

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Bishop on home ground**

June 4, 2024

## Image of the day



### Bishop on home ground

**On Day Two of the Down & Connor diocesan novena Bishop Alan McGuckian made an emotional return home to Sacred Heart church in Cloughmills where he grew up.**

Right - His brother and sister in

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law were among the congregation for the novena Mass. It was a beautiful celebration for Dunloy and Cloughmills Parish.

## News



## Caring for the earth in Westport

**After a long campaign the on street filtered water stations are operative on James Street and Bridge Street, Westport**

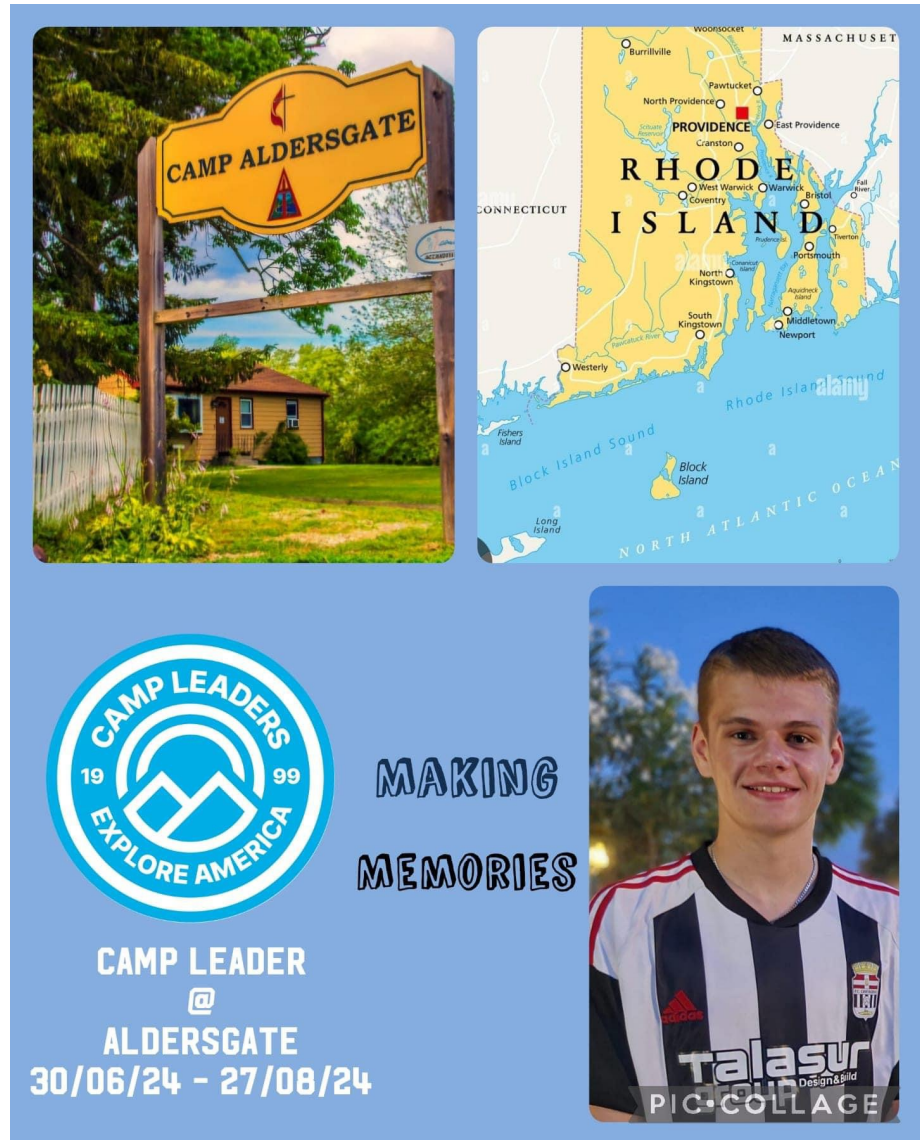
Well done to Westport Eco-Congregation and others who worked hard over a long period to get not one but two on street filtered water stations in place in Westport.

