

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Prince of Wales visits East Belfast  
Mission targeting homelessness**

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## Image of the day

### Prince of Wales visits East Belfast Mission targeting homelessness

**As part of his UK tour to launch his Homewards project to target homelessness, Prince William on Tuesday morning visited East Belfast Mission (EBM). Homewards is a 5-year programme aimed at eradicating homelessness in the U.K.**

Hosford Community Homes is the homeless service of East Belfast Mission based in the Skainos Centre on the Lower Newtownards Road in East Belfast. For over 20 years, Hosford has provided services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is a community lead solution to reducing the 10,000 persons who are deemed homeless in Northern Ireland. Under the new '240 project', unused EBM offices will be converted into 6 apartments and a community hub. The 240 project is one of six projects selected from across the UK that will be supported by Homewards.

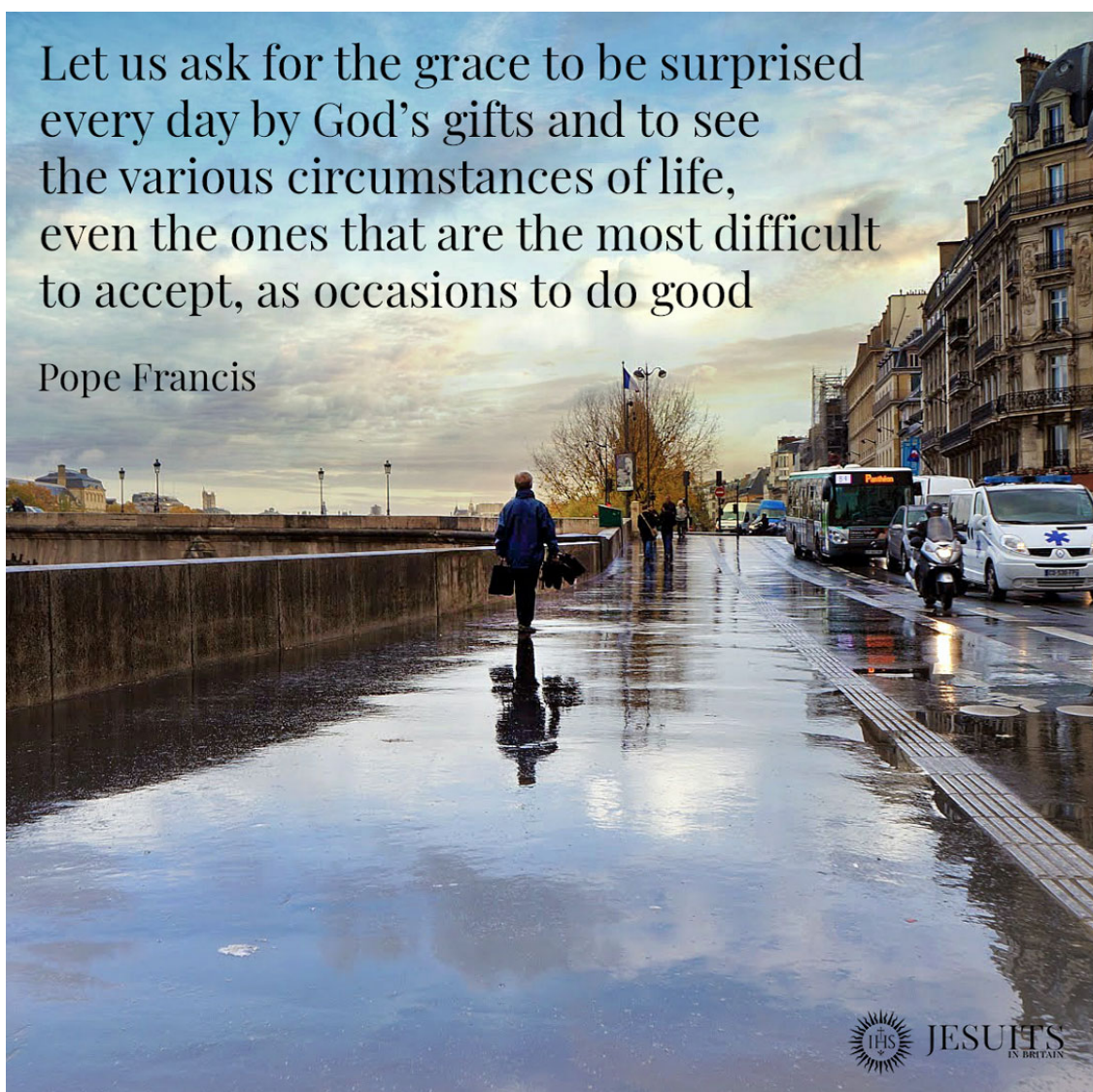
Officially welcoming Prince William to the Skainos Centre, Rev Brian Anderson, Chair of EBM's Board of Trustees said,

