

# Church News Ireland



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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site



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## Image of the day



## Holy Week in Armagh

Young people from the parish presented the events of Holy Week in Armagh Catholic Cathedral this week.

## News

### Durham children's part in Royal Maundy Service

Four local children are getting ready to play a part in the Royal Maundy Service this Thursday.



Euan and Indrakshi from Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation and Sam and Eve from Durham Johnston School have been invited to play a key role in the service.

They will accompany The King, carrying a bouquet of flowers known as a Nosegay, as he walks around the cathedral distributing Maundy Money.

Congratulations to these young people who have been selected to be Children of the Royal Almonry.

Read more here [➡ https://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/articles/local-children-prepare-to-meet-the-king-and-queen-as-they-take-on-a-central-role-in-the-historic-royal-maundy-service](https://www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/articles/local-children-prepare-to-meet-the-king-and-queen-as-they-take-on-a-central-role-in-the-historic-royal-maundy-service)





## Manx choir's 'great honour' to sing at Menin Gate

**Singing under the Menin Gate memorial in Belgium was a "great honour" for a Manx choir from Peel, the musical director has said.**

Thirteen children and six adult choristers from Cathedral Isle of Man travelled to Ypres to perform at the daily memorial service at the Menin Gate.

The Menin Gate is dedicated to the British and Commonwealth soldiers who lost their lives during World War One and whose graves are unknown. There has been a remembrance service there each evening almost continuously since 1928.



*A choir from the Isle of Man's cathedral performed at the daily remembrance service in Ypres*

Peter Litman said the trip was "a great opportunity to take young people to show them their significant past".

The choir sang two pieces at the ceremony, one of which was *The Day Thou Gavest Lord is Ended*, which was written by a pupil of King William's College.

The group also sang at Tyne Cot Cemetery, one of more than 150 cemeteries around Ypres, where almost 12,000 soldiers who fought in World War One are buried.

In front of the headstones, the choir sang *Ellan Vannin*, which Dr Litman said was "quite an emotional experience".

He said: "One of the adult singers couldn't sing they were so overcome with emotion... it was really meaningful for them."



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"We sang from the memorial at the back," he continued. It is where the name of Pte Robert Vick is engraved, a soldier from Peel who died in 1917.

Dr Litman said while the morning "started oddly" by singing in a cemetery, after a day of visiting battlegrounds, graves, and museums, the choir's perception "had completely changed and suddenly there was a strong emotion".

The trip culminated in the ceremony, which was "extraordinary" and "a great honour for us to be invited to be part of that," he added.



## Newtownbreda art sale and coffee morning for Christian Aid

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**Christian Aid conveys huge thanks to the wonderful Jennifer Cairnduff and all the members of Newtownbreda (St John's) Presbyterian Church who held an art sale and coffee morning on Saturday, raising almost £1,300 to support our work.**

There was a great turn-out and a real buzz in the hall as people browsed the pre-loved pictures that had been donated by church members and others. 🎨

The scones were like little pillows of softness, tempting the author of this Facebook post to return for second helpings. The tray bakes were scrummy too.

Thanks Jennifer and everyone at St John's for the love you show for people living in poverty and crisis around the world.

## Education

### St Dominic's Music Department visit Budapest

**Senior Choir members enjoyed a busy first full day in Budapest. Firstly the pupils visited the Kodaly Zoltan Hungarian Choir School, where they took part in choir rehearsals and Music classes delivered mostly in Hungarian, along with the Hungarian children.**

The visit finished with the Senior Choir performing a varied programme of choral and traditional Irish music in a concert for the Hungarian pupils and teachers. The audience were also treated to two lively Irish Dance reels by Year 13 pupil







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Dearbhla Finnegan, which they particularly enjoyed.

After a delicious Hungarian dinner in a local restaurant, the pupils attended a concert given by the world famous Hungarian Festival Orchestra at the highly impressive Müpa Budapest concert hall. The concert was full of breathtaking performances by the orchestra, which left our pupils feeling totally inspired as the final chords rang out throughout the concert hall!



## Abercorn welcome Education Minister

**Abercorn Primary School welcomed Education Minister Paul Givan MLA to officially reopen their refurbished ICT Suite.**





The Minister answered pupil's questions at a special assembly and was given a short tour of the school by Co Principal Mrs Harrison.

