

# Church News Ireland

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## Image of the day – Northern Ireland International Organ Competition

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### Northern Ireland International Organ Competition

Richard Yarr, founder of the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition, with Fr Eugene O'Hagan, who will introduce the evening gala on April 6.

## People and places

### Organ music spectacular pulling out all the stops - Anne Hailes

I know where I'll be at 7.30pm on Wednesday April 6 - I'll be sitting in St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast listening to the might of the cathedral organ played by 10 top class international organists, all prize winners of the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition (NIIOC); this is their 10th anniversary and they are celebrating in style - Anne Hailes writes in the Irish News 28/03/2022

Tonight (28/03/2022) these professionals play at Southwark Cathedral London and on Wednesday of next week they will delight audiences in Belfast.

Organisers have raised £39,000 to bring this wealth of talent back to Northern Ireland (where over the years they undertook their finals), including air fares, accommodation,

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payment for these professional musicians and all the expense that goes with such an undertaking.

But they work hard whilst they are here - not only the gala concert but free lunchtime recitals on April 5 at 1.15pm in each of the six counties.

## **PROUD MUSICAL HISTORY**

At St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, the 1907 Harrison and Harrison organ will be so proud to host these musicians who follow in the footsteps of the famous Captain Charles J. Brennan, the first St Anne's organist-in-residence who died in 1964.

He said that of all the services and events he played for, the funeral of Lord Carson was outstanding, the coffin carried on the deck of a warship as it sailed up Belfast Lough and then on a horse-drawn gun carriage to a packed cathedral where Captain Brennan was waiting.

Today, as then, it is a very spectacular setting as the music soars above the nave to the rafters.

Richard Yarr, renowned organist and founder and chair of this, the world's leading international competition for young people, says: "We're thrilled to be celebrating our first 10 years with these very special concerts featuring 10 winning organists who are now such great ambassadors for the king of instruments and for our competition.

"NIIOC takes pride of place on their CVs and I know these events will offer something for everyone. They will also

**10 YEARS** | **NORTHERN IRELAND INTERNATIONAL ORGAN COMPETITION**

# NI Resounds

*A unique series of free recitals across Northern Ireland, marking a decade of the competition. Everyone welcome.*

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 1.15pm**

**First Presbyterian Church**  
Dublin Rd, Omagh BT78 1HF  
**Andrew Forbes**

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**St. Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral**  
Cathedral Close, 43 Abbey St, Armagh BT61 7DY  
**Laura Schlappa & Ben Comeau**

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**St. Michael's Church**  
4 Darling St, Enniskillen BT74 7EW  
**Ben Bloor**

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**Christ Church, Londonderry**  
Infirmary Rd, Londonderry BT48 7DE  
**Sebastian Heindl**

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**Down Cathedral**  
35 English St, Downpatrick BT30 6AB  
**Johannes Krahl & Alexander Hamilton**

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**Saint Peter's Cathedral**  
St. Peter's Square, Belfast BT12 4DH  
**Mona Rozdestvenskyte & Ivan Bogdan-Reincke**

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**Ballywillan Presbyterian Church**  
131 Atlantic Rd, Portrush BT56 8PB  
**Richard Gowers**

Find out more about the performers at [www.niic.com](http://www.niic.com)

**Performers:** Andrew Forbes, Laura Schlappa, Ben Comeau, Ben Bloor, Sebastian Heindl, Johannes Krahl, Alexander Hamilton, Mona Rozdestvenskyte, Ivan Bogdan Reincke, Richard Gowers

provide great opportunities to thank those who have supported us on this exciting journey."

**Simultaneous lunchtime recitals by individual NIIOC prizewinners will be presented under the banner 'Northern Ireland Resounds' on April 5 in the following venues:**

Saint Peter's Catholic Cathedral, Belfast.

Down Cathedral, Downpatrick.

St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh.

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St Michael's Church, Enniskillen.  
First Presbyterian Church, Omagh.  
Christ Church, Derry.  
Ballywillan Presbyterian Church, Portrush.

## **A FEAST OF MUSICAL TALENT**

Most of the 10 NIIOC senior competition prize-winning organists from 2011 to 2020 are from the UK, with representatives from Germany, Hungary and Mona Rozdestvenskyte from Lithuania.

Richard Gowers, senior prizewinner in 2013, will also include the premiere of a work by Grace-Evangeline Mason specially composed for NIIOC and the Commission for Victims and Survivors. It is dedicated to all those touched by the Northern Ireland Troubles.

Tickets for the Belfast Gala Recital are £10 (students £5) and are bookable through the competition website, [niioc.com](http://niioc.com).

Report and photograph - Courtesy of Anne Hailes and the Irish News.

## **Rob Parsons founder of Care for The Family to visit Belfast**

**Author, speaker and founder of Care for The Family, Rob Parsons will speak about The Heart of Communication at Orangefield Presbyterian Church, Belfast on Wednesday 8th June 2022 at 7:30pm.**



In addition to his pioneering work with Care In The Family, Rob is also an internationally renowned Christian speaker and author. To date, he has written over twenty books, including 'The Wisdom House' and the 'Sixty Minutes Series'.