“In the past 25-years we've helped thousands of people facing homelessness from across the community or who have fled persecution from abroad. We are thrilled to be part of Homewards and by Prince William's determination to do something about the growing numbers of people who are

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trapped in homelessness. As a society we need to talk more about homelessness and I hope that the Prince's visit helps get the conversation started. Making more affordable homes available is part of the solution but it's not just about bricks and mortar. At EBM we've also sought to provide care and support and develop a community that gives people the confidence to rebuild their lives and live independently."

Mr Tom Dinnen, Capacity Building Coordinator with Hosford Homelessness Services, gave Prince William a tour of the 240 Project. Highlighting the need for sustainable solutions to homelessness, Tom said,



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“Hostels are not a long-term solution to homelessness but schemes such as 240, which provide proper apartment accommodation, offer the chance to live in a ‘community home’ that gives people the building blocks to eventually join the housing market. Prince William was aware of the complex issues which cause homelessness, particularly during the cost-of-living crisis and the challenges which the sector is tackling. As homelessness is connected to so many societal issues, including health, education and employment – solving the problem will have major benefits for the whole community.”

## People and place

### Church Music Certificates presented in Christ Church Cathedral

**The importance of music in worship and in the life of the Church was highlighted on Sunday afternoon (June 25) when three people were awarded the Archbishop’s Certificate in Church Music during Choral Evensong.**

The certificates were awarded by Dean Dermot Dunne on behalf of Church Music Dublin, the organisation which promotes and supports church music in the dioceses. Harry Powell has completed Level 2 of the ACCM. Natalie Box–McConnell has completed Level 1. Margarita Vilkoviskaia has completed the ACCM three year course.

Before the certificates were presented, Tim Hicks of the Church Music Dublin committee, spoke of the power of music to educate. He said that church musicians were vital



Harry Powell, Natalie Box–McConnell and Margarita Vilkoviskaia with Jacqueline Mullen of Church Music Dublin and Dean Dermot Dunne.

as the music they play profoundly supports the beauty of worship. He congratulated all three recipients on their awards.

He also paid tribute to the late Raymond Russell, a skilled organist who had a valuable input into CMD's education programme. He recalled that at his funeral recently, the celebrant referred to Raymond's 'ministry' as a church musician.

The Archbishop's Certificate in Church Music is presented after a three year course, with an optional introductory Foundation Course, delivered by Church Music Dublin.



## Newly appointed chaplain to Order of St John

Warm congratulations have been expressed to Fr Colin Grant, newly appointed chaplain to St John's Ambulance NI.

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Fr Grant is pictured here with St John NI CEO and volunteer Adrian Donaldson MBE OStJ DL. “A wonderful appointment and a great boost to the incomparable work of St John Ambulance in Northern Ireland.” \_

The Lord-Lieutenant and Knight Commander of the Commandery of Ards, Mr David McCorkell, KStJ, “remains committed to make the Commandery more diverse and reflective of its fantastic SJANI volunteers”.

## News reports

### Lot to Celebrate but More to Do – Pride Service Hears

**There is a reluctance within the Church community to hear from the LGBTQ+ community because listening opens the possibility of change and change demands taking a risk, according to the newly commissioned patron of Changing Attitude Ireland, the Right Revd Trevor Williams.**

The retired Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe was speaking at the first Pride service in Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin on Sunday (June 25).