## **BHS - Abaana Uganda Trip Day 4**

**The Belfast High School team started the day with a lovely hearty breakfast of sausages and eggs which set the tone for what was to come.**

We then travelled to Auntie Fiona's church, Lugogo Baptist in Kampala, for their Palm Sunday service which turned out to be an amazing and unforgettable experience. The worship was incredibly powerful and uplifting - a true highlight of the trip.



After church we embarked on a scenic jungle drive up to our lakeside activity centre at Lake Victoria. The drive was an adventure, with monkeys swinging overhead and spiders scuttling at our feet. Extra bug spray was required, making the journey as exciting as the destination.



When we arrived we were treated to a delicious dinner of rice, beef and beans, followed by a relaxing evening filled with laughter and friendly competition as we played card



games into the night. It was a beautiful blend of spiritual enrichment, nature, good food and great company. Caleb and Oliver

## Cathedral Calls

### Christian Aid's 80th Anniversary service in Belfast Cathedral

**Christian Aid writes - Please join us on Friday 20th June at 7pm in Belfast Cathedral as we mark Christian Aid's 80th Anniversary.**

The special service will feature music from the Renaissance Chamber Choir and Intercultural Worship Ireland and The Rt Rev Trevor Williams, former Chair of Christian Aid Ireland, will be the special guest preacher. Register your place at [caid.ie/80th](http://caid.ie/80th)

### Christus: A Passion Symphony for Solo Organ at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin

**This Easter Eve at 7.00pm a rare and extraordinary musical event will be presented in the heart of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.**

Acclaimed Cathedral Organist David Leigh will perform CHRISTUS: A Passion Symphony for Solo Organ by Francis



Pott — a monumental and deeply spiritual work described as “an inspired piece on a grand scale that gradually reveals its greatness.” its greatness.”

Only eight organists worldwide have ever performed this modern masterpiece, considered by many to be the “Everest” of the organ repertoire. We are honoured that Mr Leigh will bring it to life on our mighty Willis organ, in a performance that will mark the profound journey from Holy Week to Easter.

“An attempt to trace... the Coming of Christ, then Gethsemane, the Way of the Cross, Golgotha, the Deposition, Christ in the Tomb, and, finally, the Resurrection.” — Francis Pott

Let the soaring music, sacred space, and powerful acoustics of Ireland’s National Cathedral guide you through this



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remarkable musical meditation. Admission is free. All are warmly welcome.

## Buxtehude at St Fin Barre's Cathedral for Good Friday



On Good Friday 18th April at 8pm, St Fin Barre's Cathedral Choir will perform a more unusual offering this year. *Membra Jesu nostri patientis sanctissima*, often translated as 'The most holy limbs of our

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**suffering Jesus' is a cycle of seven cantatas composed by Dieterich Buxtehude in 1680.**

Each cantata is dedicated to a different part of Christ's body, reflecting a deep reverence for the suffering of Jesus during His Passion. Seven readings, including poetry written and read by Cónal Creedon, will be paired with each cantata, inviting contemplation and spiritual reflection.

The choir will be accompanied by string orchestra and organ, and the liturgical performance will last around one hour.

## Clergy and ministry

### Priest-in-Charge of Moviddy Union of Parishes

**Now that the Reverend Jean Carney has completed her initial curacy, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross,**





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**the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, has announced that he is delighted to appoint Jean as Priest-in-Charge of Moviddy Union of Parishes ...**

Expressing her delight at her appointment, Jean said: Having served this past year as Bishop's Curate, I am delighted that the Bishop will now give me the opportunity and privilege of serving the parish as their Priest-in-Charge. It is an honour to continue ministering in such a warm and caring community, and I look forward to many more joyful years together in faith and fellowship.



