

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Castleknock Parish planters

June 18, 2024

Image of the day



Castleknock Parish planters

**Castleknock
Parishioners have
expressed their
delight to
Castleknock Tidy
Towns for the beautiful
planters that have
really brightened up
the grounds of
Castleknock Parish
Centre.**

June 18, 2024

“The Tidy Towns do wonderful work in our village and we are so grateful for all their hard work.

“Look out for a revamp of the large flower bed in the Parish Centre grounds in the next few weeks following agreement at our recent Select Vestry meeting. A large part of the work is being paid for by the generosity of a vestry member”.

News

Church people acknowledged in King's Birthday Honours

Parishioners from two city centre churches in Londonderry are among around one hundred people from Northern Ireland who were named in the King's Birthday Honours list.

Alison Cairns, who worships at St Augustine's Church overlooking the city walls, was awarded an MBE for services to renal patients and their families in the Western Trust



area. Six years ago, Mrs Cairns and the Home Therapies Team at Altnagelvin Renal Unit won the RCNi 'Patient's Choice' award for their "outstanding commitment" to renal failure patients and their families. Alison's husband, Rev Nigel Cairns, is the Rector of St Augustine's Londonderry.



Templemore parishioner, **Irene Hewitt**, had double cause for celebration on the day. She and her husband, Malcolm, were celebrating their 49th wedding anniversary.

Mrs Hewitt, who recently completed 45 years' service as a teacher in St Columb's Cathedral Sunday School and has been its Superintendent since 1992, was awarded the British Empire Medal in the King's Birthday Honours "for voluntary services in Londonderry".



One of the UK's finest living composers has been knighted. Huge congratulations to **(Sir) John Rutter**, who has made such an enormous contribution to music and the church in the UK

June 18, 2024

and across the globe.

William Carson of Lurgan's High Street Methodist Church receives an MBE for services to the community at home and abroad. He is the founder of Container Ministry, Irish Methodist Mission and Partnership.
More to come...

Antrim Mothers Union 90th anniversary



On the 6th June 2024, All Saints' Antrim branch of the Mothers' Union celebrated its 90th anniversary.

A service of Holy Communion was held in the parish church and celebrated by the Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev George Davison and the rector The Ven Dr Stephen McBride who is also the All Ireland MU Chaplain was the preacher.



Paddy Wallace is a former Mothers' Union All Ireland President and Diocesan President and was given the honour of cutting the celebration cake. Photos by John McMaster

Following the service, supper prepared by the branch members was served in The Parish Centre. Sylvia Smyth, Branch Leader, on behalf of the branch members, warmly welcomed everyone. She also stated they were very honoured and pleased to be joined by Bishop Rt Rev George and his wife Nadine; June Butler, Mothers' Union All Ireland President; Sally Cotter, Connor Diocesan President; Mavis Thompson, Diocesan President Down & Dromore; Iris Suitor, Zaneal Trustee, and Ven Dr Stephen McBride Mothers' Union All Ireland Chaplain... Also, it was lovely to

June 18, 2024

have former members and friends from neighbouring branches.

There were also former Branch Leaders present; Helen McBride; Jennifer Campbell; Sheila Thompson; Sylvia Barton and Paddy Wallace.

Paddy is a former Mothers' Union All Ireland President and Diocesan President and was given the honour of cutting the celebration cake. Photos by John McMaster

Superb effort by Ballycastle Christian Aid Group

Christian Aid Ireland has said a big thank you to the Ballycastle Christian Aid Group who invited CAI's Church and Community Officer Kaye Steele to speak at their annual Christian Aid Week service held at Ballycastle Church of Ireland, Parishes of Ramoan and Culfeightrin.

Kaye told the focus story for this year's Christian Aid Week appeal - which came from Burundi.

The Ballycastle Christian Aid Group, led by Dibbie McCaughan, coordinates the fundraising activities of a number of churches in the north Antrim town.

To raise funds this year, Dibbie and three other stalwart supporters, Olive McMullan, Moyna McCullough and Helen McKeown, took part in CAI's '70k in May' challenge, each



June 18, 2024



L-R, Rev David Ferguson, Dibbie McCaughan, Kaye Steele, Christine Mitchell, Nigel Mitchell, Moyna McCullough.



walking 70 km
during the month of
May and raising
£3,300 for CAI's
work.

The Group also
organised a bucket
collection at five
supermarkets in the
town which raised
almost £1,650.

June 18, 2024

On Saturday 8 June, they held a coffee morning and plant sale which raised almost £1,050.

An Irish Moderator meets an English President

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland (NSPCI) said it was honoured to host Geoff Levermore,



President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (left), at its recent Synod in Banbridge, Northern Ireland.