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This one (Page above) is outside the Florist's shop on James Street. The other is on Bridge Street. Thanks to Frank Dolàn for the photograph

## Seagoe CLB leader selected for Rhode Island Aldersgate Camp

**Matthew  
Smyton wrote  
to his friends  
in Seagoe  
Parish Church  
Lads Brigade  
about his  
coming work  
in USA -**



“I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for the love, support and prayers I received for my Camp Leaders experience this summer. I took the opportunity to apply to be a Camp Leader and was thrilled to be accepted to the Rhode Island Aldersgate Camp, a Camp with a Christian Ethos so I'm buzzing to be getting this opportunity to have outreach with American kids for 3 months. I will miss everyone but have



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been blessed with this fantastic opportunity and will certainly give 100% to it. See you all in September. God Bless, Matthew Smyton". The CLCGB family will be praying for Matthew as he undertakes this important ministry in Rhode Island.

## Somme Remembrance Service at the Ulster Tower, Thiepval



**A 'Service of Remembrance' to commemorate the 108th anniversary of The Battle of the Somme, shall be held at the Ulster Tower, Thiepval on the 1st July 2024 at 1430hrs.**

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Following that a “Act of Remembrance” shall be held at the Celtic Cross in Guillemont at 1630hrs. All are welcome. If you have any questions please email Carol at: [sommeassociation@btconnect.com](mailto:sommeassociation@btconnect.com)



## **Benburb talk on Northern Ireland, the United States and the Second World War**

Benburb Servite Library and Museum, are holding a talk on Northern Ireland, the United States And The Second World War.

This talk on Thursday 6th of June at Benburb Priory at 8.00 pm is on the anniversary date of D.Day in which N.Ireland had a preparatory role.

The talk will be delivered by:

Dr Simon Topping who is a native of N. Ireland and currently resides in Plymouth. He is an associate Professor of United States history at the University of Plymouth. U.K.



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He has written a seminal book on this subject and several other books on American history for which he has won awards. He has written extensively on the experience of African American troops in N. Ireland during World War 2.

## **Lay Reader to be commissioned at Newcastle**

**On Sunday 9th June at 7pm we are delighted that Jill Aulds will be commissioned in St John's Church, as a Diocesan Lay Reader.**



“Everyone welcome as we pray and support Jill and her colleague Robert as they embark on this important ministry”.

## **Selected for Pioneer Ministry Training**

**Down & Dromore dioceses - We are delighted that Tim Burns (Leader, Suitcase Project) and Natalie Trainor (Pioneer Evangelist, Newry Centre of Mission) have been selected for the new 3–year Church of Ireland Pioneer Ministry Training Programme.**



The training is being delivered jointly by Church Army and the Church of Ireland Theological Institute and involves six residential weekends per year. The autumn term includes induction to the programme and weekends on The Wealth of the Cross, Mission and Evangelism, and Church History.

Please pray for Tim and Natalie as they begin this new training journey towards a Certificate of Higher Education in Theology, Ministry and Mission.

## **New President of the Methodist Church in Ireland**

**At its 2023 annual Conference, the Rev Dr John D Alderdice was designated as President of the Methodist Church in Ireland for 2024-25. He will be installed as President during the opening service of the 255th Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland taking place this year at Assembly Buildings in Belfast from Wednesday 5th – Saturday 8th June.**





Rev Dr John Alderdice with his wife, Ruth and children, Hannah and Daniel...

John Alderdice was born into a Christian household in Ballymena in 1974. Consequent to his Father, the Rev Duncan Alderdice, also a Methodist Minister, being stationed on various circuits, John was educated at Fivemiletown Primary School, Malone Primary School and Fullerton House Preparatory School before attending MethoCollege, Belfast and later studying Modern History at Queen's University Belfast.

John was accepted for ministerial training at Edgehill College in 1995, where he studied for three years before being stationed on his first circuit in Richhill in 1998 and later ordained at the Methodist Conference in Belfast in 2000.

Through the years ministry has taken John from Richhill to Movilla Abbey and Comber. He has also served in the

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Queen's University chaplaincy for five years before he was appointed as the Director of Ministry for the Methodist Church in Ireland between 2014-21. John currently serves as Circuit Superintendent of the recently amalgamated Belfast Central and South Circuit. John is also an Ecumenical Canon of Down Cathedral.

John's Presidential theme for his twelve months in office is 'For the transformation of the world'. From his experience and learning, John will be sharing more with the Methodist people, and with the Church as a whole, as to how the Holy Spirit transforms people and communities.

Speaking ahead of his installation, the Rev Dr Alderdice said:

"I see this as such a tremendous privilege and my hope and my prayer is that I'm able to serve in a way that builds on the last 25 or 30 years."