## **A lot of fun on Saturday at All Aboard**

**Connor Children's Ministry Easter trail in St Stephen's Millfield, Belfast was well supported.**



There was a great turn-out for Connor Children's Council's 'Journey to the Empty Tomb' event for children and families held in St Stephen's Millfield on Saturday. There were sensory activities, crafts and storytelling, along with a time of kids' praise and a free barbecue which was enjoyed by all. All Aboard - Connor Children's Ministry

## **Encouraging morning at recent Down & Dromore's men's breakfast in Seagoe**

**'God works all things for the good' was the key message from our speaker Scott Baker at the diocesan men's breakfast on Saturday 12 April.**

Scott was visiting the diocese with a group from Orchard Church in Colorado and was interviewed by Keith Gardiner





as part of the breakfast gathering in Seagoe Parish Centre, Portadown.

Scott works as Chief Officer in one of the largest medical groups in the USA and is responsible for over 17,000 staff. He has over 30 years in leadership and management experience and shared how he is able to bring his faith into the professional world.

Central to his message, however, was the importance of relying on God in dealing with challenges and he shared some of the ways in which God has strengthened him through very difficult situations; and how this has brought

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him into a time of blessing and helped him be a blessing to others.

Bishop David introduced the morning and Lawrence Bellew led the group in some worship songs.

## Events



## Resilient & Sustainable Church Buildings event In Belfast

**The National Churches Trust is running an event in Belfast, in the first week of May, which may be of interest to those looking after church buildings.**

This practical and inspiring event is for anyone involved in caring for church buildings - exploring how heritage, community engagement, and climate action can come





**Easter Monday  
Open Day at Drumalis**

**Monday, 21 April 2025 - 12 noon - 4 pm**

***Guided Tours of the Heritage Building***  
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***Afternoon Teas (additional charge)***  
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***Easter Crafts***  
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***Enjoy a walk in the grounds***  
\*\*\*\*\*

***Raffle***

**Free Admission. No Booking Necessary**



**47 GLENARM ROAD, LARNE, BT40 1DT**  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL  
[drumalis@btconnect.com](mailto:drumalis@btconnect.com) OR TELEPHONE  
**028 28272196/28276455**  
(DURING OFFICE HOURS, MON-FRI, 9 AM—5 PM)

together to build long-term sustainability for places of worship.

We'll look at how caring for your church building can help reduce environmental impact, unlock funding opportunities, and even generate income. Whether it's taking first steps to address heating and damp, or exploring new ways to open church buildings to the wider community, the event offers ideas and support for every stage.

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### **Speakers and contributors include:**

Historic Environment Division, Ulster Architectural Heritage, HERoNI Archives, Architectural Heritage Fund, National Lottery Heritage Fund, NICVA, Rural Community Network, and the National Churches Trust.

Please feel free to share the invitation and registration link with anyone who might be interested.

Resilient & Sustainable Church Buildings:

Tuesday, 6 May 2025 | 10:45am–3:00pm

St. Stephen's Church, Millfield, Belfast BT1 1JS

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/resilient-sustainable-church-buildings-belfast-tickets-1320957121309>

## **In the media**

**Success of national church should be of interest to all English people, whether believers or not -  
Daily Telegraph**

**Easter is a time for hope. Normally, that hope is a solely theological one. However this year, the pollsters have joined in the message of Resurrection with some cold, hard data, Madeline Grant writes.**

Far from being dead, extensive polling by the Bible Society suggests that Christianity is experiencing the beginnings of



a quiet revival, especially among younger worshippers. Sixteen per cent of 18-24-year olds say they are monthly churchgoers, up from 4 per cent in 2018. Though this rise is concentrated among young men, both sexes are attending at higher rates. Even factoring in migration from more religious countries, churchgoing is increasing among younger age-brackets across the board.

All cause for celebration: yet, I have begun to notice recently a particular subset of opinion, absolutely determined to avoid any signs of hope whatsoever. On the Right of politics, among the very people who ought most to cheer these developments, there is a sort of indulgent doomerism, a desire to explain away any positive development, and a wilful fatalism about Christianity's future in the UK (often from people who never darken their local church's door from one year to the next).

It's almost as if, despite their protestations to the contrary, they rather enjoy the thought of their much-posited prediction, that Christianity will be overwhelmed by a mix of radical Islamism and militant secular wokery, coming true.

None of these encouraging signs should be taken for granted. If anything, they pose a challenge too. In particular for the Church of England. The success of our national church should be of interest to all English people, whether believers or not.