During his visit, Mr. Levermore extended congratulations to Rev Alister Bell (right) on his election as NSPCI Moderator and conveyed greetings from the Unitarian and Free Christian community.

NSPCI said, “We are grateful for the warm interactions, enlightening conversations, and the knowledge shared. The NSPCI community extends heartfelt thanks to Mr. Levermore for his participation and presence at the Synod”.

Mr Levermore was keen to thank Rev Brian Moodie for his gracious hospitality at Synod, and notes the the assistance of Rev Robert McKee and his wife Lorna, who provided transport from Belfast, and Revs Brian and Lena Cockcroft, who ensured his safe return.

Shall we evade the conflict? No, Scottish General Synod is told

Members of the Scottish Episcopal Church's General Synod were encouraged to put their heads "above the parapet" on last Thursday morning, in an address by the Primus, the Most Revd Mark Strange.

Bishop Strange, who is also the Bishop of Moray, Ross & Caithness, said that the Synod's agenda — which includes items on the environment, the war in Gaza, and nuclear weapons — was "outward-looking".

"There are always those who worry whenever we put our heads above the parapet, and I understand that; yet there are many occasions, may I suggest, that this is exactly what we are supposed to do," he said.

"If we do not call out when we are aware of turmoil and suffering caused by actions that go against the teaching, life, and example of Christ, then we are in danger of ignoring our call. Yes, sometimes we will be criticised, sometimes we will see people storming off in disagreement, but do we believe people join us because of our silence, or because of our action?"

He referred to the war in Gaza, and said that “as peacemakers we need to talk of peace, not ignore the conflict”.

This, however, also created a responsibility to “work our way through those matters which are affecting us directly”, he said, referring to results from the 2022 census, released last month, which showed that 51.1 per cent of respondents in Scotland said that they had “no religion”: an increase from 36.7 per cent in 2011.

Archbishop of Canterbury sees God’s work in Costa Rica



Archbishop Justin Welby writes - Our final stop in Central America was the Hogar Episcopal School in

June 18, 2024

**Costa Rica,
where 70%
of the
children are
from
immigrant
families.**

Many of them
arrive in
Costa Rica
with

absolutely nothing. The school does truly inspirational work – we heard testimonies from children and parents about how being there had changed their lives.

Many of these families come from Nicaragua. The IARCA province is made up of five countries but we only visited four, having been advised not to visit Nicaragua. We met many people who had left in search of a better life – it's an intensely difficult place to be if you don't support the government.

Please pray for those who remain there, especially those serving and attending the churches, that God would sustain and encourage them.

I'm so grateful to the Primate of IARCA, Archbishop David Alvarado, to Bishop Julio Murray of Panama, and to Bishop Orlando Gomez of Costa Rica, for your hospitality, warmth and example. You are doing God's work in this region.



Cathedral Calls

Royal Army Medical Corps Remembrance

The annual Royal Army Medical Corps Ulster Branch commemoration took place at St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin.

This annual service marks their fallen comrades and those for whom they cared, and they re-dedicate themselves to serve faithfully in adversity and to live up to the Corps motto, In Ardius Fidelis - Faithful in Adversity. Thirty-three personnel of the Royal Army Medical Corps are recipients of the Victoria Cross.

In 1922, four identical memorials were placed in Westminster Abbey, St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh, St David's Cathedral in Wales and in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. The names of the 6,783 personnel of the Royal Army Medical Corps fell in the Great War are enrolled in the Golden Book in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey. Ireland provided more than its fair share, as graduates from all the medical schools on the island served with the Royal Army Medical Corps.

This year, in Dublin, the Royal Army Medical Corps Association's annual event, was on Sunday 09 June, marking the 126th Anniversary of the Royal Army Medical Corps, and the 101th Anniversary of the establishment of the Defence Forces Medical Corps. It was coordinated by Brigadier John Graham OBE (Retd) Royal Army Medical



Corps, and an active member of the Military Heritage of Ireland Trust.

Wreaths were laid by Colonel Ken Millar, RAMCA National President, Professor Tom Trinick, Chairman, Ulster Branch of the RAMC Association and current President of Queen's University Services Club; Brigadier Martin Nadin, Colonel Commandant of the RAMC; Dr Erika Keane, President, Association of Medical and Dental Graduates, RCSI; Colonel Anthony Corcoran, Director of Defence Forces

June 18, 2024

Medical Branch; and Lieutenant-Colonel Ken Martin
President Royal British Legion (Republic of Ireland District).

Graduates from all the medical schools in Ireland served in the Great War in large numbers, and representatives of medical alumni groups and members of the Royal Army Medical Corps Association participated in the Service.

