

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh

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St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh

The two cathedrals in Armagh were illuminated in green over the recent St Patrick's festival

People and places

Connor Mothers' Union annual Diocesan Festival Service resumes

Connor Mothers' Union (MU) held its annual Festival Service in Belfast Cathedral on Sunday March 20.

For the first time in more than two years, the banners of the different branches within Connor Diocese were paraded at the service as in-person festival services were suspended due to Covid-19. The service was attended by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, and the Archdeacon of Connor and Chaplain of Connor Mothers' Union, the Ven Dr Stephen McBride. The preacher was the Rev Canon Robert Deane, All Ireland MU Chaplain.

Among the guests were All-Ireland MU President June Butler, and Mavis Thompson, Diocesan President of the MU in Down and Dromore.



The Rev Canon Robert Deane, All Ireland MU Chaplain; the Ven Dr Stephen McBride, Archdeacon of Connor and Chaplain of Connor Mothers' Union; Mrs Sally Cotter, Connor Diocesan President of Mothers' Union and the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, at the MU Festival Service in Belfast Cathedral on March 20.

The diocesan photo gallery -

[\[https://connor.anglican.org/2022/03/21/banners-paraded-at-mu-festival-service/\]](https://connor.anglican.org/2022/03/21/banners-paraded-at-mu-festival-service/)

Rector appointed to Maghera

The Rev Jonathan Brown is to be the next incumbent of the Parishes of Maghera and Killelagh (Derry & Raphoe). He will succeed Rev Terence Kerr who retired last September.

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The new rector is presently a curate at St Malachi's Hillsborough (Diocese of Down and Dromore).

Jonathan was born and raised in Dundonald and went to Methody College. He read for a degree in Biblical Studies at Queen's University Belfast, followed by a Masters in Theology. He has been serving as a curate assistant in Hillsborough since 2019.

Twenty months ago, Jonathan married Julie, who is a primary school teacher, and the couple are "very excited" about his appointment to the parishes of Maghera and Killelagh. "We are just over the moon," Jonathan said, "and can't wait to get our sleeves rolled up and get started. Having met wonderful nominators, we are so looking forward to getting to know all the parishioners and sharing our lives with them as we grow together in the Lord's love and convey his love to the community."

"I will be very sad to leave the people of Hillsborough who have been so supportive and encouraging, but Julie and I know that this is the next step in the Lord's plan."

In the spare time available to him, Jonathan enjoys playing chess and reading. He describes himself as a dog lover and says he and Julie are looking forward to getting a new pet as they prepare for their move to Maghera.

Palm Sunday performance of An English Passion, according to St Matthew

AN ENGLISH PASSION ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW

Philip Wilby

In the presence of the composer

Palm Sunday 10 April, 5.00pm – 6.00pm

Mhari Lawson soprano

Margaret Bridge alto

Thomas Elwin tenor

Seán Boylan baritone

Phil Gault baritone

Jack Wilson organ

Tristan Russcher chamber organ

Belfast Cathedral Children's Choir & Songbirds

Belfast Cathedral Choir

Matthew Owens conductor

Tickets: **£10 (under 16s free)**

available from www.eventbrite.com, or at the door

Newly released CDs of this work will be available for sale, after the performance



**BELFAST
CATHEDRAL**
THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. ANNE

March 22, 2022

On Palm Sunday 10th April, Belfast Cathedral Choir, under the direction of Matthew Owens will give a concert performance of Philip Wilby's "An English Passion, according to St Matthew", also featuring the Belfast Cathedral Children's Choir and Songbirds.

The concert is from 5.00pm to 6.00pm.

Tickets £10 (Under 16s free) can be purchased on line at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/belfast-cathedral-43076508483> or at the door.

The newly released CD of the Cathedral Choir can be purchased after the performance.

Soloists are as listed:

Mhari Lawson Soprano; Margaret Bridge Alto; Thomas Elwin Tenor; Seán Boylan Baritone; Phil Gault Baritone
Jack Wilson Cathedral Organ; Tristan Russcher Chamber Organ

Carnmoney Parish Church Girls' Brigade presentations

Presentations were recently made to members of the Church Girls' Brigade in Carnmoney. Despite the pandemic, numbers have remained steady.

Officer Betty Redfern left due to other commitments and Sarah McLean and Debra Millar have joined as leaders, while Emily Conn is taking on leader duties.



Carnmoney CGB members.