But, he asked, why should people who are vulnerable or who experience discrimination have to fight for their right to exist, to be safe or be free? He pointed out that Jesus encouraged his followers to widen their hospitality to the outsider and the vulnerable.



Members of the Changing Attitude Ireland committee with their newly commissioned Patron Bishop Trevor Williams - L to R - Canon Dr Ginnie Kennerley, Bishop Trevor Williams, Mark Bowyer, Kris McCaffrey and the Very Revd David Godfrey.

The special Service of Choral Evensong was celebrated by Dean Dermot Dunne and sung by the Cathedral Choir. Welcoming the congregation the Dean said that the initiative for the service came from Changing Attitude Ireland, an organisation which promotes the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people into the life of the Church. He said that Sunday's service was historic as it was the first Pride service in the cathedral and they were proud to celebrate Pride with the LGBTQ+ community.

During the service the readings were read by CAI committee members Kris McCaffrey and Karen Godfrey. The prayers were led by the organisation's chairperson Mark Bowyer.



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Having been commissioned as patron of Changing Attitude Ireland during the service, Bishop Williams preached the sermon. “It is indeed a privilege and an honour to work alongside you for the full inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community in the Church,” he said thanking Changing Attitude Ireland for inviting him to be patron.

He observed that the Gospel reading [Luke 14:12–24] was about hospitality. “Here Jesus smashes the ‘us and them’ mentality, prevalent in all societies at all times, then and now. Your rich, influential and privileged lives will be blessed when you share company with those who have nothing to give you but themselves, their experience and their story... Jesus invites the powerful to be transformed by inviting the vulnerable, the outsiders, the powerless to eat at the same table.

Jesus’s mission is to subvert the power of oppression by the power of love. Jesus still subverts human power dynamics by inviting one and all to eat at the same eucharistic table,” Bishop Williams said.

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Members of the Changing Attitude Ireland committee with their newly commissioned Patron - Canon Dr Ginnie Kennerley, Bishop Trevor Williams, Mark Bowyer, Kris McCaffrey and the Very Revd David Godfrey.

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He talked about the importance of listening to others and said that he was impressed, 40 years after the first Pride March in Dublin in 1983, that members of the LGBTQ+ community were sharing their stories in Irish newspapers. He said those stories commanded honour and respect and

the previous day's Pride March was something that could be celebrated by everyone. He added that Ireland had come a long way since 1983.

However, Bishop Williams pointed out that there was still much to protest about noting that Uganda had introduced the death penalty for what it termed aggravated homosexuality and across the United States 70 new anti-LGBTQ+ laws had been introduced this year.

He recalled a story told by John Bell of the Iona Community who spoke of a 14 year old Christian girl called Lizzie who took her own life. Before her death she sent a message to a friend saying she didn't believe that God could love her the way she was. "Somehow, the way the Church is and the attitudes it holds, communicated to Lizzy that being a lesbian meant that she was alienated from God's love. And for Lizzie it was unbearable to accept that God didn't love her. How did it happen? All too easily I'm afraid. It was a normal 'caring' Church. They didn't notice that the message they were giving to Lizzy, that she heard so loud and clear, was 'it is not OK to be gay'. How many other stories of rejection and discrimination are to be found in the experience of gay Christians?" he wondered.

To those within the Church who were reluctant to hear from the LGBTQ+ community because the issue is contentious in the Anglican Communion and because they fear that if the Church here opens the topic again members will be "at each other's throats"

He said: "What about Lizzie?"

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He thanked members of the LGBTQ+ community who had stuck with the Church despite everything.

“We need you. We don’t deserve your love and care but we still have so far to travel, to be a community that represents the unity that is God’s desire. We need to listen to your story. To really listen, not just with the head but with the heart,” he concluded.

## **Disappointment as MPs pass regulations on teaching about abortion in Northern Ireland schools**

MPs have voted overwhelmingly in support of regulations forcing Northern Ireland schools to teach schoolchildren aged 11 to 16 about abortion.

