

Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – St Alban's Cathedral
in solidarity with Ukraine**

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Image of the day

St Alban's Cathedral in solidarity with Ukraine.

People and places

Prayers for Ukraine in Belfast city

An informal evening of prayer for the ongoing situation in Ukraine will be held in St Stephen's Parish Church, Millfield, on Wednesday March 2 at 7.30pm.

Entrance is via the carpark at the rear of the building (Photo below).

Stephen Whitten from Connect Base, Connor's North Belfast Centre of Mission, said: "This is a space to come together and lift up the people of Ukraine as well as the whole situation and its implications for the wider world to God."

Canon installed in Saint Canice's

The Revd Canon Robert Jones was installed as Prebendary of Killamery at a





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service of Choral Evensong in Saint Canice's Cathedral on Sunday 27th February.

Preaching at the service, Canon Jones noted that he was rekindling his association with the cathedral, having sung as a cathedral chorister in his youth and having been confirmed in the cathedral.

Canon Jones (Photo above) was supported at his installation by a large number of friends and parishioners from the Kiltegan Union of Parishes.

Mothers' Union All Ireland Festival Service in Armagh

This year's Mothers' Union All Ireland Festival Service took place on Sunday, 27th February 2022, in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh.

The Mothers' Union theme for 2022 of 'Transformation – Now!' was introduced and a number of people were commissioned to serve in their various roles by Archbishop John McDowell, who was the preacher at what was a very special service of Choral Evensong. The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Shane Forster, welcomed everyone to the Cathedral, as for the first time since the onset of the pandemic, a gathering of this size was possible.

Those commissioned were:

Mrs June Butler, for a second term as All Ireland President of the Mothers' Union;



All Ireland Trustees: Joy Gordon, Hazel Speares, Margaret Jacob, Clare Stewart, Mavis Thompson, Ada Lawson and Ann Howar.

The Revd Canon Ken Rue as the Mothers' Union All Ireland Treasurer and Mrs Iris Sutor as the Mothers' Union Zonal Trustee.

A video of the service is available at:

[[] <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/11211/mothers-union-all-ireland-festival>]

Appointment to Mallusk

The Rev Jacob Mercer has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of St Brigid's Parish Church, Mallusk - Glengormley in the Diocese of Connor.

The President's Diary

THIS WEEK WITH REV DR SAHR YAMBASU

TUESDAY 1ST MARCH

Review with Southdarn District Superintendant, 10am
Lagan Valley College, 2pm

WEDNESDAY 2ND MARCH

Meeting with American Council of
Young Political Leaders, Armagh, 11am

THURSDAY 3RD MARCH

Bible Study with Waterford congregation

FRIDAY 4TH MARCH

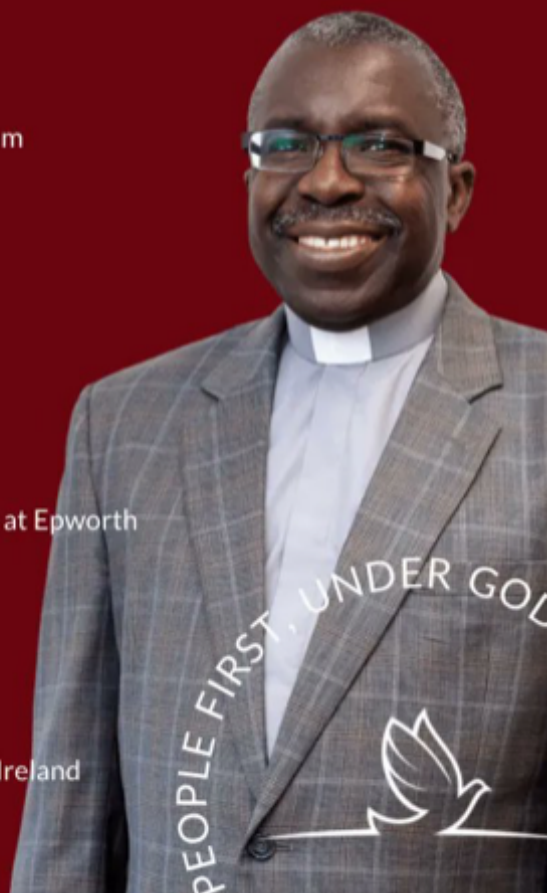
Meeting with Rev Dr Andrew Harper, Head of Ethics at Epworth

SATURDAY 5TH MARCH

Faith and Order Committee, 10am

SUNDAY 6TH MARCH

Service at Priesthill Methodist Church, 11am
150th Anniversary Service, St Matthew's, Church of Ireland
Church, Belfast, 3.30pm



Jacob, 33, is currently curate of St James and St Anne's, Bermondsey, in the Diocese of Southwark, London. He is married to Rebecca and they have three young children.

