

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Church facilities for North West fans**

## Image of the day

### Church facilities for North West fans

**The 2024 race week will take place on May 6-11, with the principal race day on Saturday, May 11.**

The North West 200 road races attract the largest crowd to the triangle of Portrush, Portstewart and Coleraine each year.

And space is at a premium for parking motorcycles, leaving helmets and gear in secure facilities.

Portstewart Presbyterian responded to help visitors and fans stating -

If you're planning to attend this year's NW200 on Race Day, 11th May 2024, let this church look after you:

 Car Parking £8

 Bike Parking £5

 Gear Storage £3

 Breakfast £8

 Child's Breakfast £5

 Parking and Gear Storage supervised

Their halls are located on Central Avenue, just a short walk from York Corner and Station Road

[https://maps.app.goo.gl/1VBXGjnW3PgFgbWW6?g\\_st=ic](https://maps.app.goo.gl/1VBXGjnW3PgFgbWW6?g_st=ic)

# News



## **Whitehead Methodist Church is National Churches Trust Church of the Week**

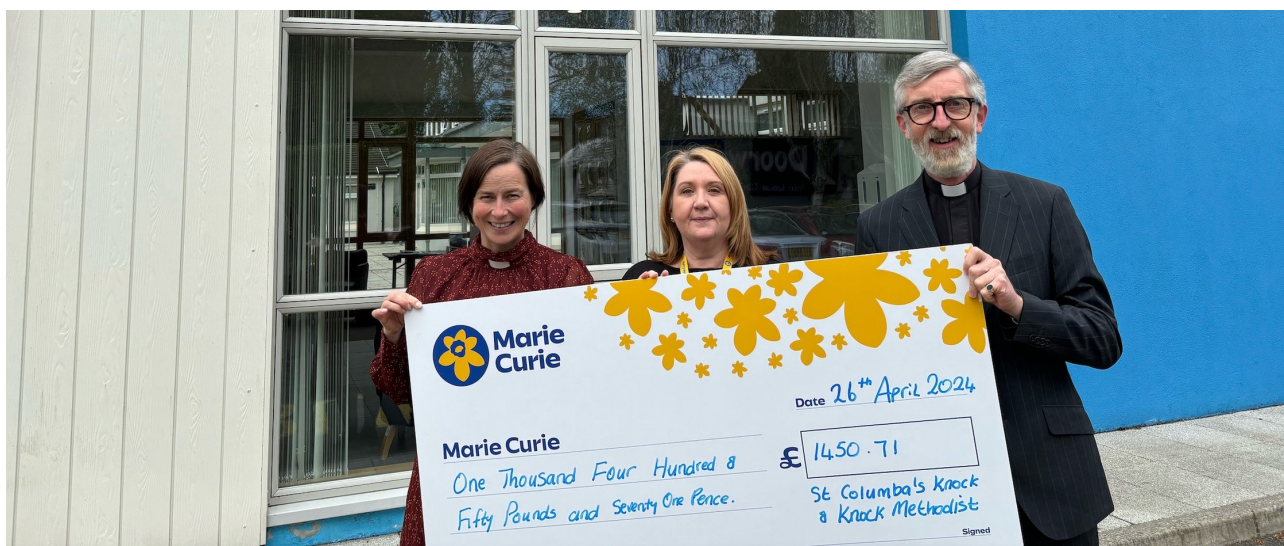
**National Churches Trust “Church Of The Week” this week is the lovely arts and crafts Whitehead Methodist Church in Whitehead, County Antrim.**

Until the mid 19th century, Whitehead was a small community consisting of a few houses and a coastguard station, but in 1862 the railway arrived and the growing town became a popular seaside resort. In the 18th century, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, preached a number of times in the neighbouring town of Carrickfergus, so there was demand for a Methodist church in the area. In 1900 the

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church was completed in a simple arts and crafts style, with five stained glass windows.

