

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Spitfire at Stormont VE-80

May June 8, 2025

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A Conversation with Ma at Larne First Friday Club

C of I Pancakes & Prayer funds raised already will feed 1,200 children

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Over 35 years of service to Stranmillis University College ✨

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Speaking to the soul -

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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Image of the day

Spitfire at Stormont VE-80

At the invitation of the Speaker the Ulster Aviation Society generously placed their Spitfire at Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

News



A Conversation with Ma at Larne First Friday Club

The First Friday Club in the Parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo had a very special guest recently – comedian Olivia Nash.

C of I Pancakes & Prayer funds raised already will feed 1,200 children

All supporters encouraged to send in donations! Bishops' Appeal and the Church of Ireland Youth Department are delighted to announce that our Pancakes & Prayer fundraising appeal through Lent has raised enough money to feed 1,200 schoolchildren in South Sudan.

Pancakes & Prayer has been supporting Fields of Life's Thrive Programme which serves children in Ibba and Maridi, where many families regularly go without clean water, food and the everyday comforts that we take for granted. The programme's aim is that every child helped by this ministry can say: "I am educated, I am fed, I am safe, and I am loved."

In particular, the Thrive Programme provides food for children and young people from gardens in school grounds. It costs about £8,000 per year (€10,000) to set up and keep a school garden going. Each one can feed up to 3,500 children for a year for less than €3 (£2.50) for each child. Leaders are now encouraged to send in all the donations received so we can make the campaign go even and ensure that more children have the food that they need. Donations from youth groups and schools can be submitted on the following page: <https://store.churchofireland.org/donations/the-bishops-appeal>

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If you are reading this for the first time and would like to give your support, this would of course also be very welcome! Check out the video clips on CIYD's Facebook and Instagram pages made by others who have been making pancakes and praying all through this season. See more at <https://www.facebook.com/coiyd/videos> and



Borderlands this month is looking at Covid: 5 years on

Corrymeela writes - Borderlands this month is looking at Covid: 5 years on.

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We are inviting people to suggest stories, poems and songs that emerged from that time. For some Covid was about grief and loss, fear and despair.

For others it was an unplugging and untethering from a system and a way of life that seemed out of control. “Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next”. So said Arundhati Roy in the early days of the

ENTRY : ADULTS £1 (INCLUDES FREE PRIZE DRAW) KIDS FREE ENTRY

MOSSLEY PARISH
CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
NEWTOWNABBEY

SPRING FAIR

SATURDAY 17TH MAY
10AM - 1PM

VARIOUS STALLS – HANDMADE GOODS
BAKED GOODS – PLANT STALL
TOMBOLA – HAMPERS
BRIC-A-BRAC –
RAFFLES – TEA ROOM –
BBQ– TEDDY BEAR’S PICNIC –
WIGGLE IT – MUSIC
KIDS ACTIVITIES & LOTS MORE.....

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, MANSE ROAD, NEWTOWNABBEY, BT36 6XR
IN AID OF PARISH FUNDS // REG. CHARITY NIC103262

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Pandemic. We want to listen to voices and perspectives that help us discern where we are at. Have we walked through a portal, or have we fallen back under the spell of consumerism? What have we truly learned from the Pandemic? Join us at the Pavilion Bar for a 7.30pm start on the 13th May.

Also for your diaries, Borderlands in June is going to be later than usual. We will be having our event on the 17th June at the Black Box in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter. Joining us as we look toward the Day of Reflection will be Jo Berry who lost her father in the Brighton bomb, and Pat Magee, an ex-combatant who planted the Brighton bomb. They will be sharing their perspectives as victim and ex-combatant and they will be offering their friendship as a story of hope for us all.

[Assisted dying: Bishop calls gov report a 'chilling read' as hundreds expected to apply in first available year](#)

The Bishop of London has called the government's impact assessment of the Assisted Dying Bill a "chilling read", warning it highlights the risks faced by vulnerable groups.