The regulations were passed by MPs in the House of Commons by 373 votes in favour to just 28 against.

The Department for Education will now start work on guidance to support the rollout of the regulations.

Right to Life UK, which had campaigned against the move, said the result was "disappointing".

It wants the government guidance "to be as narrow as possible and limit the negative impact it will have on Northern Ireland".

The regulations were debated by the House of Commons Second Delegated Legislation Committee on Monday.

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The committee received a number of submissions raising concerns about the regulations, including concerns that teachers who are morally opposed to abortion would not be free to opt out of teaching the subject.

Right to Life UK spokesperson, Catherine Robinson, said, "Northern Ireland will now be going from a country where parents can decide when and how to teach their children about abortion, to all schools, including faith schools, being forced to teach students aged 11 to 16 years old about abortion.

"[Northern Ireland Secretary] Chris Heaton-Harris has claimed that the regulations will mirror the approach taken in England. If this is the case, it is highly controversial to force Northern Ireland schools to teach children about abortion given what is currently being taught regarding abortion as part of the RSE curriculum in England.

"What is being taught in schools goes far beyond outlining what the abortion law in England is ... Looking at these resources, it's clear that if schools in Northern Ireland are forced to teach about abortion, many more lives will likely be lost to abortion in Northern Ireland."

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## In the media

### Bray native Sr Cyril Mooney dies in India aged 86

#### Independent.ie

Bray native Sr Cyril Mooney dies in India aged 86 - "Every one of us has something to give," she said. "Whether that is saving one molecule of carbon or helping one child." Sarah R MacDonald reports.

<https://www.independent.ie/regionals/wicklow/bray-news/bray-native-sr-cyril-mooney-dies-in-india-aged-86/a2082802862.html>

### Pub landlord among 54 deacons to be ordained this weekend in London

#### Diocese of London

"Having been a pub landlord for five years, it's safe to say there's not much that can shock me.

"The skills I learnt from behind the bar are just as useful in the pulpit; it's a privilege to serve Fulham's rich tapestry of residents. I hope my ordination can show people like me that anyone, no matter your background, can answer God's call. As a working class woman born and bred in Fulham, I never believed that I could be ordained – but I can testify that God has a plan for everyone

“I am looking forward to planting our new church, engaging and connecting with the parish community, extending my role in our parish schools, being able to baptise, and to walking alongside people through some of the most important moments in their lives.”

54 deacons will be ordained this weekend in the Diocese of London.

<https://www.london.anglican.org/articles/ordinations-2023/>

## **DUP 'doing Sinn Fein's dirty work' by keeping Stormont suspended: Lord Empey**

### **Belfast News Letter**

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/politics/dup-doing-sinn-feins-dirty-work-by-keeping-stormont-suspended-lord-empey-4199240>

## **UK climate progress runs off track as target dates draw closer**

### **Bloomberg**

- Government moving too slowly to cut emissions, CCC report says
- Half of areas analyzed by committee are deemed lagging



The UK's chances of achieving its climate goals are getting slimmer, just as the country should be accelerating efforts to hit its targets. That's the conclusion of the Climate Change Committee, an independent advisory panel set up by the government.

[https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-27/uk-climate-progress-runs-off-track-as-target-dates-draw-closer?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=share&utm\\_campaign=twitter&leadSource=uverify%20wall](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-06-27/uk-climate-progress-runs-off-track-as-target-dates-draw-closer?utm_source=website&utm_medium=share&utm_campaign=twitter&leadSource=uverify%20wall)

## **Presbyterian Church more 'deformed than Reformed'**

**Belfast Telegraph -**

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## **Former elder Lord Alderdice hits out over senior roles for women, Simon Bennett reports.**

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland is now “more deformed than Reformed”, according to Lord Alderdice.

The first Assembly Speaker and former Presbyterian elder hit out after the church's ruling body was unable to agree to make plans to encourage more women into leadership roles on the same basis as men.

Saturday's motion at the General Assembly had also called for the church to “explore what can be done to facilitate more women exploring a call to ordination in the future”. It has been nearly 50 years since the first female was ordained by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI).