Reflecting on the Church today, the Rev Dr Alderdice said:

"As I chat with sisters and brothers in other older denominations and even in some of the newer churches as well, there is a recognition that being followers of Jesus is going to be an ongoing challenge for decades to come."

Elaine Barnett, Lay Leader Designate 2024-26

In his inaugural address on the evening of Wednesday 5th June, the Rev John Alderdice will reflect on Paul's example of leadership found in 2 Corinthians

He will say:



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“Let’s be real and understand that to most people the church is entirely irrelevant to their daily lives and circumstances. The cultural landscape is changing right in front of us, we need to be real. For many this change might be a threat, however, this context provides so many opportunities to share the transforming message of the good news of Jesus.”

He will go on to say:

“As church leaders, lay and ordained, from Methodism and beyond, oh, how we must pray for leadership across our churches that is gifted and equipped to help us understand where we are and how we are to fulfil God’s calling today.”

Married to Ruth they have two children, Hannah and Daniel.

Mrs Elaine M Barnett is designated as Lay Leader of the Conference for the Connexional years 2024-2026 and will also be installed on the evening of the 5th June.

## Cathedral Calls

### New portrait of King Charles at St Columb’s Cathedral

**A new portrait of King Charles III has been officially unveiled at St Columb’s Church of Ireland Cathedral in Londonderry**

Some unionists suggested gifting it to the cathedral after they thought a proposal to hang it in the Guildhall might not

get enough support from nationalist councillors, BBC reports.

The Lord Lieutenant for the County Borough of Londonderry, Ian Crowe - the King's official representative in the area - said the cathedral was a fitting home for the portrait and he hoped it will be embraced by everyone.

"It's a proud day for the city. In fact, to have a portrait unveiled of His Majesty King Charles III, as we know, is a once in a lifetime opportunity," he said.

He said the cathedral was one of the most visited tourist spots in the city and was open "to all faiths and religions and people of non-faith".

'A very fitting place'

"I think there has been a stigma around the monarch and the Royal Family and I think in recent times people have seen past that," he said.

He said he understood not everyone supported the monarchy.

"But I think respect was shown by our elected members in our city council to vote to accept this," he added.

The King's representative said he was not disappointed about the move to hang the portrait in the cathedral rather than the Guildhall.

"It's our town hall but I respect people's opinions on this and I respect that this is the place that was unanimously thought



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of by the elected members and in fairness a lot of our community thought that this was a very fitting place," Mr Crowe said.

The portrait is traditional, with the King dressed in an Admiral of the Fleet uniform with medals and honours on display.

Report courtesy BBC News NI

## **New music keynote of Belfast Cathedral celebrations**

**As part of the 120th Anniversary celebrations last weekend Belfast Cathedral commissioned a new mass setting by Lucy Walker.**

The Missa Sanctae Annae received its premiere at the afternoon service of thanksgiving. The Organist and Master of Music Jack Wilson commented prior to the service "We are delighted that Lucy will be here with us as we celebrate this milestone in the cathedral's history."

Lucy Walker is composer-in-residence with St Martin's Voices at St Martin-in-the-Fields

On Sunday a new setting of the Preces and Responses by Organist and Master of Music Jack Wilson (recently published by Encore) received their premiere performance, alongside a specially composed chant for the well known text of Psalm 122, 'I was glad'.

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Details of the music for the weekend of festivities can be found below:

Civic Service of Choral Matins - 11am

- Jack Wilson Preces and Responses
- Psalm 122
- Stanford Jubilate and Te Deum in B flat
- Wood Expectans Expectavi
- Mulet Carillon-Sortie

Choral Eucharist of Thanksgiving - 3.30pm

- Lucy Walker Missa Sanctae Annae (world premiere)
- Shephard And when the builders
- Guilmant Grand chœur en ré majeur

Two services took place on Sunday June 2.

The 11am service provided an opportunity for civic, church, political and community leaders to celebrate 120 years of ministry and Christian witness to the City of Belfast and across the province.





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The preacher was the Most Rev John McDowell, Church of Ireland Primate and Archbishop of Armagh. During the service, the Archbishop dedicated 500 new chairs.

In the afternoon a second service of celebration was held, to which clergy and representatives of every parish in the dioceses of Connor and Down and Dromore were invited.

Dean Forde, said: “This very special service was an opportunity for our current generation of clergy and people to celebrate 120 years of ministry and Christian witness at the heart of these three dioceses, and for the city and province which St Anne’s was built to serve.”