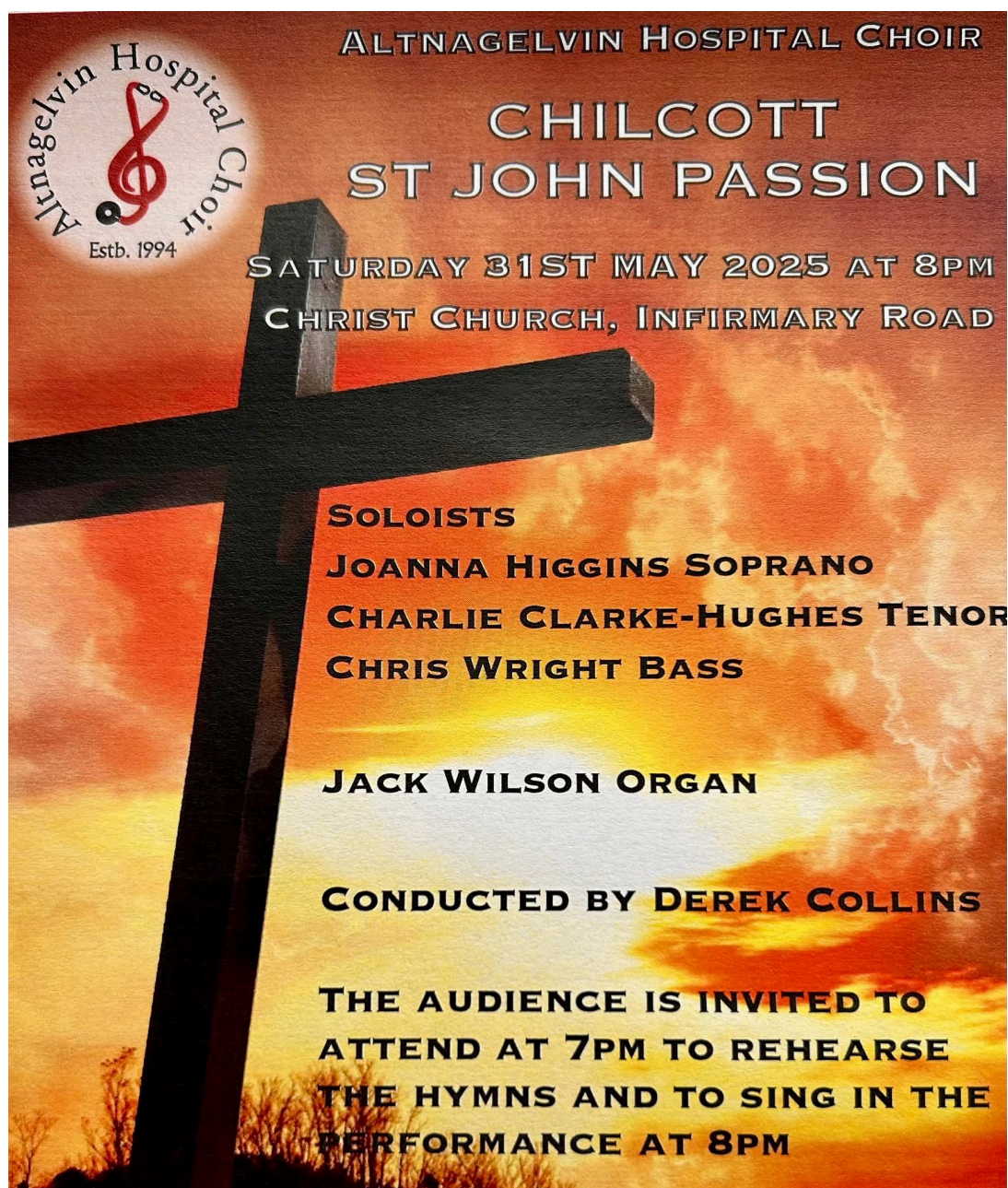
The Bishop of London has called the government's impact assessment of the Assisted Dying Bill a "chilling read", warning it highlights the risks faced by vulnerable groups.