Service Medals have been awarded to Emily Conn, 15 years; Katie Conn, 15 years; Abigail Thomas, 10 years; Tori Hunter, 10 years; Eva Tumilty, 10 years; Poppy Hunter, 5 years; Alexis Beattie, 5 years.

A well-deserved 30 years medal was awarded to Captain Amanda Kenny, who was a founder member of Carnmoney CGB Company back in 1992.

Merit Badges are awarded to girls who have moved up to their next section and who have been a credit to themselves. Recipients of Merit Badges were Madison McAlister, Ellen Gill, Tori Hunter, Eva Tumilty, Alexis Beattie, Abbie Hunter, Rosanna McLean, Lyla Beattie and Jorgie McIlwaine.

News reports

Church calls for ‘shift from fossil fuels to clean energy’

More than 100 church leaders have signed an open letter to Boris Johnson calling on him to accelerate renewable energy and home insulation instead of expanding fossil fuels.

As the Government prepares to announce the Spring Statement later this week, as well as a forthcoming energy security review following the war in Ukraine, more than a hundred church leaders and 30 bishops, including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, have written to the Prime Minister and Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor, calling for renewable energy to be prioritised.

The plea comes amid concerns about the reliance on Russian oil, and fears it is funding the invasion of Ukraine, as well as the rising cost of living.

Signatories of the letter include Rt Revd Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, the Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich and Church of England Lead Bishop on Environmental Affairs, and Rt Revd John Arnold, Bishop of Salford and Lead Bishop for the Environment for the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

The church leaders urge the Government: “We call on you to use the Spring Statement to provide financial and fiscal

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support for renewable energy and energy efficiency, especially solar and wind energy and the retrofitting of homes and other buildings across the UK. These measures would reduce heating bills, decrease carbon emissions and increase our energy security.”

They also call for “a rapid shift from fossil fuels to clean energy” ahead of the Spring Statement and the UK’s new energy security strategy, and warn that the statement must include no support for new oil and gas developments.

They added: “This plan needs to tackle the climate emergency and the cost of living crisis [affecting] millions of people in our [country].

“We welcome the UK Government’s decision to ban Russian oil and gas imports, which are fuelling the catastrophic war in Ukraine.”

The Chancellor will announce the Spring Statement on Wednesday.

Two senior Anglican Communion directors move on to new roles

The Anglican Communion’s Director of Unity, Faith and Order, Dr Will Adam; and the Director for Administration and Logistics, Stephanie Taylor, will leave their positions in the coming months to pursue new roles. Both are currently based at the Anglican Communion Office (ACO), the London-based secretariat of the global Anglican Communion.



Will Adam has been appointed to serve as the next Archdeacon of Canterbury and Residentiary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral, the Mother Church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Stephanie Taylor will become Director of Governance at the Isle of Wight College, a further and higher education institution.

Speaking of his new appointment, Will Adam said: “it’s a great honour and pleasure to be invited to take up this role. Canterbury is a place very close to my heart – as it has been for pilgrims from around the world for centuries. I’m excited by the opportunities for mission and ministry in Canterbury Diocese and the Cathedral as they work towards building a flourishing and sustainable future for their communities. I can’t wait to get to know the parishes, churches and communities of the Archdeaconry as we work together in God’s service.”

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The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, the Most Revd Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon, commented: “I am pleased that Will Adam will be taking up this significant post in Canterbury. He comes with long experience as a parish priest and pastor which has been informed by his work in the world Church. We will miss him at the Anglican Communion Office but congratulate Will and the Cathedral and Diocese of Canterbury on this news.”

Welcoming his appointment, the Bishop of Dover, the Right Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, said: “I am looking forward enormously to Will joining the senior staff team of our diocese. He comes to us with a breadth of experience and an openness and willingness to learn more - so that together as the Body of Christ we may continue the journey towards becoming a flourishing community. I have every confidence that Will and his family will settle well into our diocese and enjoy the varied tapestry of life that Canterbury has to offer. We hold him and his family in our prayers as they say their farewells and prepare to join us.”

Speaking of her new appointment, Stephanie Taylor said: “the Isle of Wight College has an outstanding reputation serving the local community. I am delighted to have been appointed Director of Governance, and to have the opportunity to continue and develop my career in governance serving my local community. I will also be taking up God’s call to serve in new ministries and will be volunteering with my local NHS hospital chaplaincy team.

“For the past eight years it has been the greatest honour to have been a servant of the global Anglican Communion. After this period of pandemic when we have all experienced

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a renewed sense of the importance of our local communities it will now be a privilege to serve my local community in two beloved institutions so instrumental to the education and health of the people of my island home.”