## **York Minster to host Thanksgiving Service for 30 years of women’s priesthood**

**Thirty years since the first ordination of women as priests in the Church of England will be celebrated by the Diocese of York at the service of Evensong in York Minster this evening at 5.30pm on Tuesday 4th June 2024. The service will be livestreamed.**

York Minster hosted two services in May 1994 at which a total of 39 women were ordained priest to serve in parishes and chaplaincies within the Diocese of York.

The Church of England's General Synod had agreed in February that year to approve the ordination of women as priests, following many years of vigorous debate and campaigning both for and against the proposal.



The 39 ordained in York Minster had served previously - sometimes for many years or decades - as lay workers, deaconesses (a recognised but non-ordained parish ministry), and since 1987 as deacons, but until 1994 women were not permitted to be ordained as priest and to administer the full range of the church's sacraments, including presiding at the service of Holy Communion.

Some of those ordained in 1994 continue in active ministry or in supporting roles in their retirement; a number have died in the thirty years since.

The preacher at the 4th June 2024 service will be the Revd Canon Sue Sheriff, who as one of those ordained in York Minster in 1994 is still in active ministry as Priest-in-Charge



of St Oswald's, Fulford, York; in the intervening years she has served in Southcoates and Marfleet, Hull, and in Tadcaster.

Sue Sheriff remembers: "Together with some incredible Godly women I was ordained alongside, I had been interviewed to see if both the Church and we ourselves felt that God has called us to the distinctively different role of priest.

"In the ordination service we had been presented by the archdeacon to the bishop, and by the bishop to the people as he asked, 'Is it your will that they should be ordained priest?'

"There had been a resounding 'It is' that felt like it could have almost lifted the roof off our beautiful cathedral."

The Revd Canon Angela Bailey was also ordained in York Minster in May 1994 and has served in many capacities including in parishes in the East Riding of Yorkshire, as a hospital chaplain and as a tutor with York School of Ministry.

Angela Bailey recalls, "We had a few years of 'permanent diaconate' as it was called then, before the ordination to priesthood.

"I was struck then and since by the way we needed to be light on our feet, adapting, developing theological thinking, learning new skills, to fulfil what the church was now calling us to.

"Of course, that's true of all Christians, witnessing 'afresh in each generation', and these first ordinations \[of women] came after a lot of liturgical revision so some folk were used to new perspectives. Not everyone likes change though!"

Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell, who has invited the whole Diocese of York to attend the celebratory service of Evensong in York Minster, said, "The Church of God released and received the most extraordinary blessing thirty years ago in ordaining women to the priesthood; I see so many people held and nurtured by the priestly ministry of women - I am one of them - and together they embody yet more facets of the person, the character and the work of Jesus Christ in the world.

"We owe a great debt of gratitude to the first women ordained as priests because so many of them kept faith with the calling they knew was theirs, and worked and prayed in their homes, parishes and workplaces sometimes for decades.

"Thanks be to God for the blessings the world and the church receive from the witness of our women priests, and may God richly bless each one of them in their ministry and their life."

## Perspective

**Thanksgiving for 30 years of women's priesthood in C of E - a reflection by the Revd Canon Angela Bailey**

**One feeling I have looking back on these years of women in priestly orders is deep respect for the women before us, and gratitude. Archbishop Runcie ordained as deacon in February 1987 women who were by then retired, together with us newbies.**

Some of these elder women had decades of faithful ministry behind them, models of service in places where they were not seen in the sanctuary nor heard in the liturgy.

We had a few years of 'permanent diaconate' as it was called then, before the ordination to priesthood. I was struck then and since by the way we needed to be light on our feet, adapting, developing theological thinking, learning new skills, to fulfil what the church was now calling us to. Of course, that's true of all Christians, witnessing 'afresh in each generation', and these first ordinations came after a lot of liturgical revision so some folk were used to new perspectives. Not everyone likes change though!

Beginning as a deaconess I never expected to be 'in charge', there were few such posts - and yet we were called to leadership and had to step up. I hope this helped me to nurture the gifts of those who were tempted to keep their lights under a bushel. One great joy of my ministry has been to see people grow in their following Jesus, and answering his call on their lives.