The report, released late on Friday last as local election results came in, estimates nearly 800 assisted deaths could

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occur in the first year if the law is passed in England and Wales. It also outlines annual running costs of up to £13.6 million for a commissioner and expert panels, and projects major savings in care and benefits spending.

Rt Rev Sarah Mullally said: “The impact assessment... makes for chilling reading as it highlights particular groups who would be put at risk... including those who are subject to health inequalities, and those vulnerable to domestic abuse.



Altnagelvin Hospital Choir
Estb. 1994

ALTNAGELVIN HOSPITAL CHOIR

**CHILCOTT
ST JOHN PASSION**

SATURDAY 31ST MAY 2025 AT 8PM
CHRIST CHURCH, INFIRMARY ROAD

SOLOISTS
JOANNA HIGGINS SOPRANO
CHARLIE CLARKE-HUGHES TENOR
CHRIS WRIGHT BASS

JACK WILSON ORGAN

CONDUCTED BY DEREK COLLINS

**THE AUDIENCE IS INVITED TO
ATTEND AT 7PM TO REHEARSE
THE HYMNS AND TO SING IN THE
PERFORMANCE AT 8PM**

“It also sets out the financial savings of introducing an assisted dying service, through reduction in care costs, palliative and end of life care costs and state-provided benefits.”

She added: “It is crude to see these cost savings set out in this way... it is easy to see how numbers of this nature could contribute to someone feeling that they should pursue an assisted death rather than receive care.”

The 149-page document was published two weeks before MPs are due to debate the Bill, which would allow terminally ill adults with fewer than six months to live to request an assisted death, subject to medical and panel approval.

Mullally concluded: “Each human life is immeasurably more valuable than the money that may be saved... We must oppose any change in the law that puts the vulnerable at risk rather than working to improve access to desperately needed palliative care.”

Education

Success for Inst Senior Robotics team

Congratulations to the Inst Senior Robotics team who competed recently in the Northern Ireland final of the First Tech Challenge at W5.

Against strong opposition, the boys competed brilliantly winning both the overall competition and the Inspire Award.



They now progress to the UK Finals in London in June. Well done RBAI!

Wallace student speaks at Council of Europe's Conference on the Rights of the Child

Year 11 pupil Elodie has continued her impressive work in promoting and advocating for children's rights beyond Wallace High School, Lisburn.

Elodie had the honour of speaking at the Council of Europe's Mid-Term Review Conference on the Rights of the Child, held in Strasbourg from 2–4 April 2025.



Over the past six months, she has worked alongside other young delegates from member states to develop a child-friendly version of



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the Council of Europe's Guide to Children's Participation in Decisions About Their Health.

During the conference, Elodie delivered a presentation on this work and was subsequently invited to give an additional speech on the Council of Europe's Conference Recommendations concerning the Protection of Children through their Comprehensive Sexuality Education Review.

WHS is exceptionally proud of Elodie's commitment to helping others and her amazing determination.



Over 35 years of service to Stranmillis University College

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On Wednesday, the Craigantlet Room was packed with colleagues to wish Professor Ken Gibson a very happy retirement on his last day as Director of Student and Learning Services.



With over 35 years of service to the College under his belt (not including his years as a student!), Prof. Gibson received a standing ovation from his fellow directors and all the professional support teams who have worked closely with him over the years.

At the event, the Stranmillis Students' Union also announced the creation of 'The Gibson Cup', which will be awarded to the graduating student deemed to have contributed the most to the Stranmillis community.

On behalf of all the staff, students and alumni who have had the pleasure of working with Prof. Gibson over the past 35 years, we wish you a very happy retirement!

Cathedral Calls

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Belfast Cathedral VE anniversary service repeat on BBC this Sunday 11th May

A special Service of Thanksgiving took place on Sunday 4th May at Belfast Cathedral to mark the VE (Victory in Europe) Day 80th anniversary.



Photo - Topper in Comber

Many organisations that were involved both on the Home Front and at the Front in the war in Europe were represented and participated in the service.