A native of Hartfordshire, Jacob has worked in Christian Ministry for the past 11 years, and was ordained in 2018. Rebecca is from Templepatrick and her father, the Rev Peter McCausland, was ordained an OLM deacon for Templepatrick and Donegore last September.

Jacob spent a year in Belfast from 2011-12. "I am looking forward to meeting everyone and getting to know people not only in the church but in the surrounding area," he said.

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“We will be looking for a school for my eldest son who is five, and are looking forward to becoming part of the community in Glengormley and to taking up opportunities inside and outside the parish.

News reports

PM promises help for Ukraine during church visit

The Prime Minister visited a Ukrainian cathedral in London on Sunday in a show of support for Ukraine after the Russian invasion.

Boris Johnson told the faithful at the Cathedral of the Holy Family that the invasion represented "the darkest times in modern memory" and that he had never seen "so clear a distinction between good and evil".

He promised that the UK would do "everything it can to help economically, politically, diplomatically, militarily".

"When innocent people are subject to a barbaric and unprovoked attack, we in the UK cannot shut our eyes and pass by on the other side," he said.

Speaking of the UK's "emotional", "political" and "strategic" bonds with Ukraine, the Prime Minister said it was "right" to help the country in its "hour of need".

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But the Prime Minister also made a distinction between the people of Russia and the actions of the country's leadership in choosing a "path of violence".

"I'm going to stress that there is no hostility in my heart towards the Russian people, none whatever - quite the reverse," he said.

"My heart aches for the Russian parents who are already losing their children in this vicious and appalling war - just as it aches for the civilians and the people of Ukraine."

The Russian invasion is now in its fifth day after encountering fierce resistance from the Ukrainian military.

Peace talks were to take place on Monday on the border between Ukraine and Belarus.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said the next 24 hours will be a "crucial period" for his country.

Ukrainian president thanks Pope for prayers

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said he is thankful for the support and prayers of Pope Francis.

The Ukrainian Embassy to the Holy See said that Pope Francis had spoken with Zelensky by phone on Saturday.

During the call, the Pope expressed his "deepest sorrow for the tragic events" taking place in Ukraine.

The call followed an unprecedented surprise visit by the Pope to the Russian embassy in Rome to express his alarm over the invasion.

Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said Francis spent over half an hour at the embassy.

"He went to express his concern over the war," Bruni said.

On Twitter, President Zelensky thanked Pope Francis "for praying for peace in Ukraine and a ceasefire".

"The Ukrainian people feel the spiritual support of His Holiness," he said.

He expressed similar comments after speaking with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who has called on Russia to end its invasion of Ukraine.

President Zelensky said on Twitter, "Thank you for the warm conversation, Your All-Holiness #Bartholomew. Your words are like hands that hold us up in this difficult time.

"Ukrainians feel the spiritual support and strength of your prayers. We hope for the soonest peace."

In the media

NATO Allies boost support to Ukraine

NATO HQ News



NATO Allies are boosting their political and practical support to Ukraine as it continues to defend itself against Russia's full-scale invasion. Thousands of anti-tank weapons, hundreds of air-defence missiles and thousands of small arms and ammunition stocks are being sent to Ukraine. Allies are also providing millions of euros worth of financial assistance and humanitarian aid, including medical supplies to help Ukrainian forces.

Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States have already sent or are approving significant deliveries of military equipment to Ukraine. Ukraine has already received critical weapons, including Javelin missiles and anti-aircraft missiles, from NATO Allies, as well as millions of euros of financial assistance. Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the United Kingdom

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and the United States are offering humanitarian aid or opening their borders to Ukrainian refugees. Croatia, Poland and Romania are already welcoming Ukrainian refugees. Italy is also providing immediate financial assistance to the Ukrainian government, and Turkey has deepened its defence ties with Ukraine and delivered humanitarian aid.

[[] https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_192476.htm?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=smc&utm_id=220227%2Bukraine%2Bnato%2Bsupport]

Ukraine invasion: Is this a new Cold War, asks John Simpson

BBC News

his feels very much like the end of an era. In November 1989, when the Berlin Wall came down, we believed that the old division of the world into East versus West was just history. Because the ideological conflict between capitalism and Communism had evaporated, there was a feeling that we were all basically on the same side.