Over 150 religious leaders are meeting regarding new safeguarding principles for the LGBTQ+ community

Religious leaders from around the world are discussing Safeguarding Principles for the LGBTQ+ community, Jordan Robledo reports in Gay Times.

Yesterday and today (21 and 22 March), over 150 religious public figures have gathered at London’s Foreign Office to participate in the 2022 Global Interfaith Commission on LGBTQ+ Lives Conference (GIC+).

The Chief Rabbi of Poland, former President of Ireland, Dr Mary McAleese, and four Anglican Primates are just some of the event’s attendees.

During this year’s gathering, the delegates will analyse specially commissioned research regarding the harmful practices of conversion therapy on LGBTQ+ youth.

The in-depth analysis, which an Advisory Board of research professionals oversaw, looks explicitly at queer communities within Hungary and the Caribbean.

In the two reports, researchers revealed that LGBTQ+ youth who have undergone conversion therapy have higher rates

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of suicidal attempts, suicidal thoughts, and self-harm than those who have not experienced any form of the horrific practice.

Zoe Playdon, Emeritus Professor of Medical Humanities at University of London and Chair of the Research Advisory Board, opened up about the alarming study in a statement.

“The research demonstrates how defenceless young LGBT+ people turned for support to those they trusted, in places that should have been safe and found only prejudice and harm,” she said.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



The Supreme Act of Love: following Jesus from Holy Week to Pentecost

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Andrew Nunn and Paula Gooder in conversation Premieres online today Tuesday 22 March, 7.00 -7.45pm

The dramatic and mysterious events of Holy Week and Easter are at the heart of Christian faith. Andrew Nunn says that Holy Week is like a pebble thrown into a pond and its effects are felt in Jesus' resurrection, the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, and all the way into the present day and our own lives. Andrew Nunn and Paula Gooder explore what happens at the Last Supper, on the Cross, and at Easter and Pentecost, including some of what it means to them personally, and how we can keep the season in a way that means we come to know Jesus better.

The Very Revd Andrew Nunn is Dean of Southwark Cathedral. His new book is *The Hour is Come: The Passion in real time* (2021).

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral. Her latest books are *Women of Holy Week: An Easter Journey in Nine Stories* and *Journalling the Psalms: A Guide for Reflection and Prayer* (both 2022).

The event is free, but if you are able to make a donation to the continuing learning programme at St Paul's Cathedral when you register for the event they would be very grateful. [\[\[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-supreme-act-of-love-following-jesus-from-holy-week-to-pentecost-tickets-251149493897 \]](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-supreme-act-of-love-following-jesus-from-holy-week-to-pentecost-tickets-251149493897)

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Challenging hunger

Years of successive droughts have devastated communities in Zimbabwe as crops are left scorched.

Yet there is hope.

Trócaire has worked through local partner organisations in Zimbabwe like Caritas Masvingo to introduce new farming approaches. Learn more bit.ly/3C5L0Ix

‘Ministry Taster Day’ this Saturday at Union Theological College in Belfast

A career is often born through the love of a favourite subject at school, a natural talent or gifting that leads to any number of openings, practical or professional. For some it is to teach, to advise on financial or legal matters, make or fix things, serve others in one of the caring or medical professions.

For others, there is a deeper desire to serve that is born of faith. Something a special open day at Union Theological College in Belfast will explore when men and women, who are thinking and praying about becoming ordained ministers in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), will attend the College’s ‘Ministry Taster Day’ this Saturday (26 March).

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Looking forward to the day, and encouraging anyone who would like to find out more about becoming a minister in PCI, Reverend Principal Gordon Campbell, who heads up the College said that 40 individuals had already signed up to the free event. “The Ministry Taster Day will be a valuable opportunity for women and men to discern and explore the call of God upon their lives and consider whether their discipleship may be leading them to ordained ministry in PCI. If you are interested in exploring the Lord’s will for your life, learning more about ministry training, or feel that the Lord may call you to serve Him in this way in the future, I would really encourage you to come along.”

Professor Campbell continued, “The vast majority of PCI’s ministerial students opt to study in Union. If you are thinking and praying about ministry, the Ministry Taster Day will enable you to reflect further on hearing and responding to God’s call to service, get a feel for our Church’s College and its community, meet students currently training for ministry and sample something of what ministerial studies involve. There will also be opportunities to talk to members of staff, we would be delighted to see you.”