Rob's visit to Northern Ireland's capital as part of a wider UK tour is to help promote his latest book: 'The Heart of Communication'.

Looking forward to the event, a spokesperson for Care In The Family, said

"At The Heart of Communication, Rob Parsons will share insights from his fifty years of public speaking experience. He will unpack methods that will help any public speaker to better grasp not only how to speak to the head, but to the heart. Join us and you'll come away with:

- A better understanding of how to prepare well for public speaking.

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- The ability to grasp the power of stories and how to utilise them.
- Top tips on how to better connect with your audience both face-to-face or online.
- Insight into why we lose an audience and how to avoid common distractions.”

Tickets for his lecture will cost £7 per person and are available from [www.cff.org.uk/heartof](http://www.cff.org.uk/heartof)

## **An invitation from Belfast Bible College**

**Staff at Belfast Bible College write -You are invited to come and visit Belfast Bible College to experience our unique College and get a sense of what it is like to study here.**

There is an exciting program planned for the evening and there will also be an opportunity to tour the campus and look at the facilities we have. We will provide information about our College, details about the BA Theology degree course and have input from our lecturers, staff and current students. There will also be a worship time led by our students, which should give a flavour of what our community and fellowship are like.

Hot chocolate and doughnuts will be on offer at the end, which will give you the chance to meet the staff team who will be available to answer any questions you may have.

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Schedule for the evening:

7.00 – 7.15 - Information about the College and the BA (Hons) Theology degree

7.15 - 7.30 - Interviews with current Theology students

7.30 - 7.45 - Sample Theology Lecture with Dr. Joy Allan

7.45 - 8.00 - Short talk

8.00 - 8.30 - Worship time led by our students

8.30 - 9.00 - Hot Chocolate & Donuts, tours of the campus and one-to one chats with the team to answer any of your questions.

### **Who is it for?**

Our goal at Belfast Bible College is to equip 21st century disciples to live out their faith in whatever context they themselves in. Therefore, our Open Evening is for anyone who would like to deepen their faith in God through theological study. You may be in Year 13 or 14 in school and are considering what to do next. Or you may be coming to the end of a degree and are considering your next step. You may be interning in a church, or on a Gap Year, and feel led to the College. You may have a job but are sensing a call of God on your life about a career change or a move into ministry or mission. Or you may simply have heard about Belfast Bible College and are interested in finding out more about us.

If this describes you, then we would love you to consider joining us for our Open Evening. You would be so welcome.

Glenburn House, Glenburn Road South, Dunmurry, Belfast, County Antrim, BT17 9JP Tel: +44 (0) 28 9030 1551

[<https://www.belfastbiblecollege.com/>]



## April's Presbyterian Herald

**The April 2022 edition of the Presbyterian Herald is now available. The editor, Sarah Harding, introduces this month's edition which includes:**

- ◆ I believe in death - Easter reflection from the Moderator Dr David Bruce
- ◆ For such a time as this... God's people amidst the Ukraine crisis
- ◆ Time to move – Windsor Presbyterian
- ◆ A ministry of presence for farmers – an interview with PCI's Rural Chaplain - Kenny Hanna  
<http://bit.ly/PHeraldApril>

## News reports

### Global meeting of Anglican primates takes place in London

**Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is playing host to the senior archbishops, presiding bishops or moderators from across the Anglican Communion this week, at a Primates' Meeting being held at Lambeth Palace, London.**

The leaders of the independent-yet-interdependent autonomous national and regional churches of the Anglican Communion were first invited to gather for “leisurely thought,

prayer and deep consultation” by the then Archbishop of Canterbury Donald Coggan in 1978. Since then, successive archbishops of Canterbury have invited their fellow primates to gather at varying intervals at venues around the world.

This week’s meeting is the first in-person gathering of Anglican primates since they met in Jordan in January 2020. International travel restrictions to protect against the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented further in-person meetings until now. The primates held online meetings in November 2020 and 2021 to discuss a range of issues, including the global impact of the pandemic.

It had originally been planned for the meeting to take place in Rome, but was switched to London at a time when travel restrictions in Italy meant that a significant number of primates would not have been able to fully participate. There are currently no COVID-related travel restrictions for visitors to the United Kingdom, but a small number of invited primates will be taking part in the meeting online because of return-travel restrictions in their home countries.

This week’s Primates’ Meeting is a precursor to the Lambeth Conference, a once-a-decade gathering to which all bishops in the Anglican Communion are invited. Postponed from 2020, the Lambeth Conference will take place in Canterbury in July and August this year.

There is very little “formal” business in this week’s Primates’ Meeting – the emphasis is on prayer, Bible study, relationship-building and spiritual reflection. In some ways, it returns the focus of the Primates’ Meeting to an opportunity for “leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation.”

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While in London, the primates will hear from Dr. Marion Watson, head of operations at the Center for Clinical Vaccinology and Tropical Medicine at the University of Oxford. Watson has overseen a wide range of clinical trial research and development activities on vaccines for malaria, tuberculosis and emerging pathogens, including vaccine trials for COVID-19.

They will also hear from a government minister from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; and visit the House of Lords.