The trouble was, for Vladimir Putin, the one-time KGB officer based in East Germany, the collapse of the old Soviet Union seems to have morphed into a bitter personal resentment which grew worse as the years went by. The fact that Ukraine, once a key part of the USSR, broke away from the Russian Federation was an insult to everything Putin believed in. More at -

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-60515342>]

Rising energy bills: NI schools face £13m power price hike

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BBC News

Schools in Northern Ireland are facing a £13m rise in energy costs over the next year, according to Department of Education (DE) figures. Northern Ireland's 1,000 schools will receive an extra £5m towards energy bills this year. But the Russian invasion of Ukraine is likely to send some energy prices soaring further, according to experts. More at -

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-60512961>]

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Lent 2022: Family activities calendar

From today 1 March you can open a daily family activity on the C of E Lent calendar as part of their Lent and Easter campaign, LiveLent: Embracing Justice

Let's LIVE LENT again this Easter - follow the link or download the app to your mobile phone.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe/lent-holy-week-and-easter/livelent-embracing-justice-our-lent-0>

Resources for children to take part in the Bishop's Big Bike Ride

Children around the diocese of Down & Dromore will be able to get involved in the diocesan 2022 Lent Appeal with a couple of excellent, easy to use resources.



The Fact Sheet is inspired by both the Bishop's Big Bike Ride and the projects in Honduras and Jordan that the appeal is supporting. Can you help the bishop find his way out of the maze? Why not take a Family Challenge inspired by the projects?

The Syllabus turns to the Bible and the story of Moses and asks the question, 'What have you got in your hands?' It looks at the issue of Climate Change (Honduras) and Church and Community Mobilisation (Jordan) and using teaching, games, craft and challenges, helps children engage with the issues.

Suitable for use in Sunday School and at home, both resources encourage prayer, reflection and action, all in a fun and interesting way!

A Fact sheet and syllabus can be downloaded at -
[[<https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2022/02/childrens-resource-for-our-lent-appeal>]



Building a rhythm of prayer in your church

An online seminar hosted by 24-7 Prayer Ireland will be held on March 8th from 7.30 to 8.30pm. Free to register and join to get your community praying.

[[] <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/building-a-rhythm-of-prayer-in-your-church-tickets-269593590687>]

Perspective

Challenges of flooding at home and Ukraine abroad - by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell

The Archbishop of York attended worship at St Mary's Church in Tadcaster on Sunday morning and gave the sermon which follows in full:

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It is good to be with you this morning. I didn't have a church to go to this Sunday, and it was when I saw on the news at the beginning of the week that the River Wharfe had flooded again, that I thought it was about time I came to Tadcaster and stood alongside you in what has once again been a difficult time for many homes and businesses. My heart goes out to you. Not least, because my house flooded again this week.

Dating back to the 13th century, those who built Bishopthorpe Palace knew that the River Ouse flooded from time to time so made the whole building on what we call an Undercroft, which is, I suppose, a natural flood defence. So the waters come in, and it is still a huge and dirty inconvenience, but they don't yet come up to where we live and work.

If you go round to the river-side of the Palace there are little plaques on the wall showing where the water level was in, say, 1752 or 1831.

They put them there because floods in those days was a relatively rare event, something that happened every 50 years or so.

I've been Archbishop of York for about 18 months and this week was the fourth time the house flooded.

What was once an exceptional event, has become fairly commonplace.

It's the same here in Tadcaster. Global warming is real. Climate change is happening.

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We urgently need to change the way we inhabit the planet, lest we end up so destroying its fragile equilibrium, that floods and storms and forest fires completely engulf us.

But there are other storms raging in our world at the moment, which even put the inconvenience of a flood into a greater and more immediate perspective.

While I woke up to an inundated undercroft this week. The people of Kyiv - let us remind ourselves a European city, a popular holiday destination, only a 2 and a half hour flight from London - woke up to bombs and fighting in the streets as President Putin, breaking his word and tearing up the treaties of which he himself was a signatory, chose to illegally and despicably invade Ukraine.

Today, the Archbishop of Canterbury and I are asking all churches and all Christian people to pray for the people of Ukraine, for peace and for a withdrawal of Russian troops.

I will offer a prayer for Ukraine and invite us to keep a time of silence at the end of this sermon.

But what can prayer do, you might ask yourself? Isn't it just wishful thinking. How can it stop tanks and bombs?

Today's readings helps us.

On the mountain of Transfiguration, Peter James and John see Jesus as he really is.

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This is what happens when we pray. We say the words that Jesus gave us, and in particular we ask, ‘Your kingdom come to Lord, Your will be done.’

Not the kingdoms of the world, not the will of despots and tyrants, not even my own will, but the will of God as we see it in Jesus Christ.