Currently PCI has over 500 congregations, served by just over 300 ministers and Union Theological College is the denomination’s principal body for the training of its ministers prior to ordination. The ordained ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is open to men and women on an equal basis and two first year students will be taking part, sharing their experiences and talking to potential future ministers.

Francine Magill, is a former RE teacher from east Belfast, who lives in Newtownards and worships at Scrabo

Presbyterian in the town. Part of the senior management team at Malone Integrated College in Belfast, the mother of three, all of whom are at university, said that for many years she believed that God had been directing her towards ministry. “From a young age He gave me a desire to know more about Him. I enjoyed discovering who God was in Sunday school, holiday bible clubs, GB, and school, and what He had done for me. As soon as I was old enough I began to share this with children and young people in church and at camps.

Francine continued, “I became an RE teacher, which I was for 26 years, because I wanted to help young people explore the ‘big questions’ in life, but it was while I was at Focusfest, a ministry event for women, that I had a strong conviction that God wanted to speak to me about how He wanted me to become a minister.

“Having listened and prayed, I knew deep down in my spirit that this was always God’s plan for me. Throughout my first year at Union, God has reassured me that I will not be making this journey alone, encouraging me through 1 Timothy 1:7, which reads ‘For I did not give you a spirit of fear but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline’, she said.”

While Francine grew up in the Church of Ireland, first year student Sam Scott came from a Congregational Church background in Ballymena, moving to PCI when he became a men’s outreach worker in Eglinton Presbyterian Church in Belfast, “Growing up I have been very fortunate to have been given lots of support and opportunities to get involved

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with service, leadership, and Bible teaching, throughout my church life,” he said.

“I remember going into my final year at Queen’s and thinking ‘I’d like to work for the church in some capacity, but after something else’. That ‘something else’ didn’t materialise, and it was after reading a piece of scripture that God often speaks to me through, that I realised that I definitely wanted to go for ministry and He was calling me to it. After a two-year Cornhill Training Course of Bible study and preaching, a number of doors opened, one after another, with God leading me to Union.”

Now into their first six months of first year study, Sam said that 10 years after graduating from Queen’s, going back to full-time study was a bit of shock, initially feeling slightly out of his comfort zone. “It is full-time study and in some respects harder than my undergrad course, especially as Kerry-Lee and I have two small kids. But it is rewarding, and really interesting right from the theological study to the practical and pastoral aspects of ministry. The craic’s good too, with the staff going out of their way to help and support you.”

If you would like to attend the Ministry Taster Day on Saturday, 26 March, please register by emailing Reverend Professor David Leach, Professor of Ministry & Director of the Institute for Ministry: d.leach@union.ac.uk

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The Crucifixion

by John Stainer

Performed by Cathedra

incorporating Down Cathedral Choir and Cadenza

Directed by Michael McCracken

Soloists: *Mark Tilley (Tenor)*

David Robertson (Bass)

Jack McCabe (Organ)

Monday, 11 April 2022 at 8pm

Venue: Down Cathedral

*Admission free with a retiring collection
for Ukraine and Afghanistan*

Poem for today

Carrickfergus by Louis MacNeice

I was born in Belfast between the mountain and the gantries
To the hooting of lost sirens and the clang of trams:
Thence to Smoky Carrick in County Antrim
Where the bottle-neck harbour collects the mud which jams

The little boats beneath the Norman castle,
The pier shining with lumps of crystal salt;
The Scotch Quarter was a line of residential houses
But the Irish Quarter was a slum for the blind and halt.

The brook ran yellow from the factory stinking of chlorine,
The yarn-milled called its funeral cry at noon;
Our lights looked over the Lough to the lights of Bangor
Under the peacock aura of a drowning moon.

The Norman walled this town against the country
To stop his ears to the yelping of his slave
And built a church in the form of a cross but denoting
The List of Christ on the cross, in the angle of the nave.

I was the rector's son, born to the Anglican order,
Banned for ever from the candles of the Irish poor;
The Chichesters knelt in marble at the end of a transept
With ruffs about their necks, their portion sure.

The war came and a huge camp of soldiers

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Grew from the ground in sight of our house with long
Dummies hanging from gibbets for bayonet practice
And the sentry's challenge echoing all day long.

I went to school in Dorset, the world of parents
Contracted into a puppet world of sons
Far from the mill girls, the smell of porter, the salt mines
And the soldiers with their guns.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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