

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Candlelight in Carlow

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Mozart by candlelight in Carlow

Frank warming up for Mozart by candlelight concert at Saint Catherine's Church of Ireland Carlow with guest violinist Deirdre Reddy

People and places

Black Santa Sit-out is one of the bright lights in Belfast and Northern Ireland - Tim McGarry

Representatives of 120 charities gathered at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, on Sunday February 4 for the annual Good Samaritans Service and to celebrate the £171,000 raised by the 2023 Black Santa Sit-out.

Welcoming guests from across Northern Ireland, Dean Stephen Forde said this was one of his favourite services of the year. "With the generosity of the people from Belfast and across the province, we have raised £171,000, and today I have the huge privilege of giving away that money to 120 charities," the Dean said.

The 47th annual Sit-out took place in the 10 days before Christmas, with Dean Forde on the steps of the Cathedral



At Belfast Cathedral's Good Samaritans Service are Dean Stephen Forde and special guests Alexandra Ford (left) and Tim McGarry (second right), with representatives of The Goliath Trust who received a grant from the 2023 Black Santa Appeal.

daily, supported by the Bishops of Connor and Down and Dromore, Cathedral Canons, clergy and other friends.

Special guests at Sunday's service were actors Tim McGarry and Alexandra Ford. Welcoming them, the Dean added: "Tim and Alexandra are not the stars of the service. The stars are you, as representatives of charities who have kept going through the cost-of-living crisis, who have supported people impacted by drug abuse and who have supported those whose lives have been changed by Covid.



Dean Forde with members of a choir which received a donation. Lisburn Community Choirs which was given out at the Good Samaritans service at St Anne's Cathedral today. Angie & her children Amelia and Leon were there to represent the choir.

“A galaxy of work and care and service which you, as members of amazing charities, give every day to young people, older people and people who triumph over challenges.”

In his reflection, Tim McGarry said the Good Samaritans Service was a highlight of his year too, describing the Black Santa Sit-out as ‘one of the bright lights in Belfast and Northern Ireland.’ Adding that the £171,000 raised had been

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donated by ‘normal people,’ Tim said: “It is all about love, kindness and goodness.”

During the service, the names of each of the charities awarded funding in different fields were read out. These were: Supporting the most disadvantaged families and individuals in our communities; working with those impacted by drug abuse; providing bereavement support in the aftermath of the Covid pandemic; groups doing charitable work in our communities; and charities working internationally.

There was applause for each charity representative in acknowledgement of the work they carry out and the difference their charities make.

The service took the form of Evensong, with music from the Cathedral Choir, conducted by Master of Music Jack Wilson, with Stephen Hamill at the organ. Alexandra Ford read the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and a collection was taken for the 2024 Black Santa Appeal.

Archbishop Jackson of Dublin’s concern at fire at former nursing home

Following a fire at the former St Brigid’s Nursing Home at Crooksling, Brittas, on the Dublin/Wicklow border on Sunday last February 4 2024, Archbishop Michael Jackson stated -

“This morning we heard of another blaze at a building where protests have been taking place in recent days. The cause of the fire has not yet officially been identified. However, the



building in question, a former nursing home named after St Brigid, has been rendered useless to anyone.

“Nobody wins when such buildings are burned. The resources of hard pressed emergency services have been needlessly and fruitlessly depleted. Those seeking International Protection in our country have a right to safety while their application is being examined.

“The total community in which such buildings stand is branded, by such actions, with racism and with anti-immigrant sentiment, and their place becomes a household name. The integrity and the stability of such a community are endangered by these needless actions.

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“History shows us that we in Ireland are no strangers to emigration or to the need to be received as graciously and as helpfully as possible wherever we have arrived across the world in order to make a fresh start. Communities throughout our country across the centuries have flourished as a result of the arrival of people from different backgrounds and cultures.

“Our thoughts are very much with the community of Crooksling, Brittas at this time.”



RAF wishes happy birthday to WW2 Scarva veteran

The Royal Air Force has honoured Ena Kinnin, a Scarva woman who has become a centenarian.



The popular local lady served in the RAF during the Second World War, reaching the rank of sergeant. RAF personnel from 502 (Ulster) Squadron took part in Sunday's service at St. Matthew's Parish Church, where Ena has been a loyal, lifelong member. An RAF piper played happy

birthday, with the congregation singing along.

Scarva minister Rev Rodney Magennis, conducted and led the service. There were presentations from Air Marshal Sean Reynolds, Air Officer Northern Ireland, the church and Upper Bann MP Carla Lockhart.

Diocesan readers commissioned for Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.