The Eucharist has always been central in my own faith and to preside, to serve in that way is a privilege. The prayer of Jesus that we may be one is focussed in the Eucharist and is key to our witness that God was in Christ reconciling the world to God-self. For me this is the heart of our faith and



our calling in the church, whatever our role in the celebration, to be together at the Eucharist. Speaking God's word of peace wherever we are serving is my prayer in pastoral work, which is my main role now.

So gratitude for the women before us, a sense of being light-footed on the Way, sharing the journey and seeing others grow into maturity in Christ, speaking God's word of peace and seeking unity in the Eucharist - these have been the themes of these past years. I've served with and among great folk - thank you.

## In the media

### **The Tablet - Archbishops describe sorrow over loss and devastation in Gaza**

**Ireland's formal recognition of Palestine as a sovereign state has been welcomed by Archbishop Hosam Naoum of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem who was visiting Dublin last week, Sarah Mac Donald writes.**

Speaking to The Tablet, Archbishop Naoum, whose diocese is spread throughout Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, including Gaza and the West Bank, described the move by Ireland as "a great step" and "timely".

He also welcomed the flying of the Palestinian flag at Leinster House, the Irish parliament.

"I am happy, but I would have been happier if this was by the whole international community with the consent of Israel

as part of a peace process because that would bring a better effect,” he said.

Asked about Taoiseach Simon Harris’ comment that Europe could be doing more to bring about a ceasefire, Dr Naoum said that not only did Europe need to act collectively but it would need the world to “come together for this important step”.

He said that any ceasefire would have to “implement justice for the whole region” and “provide a vision for the future” post conflict.

Dr Naoum is a guest of the Church of Ireland Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough which is linked to the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and has fundraised for the Anglican Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Northern Gaza.

Speaking to The Tablet, Archbishop Michael Jackson of Dublin and Glendalough said, “I think the recognition of statehood is something that is rightly a delight to the people for whom it is a primary recognition of identity.” But he cautioned, “We all need to move carefully in the early stages so that what is a positive for some does not become an insult to others.”

Archbishop Jackson said a ceasefire had to be a “springboard” to “a lasting solution which involves justice, integrity and reciprocal respect of people in a region which has always been complex and is made even more complex by the war”.

He described flags as “double-edged” particularly in Ireland and warned that flags can be “weaponised” and can “bring tension”.

“My concern is to be even-handed in relation to people who have suffered. We have never sought to diminish or minimise one side or the other – we see the whole thing as a place that needs to help itself to move forward with international love and concern.”

According to Archbishop Naoum the situation on the ground in Gaza is “far worse” than that seen in the media. The 50-year-old church leader said his main source for what is happening is the Al-Ahli hospital, the only functioning hospital in northern Gaza, which is run by the Anglican church.

“I think the picture is far worse than we hear on the media. We hear statistics of people who are injured or have died and the work we are doing on the ground whether in Gaza or Rafah but to see the suffering on the ground – it is something that grieves us all.”

The Church of Ireland Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough has fundraised for Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Northern Gaza and a recent appeal raised €216,000.

“Al Ahli Arab hospital continues to be the only operating hospital in the north of Gaza as we speak. The hospital is one of those beacons of light that continues to shine in darkness and what the hospital is doing and what it did and what it will continue to do is really absolutely phenomenal



because the church continues to serve in the direst places – places of want and need.”

Before the conflict erupted last October, Palestinian Christians made up one percent of the population of Gaza. But the last eight months has seen an exodus of hundreds from this fragile community.

“Up to Israel took control of the Rafah crossing we have lost 400 Christians out of 1000 – so only 600 are left. So it has dropped 40 per cent within a few months. I think if it wasn’t for the closing of the crossing, more would have left. My expectation is that none will be left after this war is over. For us this is really worrying because Gaza is one of the most ancient centres of Christian communities.”

## Poem For Today

### Business Girls by John Betjeman

From the geyser ventilators  
Autumn winds are blowing down  
On a thousand business women  
Having baths in Camden Town

Waste pipes chuckle into runnels,  
Steam's escaping here and there,  
Morning trains through Camden cutting  
Shake the Crescent and the Square.

Early nip of changeeful autumn,  
Dahlias glimpsed through garden doors,

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At the back precarious bathrooms  
Jutting out from upper floors;

And behind their frail partitions  
Business women lie and soak,  
Seeing through the draughty skylight  
Flying clouds and railway smoke.

Rest you there, poor unbelov'd ones,  
Lap your loneliness in heat.  
All too soon the tiny breakfast,  
Trolley-bus and windy street!

## 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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