To pray, therefore, is to see things as they really are and as they can be if we align our wills and our purpose to the will and purpose of Jesus Christ. If, as Paul says to the church in Corinth, “We do not lose heart”... (2 Cor. 4.1), and “with our unveiled faces see the glory of the Lord as if reflected in a mirror, and are ourselves transformed.” (2 Cor. 3.18)

Prayer matters and prayer helps, because prayer changes things, beginning with us and giving us the resolve we need.

NATO is not about to declare war on Russia and Ukraine must be feeling very alone. But there are things we can do, such as offering generous humanitarian aid; receiving refugees and supporting countries in the region who will see vast movements of people; imposing the stiffest possible sanctions on Russia, including a long and long overdue hard look at some of the dubious and dirty Russian money that sloshes around London. But these things won’t just hurt Russia and make it far harder for them to sustain their subjugation of Ukraine, they will hurt us as well. We need to be prepared to make painful sacrifices ourselves, which will affect our own pocket and our own standards of living.

And this, again, is where prayer will help, because it will help us to see what is right and strengthen our resolve to do

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it. This is a wake up call for us. The waters are rising. An unscrupulous and despotic enemy really is at the gate. We have taken peace for granted, and we have neglected the international bonds and associations between and nations that have done so much to secure peace for most of Europe for most of the past 77 years.

That changed on Thursday, and now we must change, and as Christian people that must begin in prayer and proceed by acts of generosity and sacrifice for the good of all.

As Jesus is transfigured, the disciples hear God speaking. “This is my son, my chosen”, says God, “Listen to him.” (Luke 8. 35)

May our church and our nation listen today to the voice of Jesus Christ, the voice of peace and good order. May Russia also hear the voice of Christ and the voice of peace. And may the people of Ukraine know the comfort, blessing, resolve of Christ in this terrible, dark hour of need. And now let us pray earnestly for peace in the world and for the part we must play to make it happen.

Prayers for this day

Prayer for Ukraine

God of all,
with alarm and concern we bring before you
the military intervention in Ukraine.

In a world you made for peace and flourishing,
we lament the use of armed force.

We mourn every casualty of this conflict,
every precious life extinguished by war.
We pray comfort for those who grieve
and those who are fearful.

Hear our longing that leaders and nations
will honour the worth of all people
by having the courage
to resolve conflict through dialogue.

May all our human failings be transformed
by your wonderful grace and goodness.

We ask this in the name of Christ,
the author of peace and sustainer of Creation.
Amen.

Prayer for Hope

God of all time,
God of this time,
these times are difficult, and we bring them to you.
There have been other times like this when countries have
invaded others.
You show us countries seized, a village or settlement at a
time, and countries facing full invasion.
You reveal, when we dare to look, how national boundaries
have changed like waves on the sand.
We feel so powerless; it all is so human and so tragic.
We bring it all to you in our confusion and worry.
Remind us, as ever, that worry is not what we must carry.

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Remind us that worry makes us smaller, makes our powerlessness real.

Fill the place that worry has taken in our hearts and replace it with hope.

Give us courage to read the news as we can, to listen, to watch, to understand.

As we face the reality of these times, we pray for your hope to carry and fill us.

Let hope be the insight which we gift to each other.

Fill us with your knowledge that hope is as real an act as giving our money and our welcome.

You will bring peace, as ever you do.

Give us courage to gift your hope to that process.

In the name of your incarnated Christ and in the power and presence of Holy Spirit,

Amen

Could You Smite Him Lord?

Oh Lord,

I really want to ask you smite Mr Putin;

it hasn't got to be a big smite,

just enough to remove him from power,

topple him from his throne,

remove his advisors,

disable his armed forces,

and make him see sense.

Is that a big ask Lord?

After all you seem to have smote a lot in the Bible;

powerful kings brushed away,

invading generals confounded by your power,

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or had their heads chopped off by some pretty feisty women,
so that your people would be free.
Even your mother sung of your power to remove tyrants
from their thrones
and she faced the might of Rome.

The problem with asking you for some smiting,
is that I see myself as a trendy leftie,
what they call a snowflake,
I don't really believe in violence,
I think anger can be used more productively,
I know you call us to solve our problems and not depend on
you to sort out our messes,
but just this once Lord?
A bit of a smite?
A localised precision smite?

In the meantime, Lord,
please look after Mr Zelenskiy,
inspire him to continue to use his skills to defend his people;
protect him as you protected his ancestors of old.
Give hope to the people of Ukraine,
hope in your providence,
hope that the world won't ignore their plight,
hope that the invaders will go,
and if, after that, you've got time for a smite....
Amen

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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