The church leaders will agree to their agenda on the first day of their Primates' Meeting, but the limited "business" sessions are likely to include updates on the Lambeth Conference and on the next plenary meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, which is due to take place in Accra, Ghana, in early 2023.

They are also expected to discuss a consultation from the Church of England on extending the involvement of the wider Anglican Communion in the choice of future archbishops of Canterbury.

They will have Bible studies on 1 Peter – the biblical focus for this year's Lambeth Conference – and hear reflections on chapters 15 and 16 of John's Gospel. The primates will worship at services in Lambeth Palace and elsewhere in London.

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## Archbishop Welby's visit to Beirut

Archbishop Welby writes - I was so grateful to visit Beirut with Archbishop Hosam Naoum رئيس الأساقفة حسام نعوم and clergy from the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem last week, and see in person their witness to Jesus Christ, commitment to peace and service to the community.

We visited St Luke's Rehabilitation Centre in Beirut - a witness to God's care for every single one of his children, and the innate value each of us have as those made in His image.

It was also an honour to meet President Michel Aoun and His Beatitude Patriarch Bechara Boutros Rahi, and reaffirm our commitment to unity, reconciliation and Christian witness in this Holy Land.



We cannot forget the people of Lebanon and the suffering they face as a result of the port explosion, the pandemic and economic and political problems. Let us pray for hope and abundance for this beautiful nation, for the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and all those it serves.

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

### **A Corrymeela conversation**

How are religion and violence held together at the heart of our history? How can nonviolence still shape our culture?

Join us for a conversation led by historian and ecumenist Johnston McMaster at Ballynafeigh Methodist Church, Ormeau Road, Belfast.



examining and redressing several preconceptions and presuppositions. <http://dlvr.it/SMYxtz>

## Perspective

### **Gaffe-prone Joe Biden thinks he's a foreign policy genius. He isn't by Robin Renwick**

**As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for 30 years, Joe Biden prided himself as an expert on foreign policy. It was one of the key planks of his pitch for election as US President, after the bumpy ride under his predecessor, Donald Trump.**

Unfortunately, it was never really true. Biden voted against the war to liberate Kuwait in the 1990s, in favour of the invasion of Iraq in the 2000s and he opposed the raid that killed Bin Laden (he told Barack Obama: “Don’t go”).

None of which mattered nearly as much as the chaotic American withdrawal from Afghanistan last year, which caused dismay to the US public and the country’s allies and sent a very unfortunate message to the Kremlin.

This has been compounded by the President’s tendency to make gaffes, particularly when he ventures off script – as he does all too often. He has made fun of this tendency in the past and it once mattered far less than it does now.

Running for the Democratic nomination for the presidency against Obama in 2007, for example, he awkwardly

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described his opponent as: “the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy”.

A few years later Obama observed to his staff about his then vice-president, “Never underestimate the ability of the vice-president to screw things up.”

Biden’s first gaffe during the Ukraine crisis was to suggest that Putin would face only limited sanctions if his incursion into the country was correspondingly minor.

The second was to tell members of the US 82nd Airborne Division in Poland that they would find terrible scenes there, suggesting that they might end up in Ukraine, when there was never any intention of sending them to that country.

But the mega gaffe, also in Poland, was to declare, “For God’s sake, this man [Putin] cannot remain in power.” This left the White House scrambling to say that the President hadn’t meant it, as regime change is not American policy.

Biden’s remark unfortunately is already being used by Putin and his acolytes to denounce opponents of the war in Russia as agents of the United States.

Those who know the US President will testify, as I can, that he is a nice guy, but there are worries in the US and among the Western allies as to whether that is what is required in standing up to Putin.



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Biden has been clear that the alliance will defend “every inch of Nato territory”. But as leader of the free world, he has been curiously muted in responding to Putin’s threats.

It would be more encouraging to hear the US President – in a scripted question – ask Putin why he persists in threatening the Russian people with a nuclear war.

For does anyone believe that if a nuclear weapon ever were used on Nato territory, the alliance would not retaliate?

Making that red line more explicit would have more effect than calling Putin, as Biden has, a war criminal, thug and a murderous dictator, all of which is water off that particular duck’s back.

Lord Renwick is a former British ambassador to Washington, DC. Article courtesy The Daily Telegraph.

## Poem for today

### **I Sit Before the Fire and Think**

I sit beside the fire and think  
of all that I have seen  
of meadow-flowers and butterflies  
in summers that have been;

Of yellow leaves and gossamer  
in autumns that there were,  
with morning mist and silver sun  
and wind upon my hair.

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I sit beside the fire and think  
of how the world will be  
when winter comes without a spring  
that I shall ever see.

For still there are so many things  
that I have never seen:  
in every wood in every spring  
there is a different green.

I sit beside the fire and think  
of people long ago  
and people who will see a world  
that I shall never know.

But all the while I sit and think  
of times there were before,  
I listen for returning feet  
and voices at the door.

'I Sit Beside the Fire and Think' was a song found in J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Fellowship of the Ring'. Bilbo sings this song, mostly to himself but with Frodo present, just after he gives Frodo the mithril vest and Sting in Rivendell.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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