The service featuring a sermon from **President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev Dr John Alderdice** will be broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster and BBC Radio Foyle at 9.03am this Sunday 11th May and will be available for listening back afterwards at www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002ccbt

Clergy and ministry



ANGLICAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

Today we pray for
Archbishop John McDowell
and all within the churches
in the Church of Ireland





Church of Ireland remembered in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer


This week in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for the Church of Ireland, a community of around 343,000 members across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.


We pray for The Most Revd John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland and Metropolitan, and for the bishops, clergy, and people of the Church of Ireland as they bear faithful witness to Christ.


Let us pray for:

 Those discerning a call to ordained and lay ministry, and for those currently training or preparing for ordination, commissioning, and ministry across the Church.

 We pray for the growth and flourishing of Pioneer Ministry—an initiative that supports the establishing of new Christian communities and reaching people beyond the traditional church, through creative expressions of faith.

 Cross-community initiatives that build understanding, foster healing and forgiveness, and promote peace and reconciliation.

 Those providing shelter and care for the homeless and for refugees who have fled conflict, violence, and persecution.

 The stewardship of creation, giving thanks for God's world and praying for wise and faithful care of its resources.

Amen.

Clogher Diocese ordinand is appointed Curate Assistant in Limerick

A different take on yesterday's report in CNI. From a sending diocese - A Clogher Diocese ordinand will be taking up his first post as Curate Assistant in June.

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Scott Elliott, who is well known in St. Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen where he served as Parish Reader and in other churches throughout Clogher Diocese, has been appointed Curate-Assistant of Limerick City Parish.

The announcement was made by the Dean of Limerick, the Very Revd Niall Sloane.

Scott will be made deacon in Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick on Sunday 8th June, the feast of Pentecost at 7.30pm. All are most welcome to attend.

Scott grew up on a farm outside Enniskillen and studied theology at Queen's University Belfast after which he worked for a number of years with Fermanagh & Omagh District Council. He was commissioned as Parish Reader in 2021.

He is currently completing his studies in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, having served parish placements in Enniskillen, Rathfarnham and Salisbury Cathedral.

Events

Lambeth Call webinar on Mission and Evangelism

We invite you to join us on May 14 and 15 for the next Lambeth Call webinar on Mission and Evangelism.



Mission and Evangelism
Webinar Contributors

This session will explore how different parts of the Anglican Communion are living out the Five Marks of Mission, sharing examples of contextual mission, evangelism, and church planting from around the world.

We will also be joined by guest speakers, such as The Most Revd Moon Hing, The Right Revd Dr Vicentia Kgabe, The Right Revd Paul Swarup, Rev Fraser Mzungu, The Right Revd Dr Francisco Silva and more.

Register your place: <https://bit.ly/3Rk2M44>

In the media

Who will be the next leader of the Church of England?

The position of Archbishop of Canterbury has been vacant since January 2025. Who will be the person to guide the Church of England through what has been a volatile era of polarisation, safeguarding scandals, yet spiritual awakening amongst the youth and renewal in the UK. Here are seven prospective candidates who were identified by Premier News which is one of the largest church news agencies in the UK.

The position of Archbishop of Canterbury has remained vacant since Justin Welby formally resigned on January 7 2025, following the completion of his final official duties on January 6. Although still in its early stages, the process for finding his successor has already spanned several months — and is expected to take many more before a final decision is reached.

The Crown Nominations Commission, which consists of 17 members and must agree with a two-thirds majority, will short list and interview candidates before eventually making a recommendation to the prime minister. The PM then forwards the name to King Charles III, the supreme governor of the Church of England, who formally makes the appointment.

Predicting the next archbishop is notoriously difficult – Welby himself was a famously left-field choice. However, a number of names have been placed in the frame, including several female bishops. If appointed, they would make history by becoming the first ever woman to become Archbishop of Canterbury.