In 2016, the church opened a brand new extension thanks to a grant from the National Churches Trust, but this was in jeopardy in 2021 when extensive dry rot was found in the building. We were delighted to award the church £20,000 in 2022 on behalf of the Historic Environment Division at Northern Ireland's Department for Communities to conserve the building, helping to ensure its use for many years to come. Photo by Stanley Gilpin. See - [<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/church/whitehead-methodist-church-whitehead>]



## Knock congregations present cheque to Marie Curie

**The Marie Curie Hospice on Kensington Road received a £1450 cheque recently from the congregations of St Columba's Knock and Knock Methodist Church.**

Canon John Auchmuty and Revd Fiona McCrea are pictured above making the presentation to Marie Curie's Marie Harris.

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Both churches allocated the cash collections from their Holy Week services to the nearby hospice which provides in-patient care and a range of day therapies for adults. It also supports families and carers.



## **Episcopal Church representative at the Primates Meeting in Rome**

**Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves, Vice President of the House of Bishops and Sharon Jones, Deputy for Administration and Logistics to the Presiding Bishop arrived in Rome, Italy for the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting.**

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Bishop Mary will represent Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry and The Episcopal Church at the Primates Meeting which began yesterday.

## **Preview of C of I General Synod 2024**

**A preview of General Synod 2024 was circulated by the Honorary Secretaries.**

For the first time since 2018, General Synod will this year be meeting in Armagh City Hotel, at the heart of the Orchard County and in the home of Ireland's ecclesiastical capital.

The article is available to read in full at: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/12299/general-synod-2024-a-preview>

## **Friendships made and friendships forged by Mothers Union Ireland at Newcastle weekend**

**What a super weekend! Friendships made and friendships forged as the MU Changing The Story Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing Group gathered together in person for the first time - a Mothers Union correspondent writes**

We were encouraged, rejuvenated and refreshed by our weekend programme, combined with the welcome received



at Greenhills YMCA, Newcastle from the staff to the forest, the river, the waterfall, the sunshine and the sea.

As a group we were delighted to be joined by four ‘Changing The Story’ participants for two hybrid sessions. This was appreciated by those who could not attend in person, and greatly enriched the weekend experience. We are only sorry that they missed out on the chef’s menu, the competitive streak that came to the fore during the archery competition, the exploration of the forest, a dip in the sea, our circle of trust, and the hilarious balloon dance as prayers were offered to God!

The sessions were skilfully and mindfully facilitated by Lydia Monds, the Church’s Ministry of Healing; Ireland.

Wonderful animated, quiet and thought provoking conversations took place as ‘Out of the Box’ stories, personal storytelling, mindfulness, artistic creations, song,



dance and the freedom to wander and breathe in God's wonderful creation unlocked 'space' to explore:

the release and freedom FORGIVENESS brings as we strive to live with personal scars,

the gift of SELF-ACCEPTANCE as we nurture and appreciate our unique value and the importance of the gift of gratitude, cultivating 'Connection' and being 'present' in the





moment as we foster **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS** within ourselves, our friends, our communities and **GOD**,

how **RESILIENCE** can grow – as, like a bud and a flower, **HOPE** and **RESILIENCE** often emanate from a place of darkness,

We move forward acknowledging the thorns of our past, as in the present, we soften our gaze, invite God to soothe us and allow God to be present with in each moment. The seeds of new life are sown every day, and as the memories of the weekend inspire our lives, we look forward to further building ‘**CONNECTION**’, and growing in God’s love.

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We greatly appreciate the value of zoom which allows women from every corner of Ireland to take part in our Changing The Story Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing Sessions. Alongside, we thoroughly enjoyed meeting, nurturing, growing and bonding together as a group.

Our thanks to St. John's Church, Newcastle for the warm welcome, beautiful worship, and chat with MU members. Our Closing Circle, under a tree, overlooking Newcastle Bay provided a fitting space and place to give thanks, to recall our 'take aways', and to offer each other a final 'blanket blessing'.....our cup full to overflowing with grace, kindness, appreciation, joy and love.

'My cup overflows with blessings.  
Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me

all the days of my life.' Psalm 23:5-6

Church of Ireland Diocese of Killaloe

## 'Songs of Praise'

*Some of our favourite and well loved Hymns  
with live large screen presentation*

*Hosted by Birr Branch Mothers Union*



**The Church of St Brendan, the Elder**  
Oxmantown Mall, Birr, Co. Offaly

on  
**Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup>. April 2024**  
at  
**3.30p.m.**

Organist: Mr Peter White  
Rector: Revd Arthur Minion

*Donations may be made to the charitable work of*  
**Mothers Union Overseas**  
*A Donation Box is available at the back of the church*

**All Welcome**

## **Caring work of Presbyterian Church chaplains team**

**The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has acknowledged the "indispensable special and caring" frontline role, which its team of healthcare chaplains plays in hospitals and care homes in showing Christian love and compassion to patients and their families.**

The acknowledgement came at a special conference at the Presbyterian Assembly Buildings, Belfast yesterday, organised by the church's Council for Mission Ireland.

