the United Nations has prioritised ending human trafficking in its Sustainable Development Goals.

"Together, inspired by survivors of human trafficking including Sir Mo, we must collaboratively act in this struggle. I call on Government, as well as leaders across civil society, to re-double our efforts to abolish human trafficking and modern slavery."



## Faith leaders attend White House celebration of gun control law

**'Neighbourhoods and streets have been turned into killing fields as well,' said President Joe Biden. 'Will we match thoughts and prayers with action? I say yes.'**

Faith leaders from a wide range of traditions, including those whose houses of worship have been attacked, were at the White House recently as members of Congress and other gun control advocates gathered for a White House celebration of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, signed into law June 25.

Pastor Mike McBride, the leader of Live Free USA, who has long sought political support to especially help the nation's urban centers, hailed the signing as an opportunity to address gun violence deaths that do not always make national headlines.

“It's been a very difficult task to get the death of Black men in this country, much less the death of any Black folks, to receive national attention and intervention,” said McBride. “Even among Democrats — Democrats have not been the most political champions for this work. So it's taken us 10 years to get to \$250 million committed in a bipartisan way.”

On hand were Rabbi Jonathan Perlman and others who endured a mass shooting in 2018 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and the Rev. Sharon Risher, whose mother was among the nine African American

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worshippers killed during the 2015 shooting at Mother Emanuel AME church in Charleston, South Carolina.

“That was beautiful — to see all these heroic people, survivors that have been working for change,” said Shane Claiborne, co-founder of the group Red Letter Christians and leader of an effort that melts down guns into garden tools in observance of the biblical call to turn “swords into plowshares.”

But Claiborne added that he understood that the bipartisan legislation “is the most substantial gun reform bill that we’ve seen in 30 years. But what we also heard is how dysfunctional our political process is — because there’s so much more that’s needed.”

“We need a ban on assault rifles,” he added.

The legislation includes a variety of interventions into gun purchasing, including expansion of background checks for people younger than 21, \$250 million for community-based violence prevention initiatives and \$500 million to increase the number of mental health staffers in school districts.

President Joe Biden, in remarks from the White House’s South Lawn, decried the violence that has turned houses of worship, schools, nightclubs and stores into places of death.

“Neighborhoods and streets have been turned into killing fields as well,” said the president. “Will we match thoughts and prayers with action? I say yes. And that’s what we’re doing here today.”

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Claiborne said he presented a Christian cross made from a melted-down gun barrel to second gentleman Douglas Emhoff, as well as to a friend of President Biden.

## Poem for today

### Dublin Made Me by Donagh MacDonagh

Dublin made me and no little town  
With the country closing in on its streets  
The cattle walking proudly on its pavements  
The jobbers, the gombeenmen and the cheats

Devouring the fair-day between them  
A public-house to half a hundred men  
And the teacher, the solicitor and the bank-clerk  
In the hotel bar drinking for ten.

Dublin made me, not the secret poteen still  
The raw and hungry hills of the West  
The lean road flung over profitless bog  
Where only a snipe could nest

Where the sea takes its tithe of every boat.  
Bawneen and currach have no allegiance of mine,  
Nor the cute self-deceiving talkers of the South  
Who look to the East for a sign

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# Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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