1. Rt Rev Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester

Born in Indonesia and having previously worked in West Africa, Snow has a background in the global Church. He has worked to combat homelessness and is overseeing the CofE's target to raise up 30,000 new children's and youth leaders by 2030. He is the lead bishop for Living in Love and Faith (LLF), the CofE's attempt to "journey together" on debates over sexuality. Given Snow abstained from a vote on blessings for gay couples, some hope he will be able to hold the CofE together in unity.

2. Rt Rev Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop of Chelmsford

Francis-Dehqani was ordained in 2017, just three years after the first woman bishop was appointed. She was born in Iran and has spoken about her brother's murder in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution, which prompted her family to flee to Britain. When profiled recently in Premier Christianity, Bishop Guli lamented the polarised nature of our national debates and advocated an approach which looks at "the grey space within the binaries". Guli was one of 44 bishops to sign an open letter in support of priests being allowed to enter into same-sex marriages in 2023.

3. Rt Rev Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich

Currently lead bishop on the environment, Usher was widely believed to be a frontrunner for the next head of the Church of England. However, he recently ruled himself out of contention by committing to serve on the commission that will nominate the archbishop. Usher studied ecological science at the University of Edinburgh and theology at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He is a keen beekeeper, and patron or president of 25 charities. Usher is in favour of blessing same-sex couples in church.

4. Rt Rev Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester

Treweek grew up in Hertfordshire where, as a child, she asked to join the all-male choir at her local church — an early act that set a precedent for the path she would later walk. In 2015, she became the first female diocesan bishop in the Church of England and the first female bishop admitted to the House of Lords. Before ordination, Treweek worked as a speech and language therapist and previously spoke to Premier Christianity of her wrestle with God's call to ministry at a time when women were still barred from becoming CofE priests. In 2023, Treweek stated that she supported the celebration and blessing of "faithful monogamous same-sex relationships", but did not support changing the Church of England's doctrine of marriage as the life-long union of one man and one woman.

5. Most Rt Rev Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

Currently the most senior leader of the Church of England, Cottrell, 66, has served as Archbishop of York since 2020. While he would be a natural frontrunner, his age — close to the standard retirement age for clergy — may rule him out, as bishops are generally required to retire by 70 unless

granted special permission to continue until 75. He has also come under criticism for his role in recent safeguarding scandals, with some clergy calling for his resignation.

6. Rt Rev Dame Sarah Mullally, Bishop of London

Formerly the NHS's Chief Nursing Officer, Mullally came to ordained ministry later in life, bringing high-level leadership experience from outside the Church. Now the third most senior bishop in the Church of England, she was once a candidate for Archbishop of York. Mullally has a strong public profile, presiding over national events such as Remembrance Sunday, and leads a thriving diocese. She described the prayers of blessing for same-sex couples as a "moment of hope for the Church".

7. Rt Rev Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Newcastle

Bishop of Newcastle since April 2023, Hartley has previously served as Bishop of Waikato, a diocese of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. She is known for her vocal criticism of other senior clergy regarding safeguarding issues and was the only bishop to publicly call for Archbishop Welby's resignation, describing his position as "untenable" in light of safeguarding failures. While her boldness may resonate with those demanding reform, it could also alienate senior figures whose support she would need to secure the top job. Hartley has previously said that she supports "full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in the life of the Church", including the introduction of same-sex marriage.

Poem for today

One

by **Deborah Walker Shawnee Kellie**

One word can spark a moment,
One flower can wake the dream;
One tree can start a forest,
One bird can herald Spring.

One smile can bring a friendship,
One handclasp can lift a soul;
One star can guide a ship at sea,
One cheer can obtain a goal.

One vote can change a Nation,
One sunbeam can lift a room;
One candle wipes out darkness,
One laugh will conquer gloom.

One look can change two lives;
One kiss can make love bloom.
One step must start each journey,
One word must start each prayer;

One hope can raise our spirits,
One touch can show you care.
One voice can speak with wisdom,
One heart can know what's true;
One life can make a difference,
One life is me and you....

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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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

Link in Monday through Saturday from early morning

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