The conference discussed the various ethical challenges chaplains may need to navigate, from both a theological and medical perspective now and in coming years.

The Rev Robert Bell, convener of CMI's chaplaincy committee, welcomed the opportunity to bring the healthcare chaplains together to face the various challenges.

"As a church we have a long history of providing pastoral support through our chaplains to many different people across many different aspects of national day-to-day life, be it in universities and colleges, prisons, the armed forces, and more recently in the rural community," he said.

"We have around 30 chaplains, full and part-time, men and women, who work in hospitals and other health settings. This is an opportunity to bring many of them together for fellowship, time of prayer, teaching and discussion.

“Our chaplains have an important frontline role in our congregations across Ireland in bringing Christ’s love and compassion to patients and families. “They often go above and beyond the actual hours for which they are employed – which are often not sufficient for the task, with many combining the demands of healthcare ministry alongside other commitments in local congregations and elsewhere.

“The pastoral and spiritual support, along with the care provided by them, and indeed by chaplains from other denominations, is very deeply appreciated, not only by patients and families, but the whole healthcare community, and it is important that that is recognised,” said Mr Bell, who added that chaplains were very much part of a hospital’s multi-disciplinary team and their role often opened up significant opportunities for sensitive Christian ministry.

“The onus is on patients to seek the chaplain’s support and care, so it is very important that when people are admitted to hospital, they indicate their permission for a chaplain to be informed of their desire to be visited and have their own minister told that they are in hospital.”

At the conference, former Presbyterian moderator the Rev Dr David Bruce spoke of how human life is “special and holy to God”.

“While our chaplains may not be able to say everything that they might want to say at every bedside, they can say it all in prayer to the Lord in the privacy of their room later. They may not see the results of their labours in every encounter, but they will have made a mark in the lives of those folk who

gather, bewildered and exhausted when they simply ask: ‘Can I pray for you?’.”

The conference also heard from Dr Tim Huey, an elder in Whiteabbey Presbyterian church, and GP working in Templepatrick, who said: “Chaplains offer a unique service in their support for people of all faiths and none.”

## **Vatican says trans surgery is threat to ‘dignity of person’**

**The Vatican has issued a scathing condemnation of gender reassignment saying it represents a grave threat to the “dignity” of a person.**

In a document that took five years to draw up, the Vatican said that “any sex-change intervention, as a rule, risks threatening the unique dignity the person has received from the moment of conception”. The 20-page declaration, issued by the department responsible for Catholic doctrine, was approved by Pope Francis.

Entitled “Infinite Dignity”, it said men and women were created by God to be biologically different and that there should be no attempt to change gender.

The uncompromising stance was criticised by some LGBT groups.

“The Vatican is again supporting and propagating ideas that lead to real physical harm to transgender, non-binary and other LGBTQ+ people,” said Francis DeBernardo, executive

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director of New Ways Ministry, an American organisation that campaigns for gay Catholics. The document failed to take into account “the growing reality that a person’s gender includes the psychological, social and spiritual aspects naturally present in their lives”, he added.

Pope Francis has previously denounced gender theory as an “ugly ideology” that contravenes the fundamental biological differences between men and women.

Elsewhere, the document comes to the defence of gay Catholics and denounces the fact that homosexuality is still criminalised in some countries.

“The fact that, in some places ... people are imprisoned, tortured, and even deprived of the good of life solely because of their sexual orientation” was contrary to human dignity, it said.

Free event // No booking required

# PRINCIPLES ON EQUALITY & LEADERSHIP

A Consideration of Scripture &  
the Westminster Confession

Rev Dr Trevor Morrow

*Former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*

10-12.30 // Sat 1st June 2024

Malone Presbyterian Church



**EQUAL**  
*to lead*

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The declaration, issued by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, reiterates the Vatican's opposition to surrogacy, abortion, the death penalty and euthanasia.