On Sunday past, in the context of a special evening service for Candlemas in St Laserian's Cathedral in Old



Leighlin, four new diocesan readers were commissioned by Bishop Adrian Wilkinson to serve in the diocese. They are Rosemary Brown, Stephen Doak, Claire Forde and Paul Hanson.

They were presented by the Warden of Readers, the Very Revd Tom Gordon. This was the last occasion Dean Gordon acted in this capacity, having recently announced his retirement.

The new readers were supported by their families, sponsoring clergy and many parishioners from their home parishes of Lismore, Waterford and Dunleckney.

The preacher was Mrs Phyllis Grothier, one of the most experienced readers in the Diocese. In her sermon, she said

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that Diocesan readers have an opportunity to meet parishioners in their home parish and to share in praise, prayer, reflection and thanksgiving with them.

When commissioning the new readers, Bishop Wilkinson highlighted both the importance and privilege of this distinctive ministry within the church and thanked Dean Gordon for all his work as Adult Education Officer in the Diocese and more recently as Warden of Readers.

He wished the new readers every blessing in their new role within the Diocese and thanked all those who serve faithfully Sunday by Sunday in this way across the many churches in Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.

Feature

Racial Justice Sunday

A podcast from Archbishop John McDowell

To encourage interest in Racial Justice Sunday, observed on the second Sunday in February each year, a podcast from the Primate's Ethnic Diversity, Inclusion and Racial Justice Reference Group discusses some issues involved in welcoming people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds in Ireland today and standing up against racism.

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The podcast is hosted by Dr Lucy Michael with contributions from Archbishop John McDowell, and two members of the group, the Revd Dr Maithrie White and Oluromade Olusa.

Reference -

[\[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhRQh86ngXg&t=103s\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhRQh86ngXg&t=103s)

Listen on to hear about the origins of Racial Justice Sunday and their perspectives on:

How it aligns with the Church's mission and values (from 03:15)

Why should we be celebrating Racial Justice Sunday more (04:48)

The current state of awareness of racial justice in the Church (10:43)

What could happen in a local church celebrating racial justice (14:53)

How these celebrations can 'lift our eyes' and deepen our faith (21:19)

This year's theme is migration, for which Churches Together in Britain and Ireland has produced a set of helpful resources for Racial Justice Sunday on the theme of migration, available at this link.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees states at least 108 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes. Among them are more than 35 million refugees, around 41 per cent of whom are aged under 18. The discussion continues as the contributors consider the most important issues of migration for members of the

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Church to reflect on (from 24:32), and what we can do to take forward racial justice all through the year (29:07)

CTBI has suggested three points to guide churches' work in marking Racial Justice Sunday:

- Remember the importance of racial justice
- Reflect on human diversity and thank God for this
- Respond by working to end injustice, racism and ignorance through prayer and action

Dr Michael remarks: "I want to thank Archbishop John McDowell, Dr Maithrie White and Oluromade Olusa for their valuable insights and willingness to engage in this important conversation. We invite you to continue this conversation through your local church or diocese and connect with others who can learn and grow with you as you explore this area more deeply."

The reference group hopes that you'll listen out for future episodes as we seek to learn and grow together in faith.

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhRQh86ngXg&t=103s>]

There are a number of relevant resources at -
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=CTBI+Racial+Justice

CTBI -
<https://ctbi.org.uk/category/witnessing-together/>

Racial Justice Sunday - Moderator of Church of Scotland urges people to 'call out' racism

People have been urged to "call out" all those who use hostile and dehumanising language towards asylum seekers and refugees.

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said it "diminished humanity" and we all have a responsibility to "create a world where every person is treated with dignity and respect".

Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton is encouraging congregations to use the Exodus resource in services to mark Racial Justice Sunday on 11 February.

She spoke out ahead of Racial Justice Sunday on 11 February which provides churches across the UK the opportunity to lament the reality of racism in society and commit to try and help end it.

This year's theme is migration

Migration has always been a part of our human story, that's why so many of the stories in the Bible involve people on the move:

Moses leading the Israelites from slavery in Egypt to the promised land.

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Ruth and Naomi travelling to Bethlehem to seek a new beginning.

Mary and Joseph fleeing to Egypt to protect their new born son.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have put together a resource called Exodus which contains dozens of prayers and creative ideas for marking Racial Justice Sunday.

News

Anglican Communion Office appoints Public Engagement Director

The Right Revd Anthony Poggo, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion has announced yesterday the Anglican Consultative Council's appointment of Janet Miles to the role of Public Engagement Director for the Anglican Communion Office (ACO).

The ACO is the official Secretariat to the Anglican Communion - a global network of Anglican churches active in more than 165 countries. Joining the Secretary General's team, Janet will oversee public engagement (communications, digital, fundraising), to grow profile and support.