In many ways it is uniquely placed to seize the cultural moment and make good the younger generation's interest in Christian faith. Not only does the Church possess great beauties of its own, from the Book of Common Prayer to the

King James Bible, it offers the presence in every community of someone whose job it is to preach this compelling tale and minister to people.

In the modern world, young men are buttressed with harmful messages from both Left and Right. On the Right, toxic gurus like Andrew Tate preach a loveless life to rootless young men, denying the basic humanity of women. The Left offers concerted efforts to pathologise and treat all forms of masculinity as inherently problematic. Rather than scold or patronise those young men, the task for the Church is how to encourage and welcome them.

Yet all too often our national Church seems determined to squander the opportunities in front of it. The leadership often exhibits a very profound sense of misplaced priorities. Justin Welby's infamous decision to stand at his kitchen table during Covid rather than in an empty church became symbolic of his failure to realise that people want the Church to provide something resounding and eternal, not something with the general tone and decorum of an episode of Ready, Steady, Cook.

Then there's the political hectoring. The centralised CofE's parroting of progressive talking points is the last thing that will attract these seekers of something different. There seems to be no desire among its senior caste to learn: even in Holy Week the Archbishop of York is tweeting about slavery reparations. Despite much good work on the ground, the great urge to appeal to the lowest common denominator can lead to some services resembling, as one clergyman put it, a "school assembly for old people". Yes, Anglicanism has profound beauties on offer: the problem is that these



priceless treasures are, to paraphrase Evelyn Waugh, a Ming vase in the hands of grey-suited gorillas.

At the root of much of this failure is the idea that the Church needs to be more like the world around it, whereas what these findings suggest is that young people are crying out for, if anything, an escape from the world; hence Pentecostalism and Roman Catholicism's greater success among younger age groups. Pockets of CofE worship that succeed are those that seem to follow this model.

Despite mismanagement in many of our cathedrals, worship in them is on the rise too; they, at least, do know how to put on a good show.

Fundamentally, people do not go to church for what they could get sitting at home. The leadership has long failed to recognise that they crave something deeper and transcendent. It believed that Paula Vennells's Post Office credentials, without any parish experience, alone qualified her to be shortlisted for one of the most important bishoprics.

Welbyism was all about running the CofE as if it were an NHS Trust or any other great office of state, when it isn't – which to this new generation may be a strong part of its appeal. As the Church chooses a new leader, what's urgently needed is someone who can tap into this need for profundity, this clear yearning, who can jettison all the politicised jargon and empty, managerial platitudes.

I know, because it worked for me. After months of being scared witless during the pandemic, I attended an Easter

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Sunday service at St Bartholomew-the-Great in Smithfield. Listening to beautiful music, connecting with people – albeit from afar – and, crucially, receiving a message of hope, was the exact opposite of what the world was then offering. It was precisely the strangeness that made me want to return. And in this world, there is nothing stranger to young people than the claim, so different to that of radical Left and Right, that they are known and loved by a God who is beyond the human or political and yet whom they can encounter at their local church.

16 April 2025 6:00am BST  
Madeline Grant

## Heritage

### A trailblazer from Strabane

**Annie Maunder – a trailblazer from Strabane, Co. Tyrone – was born in April 1868 as Annie Russell.**

One of six children in a brilliant, high-achieving family, she stood out early on, especially in mathematics. She studied at Girton College, of Cambridge University, and became the first Irish woman to achieve a high second honours degree in mathematics — an incredible achievement at the time!

Though Girton was one of the first institutions for women's higher education (founded in 1869), Cambridge itself didn't



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award women full membership until 1948 — long after Annie had made her mark.

Together with her husband, Walter Maunder, Annie made groundbreaking discoveries in solar astronomy. She worked at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, where she helped pioneer solar photography. Her solar observations, many of which captured the Sun's stunning corona (visible only during solar eclipses), were recorded almost daily for 13 years.



In 1908, she published *The Heavens and Their Story*, a beautifully written and illustrated book that made astronomy accessible to all, regardless of background. It features many of her own photographs and remains available to read even today.

You can now find a telescope at the Royal Observatory Greenwich named "AMAT" after Annie, a blue plaque outside her former London home, and an asteroid named in 2023 "Anniemaunder". A wonderful legacy for a native of Strabane.

# 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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