Attendance also included: Mr Paul Stephenson, Chairman Royal British Legion (Republic of Ireland District); The Reverend Peter M. Rutherford, Chaplain, Royal British Legion (Republic of Ireland District; and Michael Kinahan, President of the Organisation of Ex Servicemen and Women.

The Military Heritage of Ireland Trust was represented by its Chair Brigadier-General Paul Fry (Retd), accompanied by Brigadier-General Paul Pakenham (Retd) and Lieutenant-Colonel Eamonn Fogarty (Retd).

Photos Brig Gen Paul Fry and Paul Stephenson.

Festival of Cloaks in Derry

The long-awaited and eagerly-anticipated Festival of Cloaks at St Columb's Cathedral was officially opened on Friday evening by the Bishop of Meath and Kildare, Most Rev Pat Storey.

The service was attended by The Lord Lieutenant for the County Borough of Londonderry, Mr Ian Crowe MBE. See feature on CNI tomorrow.



Festival of Cloaks in Derry

In the media

Presbyterian Church in Ireland prepares for General Assembly in Belfast - News Letter

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland takes place next Thursday, Friday and Saturday at Church House, Belfast, with more than 1,000 ministers and elders from the denomination's 550 congregations taking part, Billy Kennedy writes

Members of PCI's principal decision-making body will take decisions affecting church life for in the months and years ahead.

In a significant change this year, PCI's current moderator, Rev Dr Sam Mawhinney, will conclude his year in office by opening proceedings on Thursday morning, and continue to chair the Assembly until Friday afternoon.

He will then pause business for the installation service of his successor, Rev Dr Richard Murray, of Drumreagh church, Ballymoney. Dr Murray will chair the remaining business until the Assembly's close on Saturday afternoon, when he will lead the communion service.

General Assembly clerk Rev Trevor Gribben, confirms: "Primarily, the General Assembly is a time of worship, Bible study, prayer and waiting on the Lord. A time of coming together, when our ministers and elders, and colleagues from overseas, meet to debate reports and make decisions."

From permission to rename congregations to a final resolution of the church's decision-making and dissent task group, financial matters, and areas of ministry, will come before the Assembly.

Rev Gribben said a new initiative 'Present' will be launched at the Assembly. "This stems from an acknowledgement that church life has changed since the covid pandemic and, for many, it has been difficult. Essentially it is an invitation for congregations to look and see what God is already doing and an invitation to engage with Him.

"It is also about how we can be 'present' in an ever-changing society to one another, to the community the

church serves, and the wider community that we seek to reach out with the gospel.

“Therefore, that is why we are, as Irish Presbyterians, ‘the church reformed, always reforming’ – an idea that dates back to our roots in the Protestant Reformation.”

Rev Gribben added: “This actually acknowledges that the church on earth, which PCI is a part of, is never the finished product, but while we are anchored firmly in the core unchanging doctrines of scripture, we should expect ongoing refinements to how we understand and express our life together and witness to the world.

“Important consultative work has continued in a process over ‘Reconfiguration of Ministry’. This process began in 2021 and the church has looked at key principles and practicalities that will underpin a radical reconfiguration of mission and ministry across the island and will now discuss the next stage of the process.

“Common to all denominations, the Presbyterian church has a reducing number of ministers as more are due to retire than are training at present. We also have fewer contributing families.

These factors have impacted congregations across our denomination, so it is important that we ensure that what we are faced with does not happen in an uncontrolled way.”

The Assembly will discuss education, thanking those who serve on boards of governors, commending the work of special schools across Ireland and affirming the non-

denominational Christian ethos of controlled schools in Northern Ireland.

There will also be an update in PCI's work in the area of social care, while the General Assembly will also be asked to commend the invaluable work of congregations and faith-based organisations that address the implications of the cost of living crisis.

A major issue discussed will be assisted suicide and euthanasia. The Presbyterian church held a major conference on this issue in 2015 and in 2018, with the General Assembly voting to strongly oppose any legislation which allows assisted suicide or euthanasia.

While much of the focus of the General Assembly is on mission and ministry on this island, the church also has a broader more global outlook and the Assembly will be asked to thank its 21 global mission workers as they "collaborate in mission with PCI's overseas partners", serving in nine countries around the world. This year the Assembly will welcome overseas delegates from Nepal, Poland and Malawi. For the first time, a delegation from the Presbyterian church of Guatemala will attend.

A highlight of the general Assembly will be the Thursday evening celebration event, with the speaker this year John Risbridger, chairman of the Evangelical Alliance Council, who will speak on the theme 'Crossing Boundaries with Christ and for Christ'.

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