Bishop Anthony said:

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‘Now over one year into my work as Secretary General, I am excited to have created this new Public Engagement role. The ACO has a diverse portfolio of work, which involves supporting the Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates Meeting, the Lambeth Conference and The Archbishop of Canterbury; representing Anglicans at the UN; facilitating ecumenical and interfaith dialogues; collaborating with the Anglican Alliance in response to human need and supporting Anglican Commissions and Networks on themes including science and faith; the environment; peace and reconciliation and more.

‘I see the Public Engagement role as playing a vital part in growing awareness and support for the ACO as an enabling team, here to serve and strengthen the life of the Anglican Communion.’

Janet joins the Anglican Communion Office having been Head of Communications for the Lambeth Conference. Previously, she has worked in communications and engagement roles in the charity sector, including Livability, The Children’s Society and The Salvation Army.

Janet said: ‘I am delighted to be appointed to this position and am looking forward to working with the ACO team and communion partners around the world.’

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Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

4 Corners Festival 2024 across Belfast

Full Programme available to book your tickets on the website

www.4cornersfestival.com

Go behind the scenes of the hit BBC police drama Blue Lights at the 4 Corners Festival on February 7th.

Join screenwriters Declan Lawn and Adam Patterson with journalist Tyree Patton for an insider's look at creating the gritty series followed by a Q&A session.

Book your tickets now for this one-of-a-kind discussion with the creative talent behind a fan-favorite show along with our other events here -

<https://www.4cornersfestival.com/festival-years/2024-festival/>

Livestream also available for this event

Deadbeat Avenue at the 4 Corners Festival

At Methodist College on February 8th at 7pm as primary school pupils, assisted by Play it by Ear Drama Company, introduce you to the inhabitants of Deadbeat Avenue.

Don't miss this heartwarming theatrical performance that brings courage and optimism to life through the eyes of children.

St Mark's Parish
Church
Church St. Newtownards

Ards Choral Society
presents

**MUSIC for
PASSIONTIDE**

featuring **RUTTER'S REQUIEM**
with
Mary McCabe - Soprano, Noel Williamson - Organ
& Joanne Cruise - Piano

THURSDAY **7th March 2024** at 7.30 pm

ACS Charity No.
NIC 108830

Ticket
Donation **£15**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Tickets available for this one-night-only show that will inspire you as local youth take to the stage.

Book now for Deadbeat Avenue, and all other events at the 4 Corners Festival

<https://www.4cornersfestival.com/festival-years/2024-festival/>

Heritage

St Brigid's legacy

In the first of three articles from the RCB Library celebrating St Brigid's legacy Ella Squire writes: 'St Brigid is rooted in Irish culture most evident in the way her name is preserved throughout Ireland;



“wherever the Irish people are, church, schools and convents bear her name” (Sherlock, 1896). The most ubiquitous being the 36 townlands named Kilbride. Since the medieval period, Brigid has been an incredibly popular patron saint of churches and other religious houses. Currently, she is patron of 113 Roman Catholic churches and 14 Church of Ireland churches throughout the island (Kissane, 2017). Arguably, the most famous being her own: St Brigid’s Cathedral in Co. Kildare.'

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You can read on at this link and feel free to check out the next two posts too: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/12236/st-brigid-a-powerful-focus>

Poem for today



Friday last was the Feast of the Presentation in the Temple.

A Song For Simeon by T.S. Eliot

Lord, they Roman hyacinths are blooming in bowls and
The winter sun creeps by the snow hills;
The stubborn season has made stand.
My life is light, waiting for the death wind,
Like a feather on the back of my hand.
Dust in sunlight and memory in corners
Wait for the wind that chills towards the dead land.

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Grant us thy peace.

I have walked many years in this city,
Kept faith and fast, provided for the poor,
have given and taken honour and ease.

There went never any rejected from my door.

Who shall remember my house, where shall live my
children's
children?

When the time of sorrow is come?

They will take to the goat's path, and the fox's home,
Fleeing from foreign faces and the foreign swords.

Before the time of cords and scourges and lamentation
Grant us thy peace.

Before the stations of the mountain of desolation,

Before the certain hour of maternal sorrow,

Now at this birth season of decease,

Let the Infant, the still unspeaking and unspoken Word,
Grant Israel's consolation

To one who has eighty years and no to-morrow.

According to thy word.

They shall praise Thee and suffer in every generation

With glory and derision,

Light upon light, mounting the saints' stair.

Not for me the martyrdom, the ecstasy of thought and
prayer,

Not for me the ultimate vision.

Grant me thy peace.

(And a sword shall pierce thy heart,
Thine also).

I am tired with my own life and the lives of those after me,

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I am dying in my own death and the deaths of those after me.

Let thy servant depart,
Having seen thy salvation.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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