Research from 2016 showed that only 21 Presbyterian ministers were female out of a total of 345.

Lord Alderdice, who spent over 30 years as an elder and whose father was a Presbyterian minister, left the church in 2018 after the General Assembly decided that people in same-sex relationships could not be full members.

The former leader of the Alliance Party was one of the key players in restoring peace to Northern Ireland through the Good Friday Agreement, and was made a peer in 1996.

The Ballymena-born Liberal Democrat peer tweeted: “Shrinking in numbers, vision, intellect, spirituality and generosity of spirit; PCI is now more deformed than Reformed. It is deeply sad.”



He compared this to the instability in Northern Ireland's politics.

“It mirrors the political trajectory in NI, with the DUP replacing the UUP and the death of the kind of Ulster unionism it tried to represent,” he said.

The church's current policies are that women can be ordained as 'ruling elders', with responsibility for decision making in local congregations in the same way as men since 1926, and as 'teaching elders' — ordained as ministers in the same way as men — since 1973.

The church's book of the Constitution and Government states: “To be chosen for the office of the eldership in a congregation a person must be a voting member of that congregation and a regular attendant on its ordinances.”

It adds that women “shall be eligible for election on the same conditions as men”.

The code adds that “both men and women shall be eligible for nomination as students for the ministry and for ordination on the same conditions.”

However, in February, the church's new moderator has said he is against the ordination of women even though it is church policy.

Rev Sam Mawhinney told the BBC it was a personal view and he respected the church's stance on the issue.

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“I don't want to make it a primary issue, but it is something that I hold,” he added.

In a response to Lord Alderdice's comment, Rev Trevor Gribben, clerk of the General Assembly and the church's general secretary, said: “While acknowledging Lord Alderdice's right to hold and express his opinion, I and most other people do not recognise his words as accurately describing the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.”

Giving his opinions on female leadership in the PCI, Rev Gribben said: “The clear, longstanding and settled position of our General Assembly is that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland ordains men and women on an equal basis.

“This means that in a local congregation both men and women can be, and often are, elected to the position of elder,” he added.

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

### Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny on the organ of St Patrick's Cathedral

**“To celebrate the release of Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny this week may we introduce our Master of the Music, Stuart, playing the theme like you've never heard it before. On the Cathedral Organ!**

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“Just a little taste of what to expect at our upcoming July 4th Family Movie Night in aid of Temple Street Hospital. Book your tickets today!”

<https://stpatrickscathedral.digitickets.co.uk/category/48363>

## Presbyterian Apprentices 2023-24

**Would your congregation like to have an Apprentice play a part within an aspect of your church’s life and witness in 2023-2024?**

If your answer to that question is “Yes”, then the Council for Congregational Life and Witness offers a package of advice, support and training intended to enable the effective recruitment, deployment and ongoing growth of apprentices.

Please note, the identification and appointment of an Apprentice is the responsibility of the congregation, not CCLW.

Check out all the guidance about how to \*Recruit an Apprentice here:

[www.presbyterianireland.org/apprenticerecruit](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/apprenticerecruit)

More info will be coming soon for those who wish to \*Serve as an Apprentice, including videos of last years Apprentices and how they enjoyed their placements

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WCC central committee 2023

CC interviews

**Mariana Jorge,  
Episcopal  
Anglican Church  
of Brazil**

More info at  
[www.oikoumene.org/central-committee-2023](http://www.oikoumene.org/central-committee-2023)



## **Brazilian Anglican advocates for youth on World Council of Churches**

Check out Mariana Jorge from the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil. As the Youth advisor, she passionately advocates for increased youth participation in the Council. She shared the critical concerns in the Latin America region.  
<https://youtu.be/Yi4ChQUz40s>

## **Dublin City Interfaith forum mark World Refugee Day**

Members of the Dublin City Interfaith forum gathered at the Famine Memorial in Dublin to mark World Refugee Day with prayers and reflections. Chair person Archbishop Michael Jackson read this statement on behalf of members of the forum -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFU0G\\_hgIFU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFU0G_hgIFU)

# Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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