It called for a global ban on couples using surrogate mothers to have babies. The Pope called the practice "despicable" earlier this year.

## Cathedral Call

### **Belfast Cathedral's newest ecumenical canon installed**

**Yesterday afternoon the Rev. Dr Janet Unsworth was installed as the newest ecumenical canon in a service of Choral Evensong.**

You can find out more about Janet and her appointment by following the link below:

<https://www.belfastcathedral.org/news/dr-janet-unsworth-appointed-new-methodist-ecumenical-canon-at-st-annes>

### **State Choir Latvia to sing at St Canice's Cathedral on 3rd of May**

**Along with their Artistic Director and Chief Conductor, Māris Sirmāis, they will present a rich programme of Latvian/Baltic music alongside that of Irish composers. This is an event not to be missed.**



Find out more and book your tickets here:  
<https://www.stcanicescathedral.ie/whats-on-events>

## Consecration at Canterbury



**The Rt Revd Canon Dr Anderson Jeremiah was consecrated as the new Bishop of Edmonton at Canterbury Cathedral, at a service on**





**Thursday led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.**

Read more on website: <https://www.london.anglican.org/articles/new-bishop-of-edmonton-consecrated-at-canterbury-cathedral/>

## **Cathedral Music: New Generation Perspectives at Salisbury**

**The Cathedral Music Trust invites - “Meet the ten researchers presenting their papers at our Conference in Salisbury later this year, with topics ranging from how religious practices shape the musical and extra-musical behaviour within institutions to an exploration of visual mental images experienced by sacred music listeners “**

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Isobel Chesman, Rev Pete Gunstone, Imogen Morgan, Rebekah Okpoti, Denise Stobart, Katie Ambrose, Benjamin Liberatore, Elizabeth Preece, Meg Rees & Simone Krueger-Bridge

Cathedral Music: New Generation Perspectives takes place at Sarum College from 19-20 September 🎵

Find out more about each presenter and their research at [www.cathedralmusictrust.org.uk/conference-2024](http://www.cathedralmusictrust.org.uk/conference-2024)



Jim Fitzpatrick Memorial

**ORGAN RECITAL**

SAINT PETER'S CATHEDRAL BELFAST

SUNDAY 7 MAY 2023

3:00PM

Organists:

**Aaron Voderholzer (Germany)**  
**Ivan-Bogdan Reincke (Hungary)**

ADMISSION FREE

# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## The Book of Psalms - the heart of the Bible

Guest Speaker: Ray Ortlund

Dates: 13-24 May 2024

Venue: 1 Cadogan Park, Belfast

Said or sung, memorised or quoted, the Psalms universally have shaped Christian thinking, living, and devotion. They plumb the depths of humanity and reach the heights of God's sovereign faithfulness. These multi-faceted songs rejoice in God's trustworthy promises and describe his salvation.

For full details and booking information visit:

<http://www.theologyireland.com>

## How to be an open church - National Churches Trust

**"Churches are not here to be locked up. Museums used to lock themselves up and not change things, and the museums that didn't stop doing that closed down – and even museums are much more interactive than many parish churches are." - Father Andrew Teather, St Stephen on the Cliffs, Blackpool.**

Settle down with a cup of tea while reading with our latest blog post, 'How to be an open church.' Click the link below to read more 📌

<https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/campaign/our-updates/how-be-open-church>

## Charles Wood Composers' Competition 2024

**The Charles Wood Festival has announce the return of the composition competition with the aim to inspire composers of all ages.**

Entrants are invited to compose a new choral setting of 'O for a closer walk with God' - text which Charles Villiers Stanford used for one of his most iconic choral settings.

Three finalists will be invited to Armagh in August 2024 to hear their pieces performed by members of the Charles Wood Singers with the competition jury panel including Errollyn Wallen, Elaine Agnew and David Hill.

The winning entry will be performed at the Festival's Gala Concert on Friday 16th August, and a recording of the work will be made.

The deadline for entries is Friday 28th June 2024. Full competition details and terms and conditions are available at -

[<https://www.charleswoodsummerschool.org/composers-competition-rules>]

# 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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