

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – One man's legacy

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One man's legacy

With the crowds all gone and calm restored at the Queen's University Belfast one man's legacy casts a long bright shadow for Ireland.

Thanks to Senator George Mitchell. A key architect of the Good Friday Agreement and friend of all. Bringing light to darkness. See pages 16 - 20. BBC Ni, Mark Simpson.

People and places

Annual Presbyterian Women's conference next month

One of the highlights of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) year will take place next month when Presbyterian Women (PW), the organisation that supports the development of ministry among women in the all-Ireland denomination, holds its Annual Conference on Thursday, 4 May.

Upwards of 1000 women are set to gather in Assembly Buildings in Belfast to welcome the group's new president, Ann Wilson from Saintfield, to worship, hear from God's Word, and find out how the organisation's work has continued to make a difference to the lives of so many across Ireland and overseas this past year.



Pauline Kennedy, PCI's Women's Ministry and PW Development Officer, is looking forward to it. "I am really excited, as this year's conference is a brilliant opportunity for women from our congregations to join with women from across Ireland as we come together to worship and celebrate all that God is doing in our lives and through His church," Pauline said.

"The non-ticket event is free and open to women of all ages across our congregations, and as with many organisations, there is a certain rhythm to church life and our Annual Conference is one of those points in PCI's calendar that so many women look forward to."

As Pauline Kennedy explained Presbyterian Women is an organisation within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland that



enables, encourages and equips women to become disciples of Christ. It also highlights the need for love and unity, obedience to God, having a servant heart and a commitment to local and global mission. “We are very blessed as an organisation of some 450 groups across the island, as we are able to do more together than we could do alone. Together we are a real partnership that is able to support our Mission Fund to the tune of around £300,000 each year, and we are so grateful for the generosity of our groups up and down the land,” she said.

Alongside supporting the development of ministry to women in the Church each year, Presbyterian Women, support various special projects at home and overseas through the Mission Fund. In recent years, for example, the organisation has partnered with the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor, Indonesia, helping to restore the Suara Kasih radio



station after 2021's devastating Cyclone Seroja. It has also supported the International Justice Ministry IJM and its work with child victims of cybersex trafficking.

Locally, Presbyterian Women have helped CARE NI, specifically for retreats for couples who have suffered pregnancy loss and provided a more modern, well-equipped kitchen, at PCI's International Meeting Point (IMP) in North Belfast. The IMP reaches out to asylum seekers and refugees who have come to make their new home in the city.

"Every year our partnership also supports the work of PCI's deaconesses here at home, the training of new student deaconesses, and the work of South Belfast Friendship House, alongside our Global Mission Workers. At this year's Annual Conference we will be unveiling our Special Home

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and Overseas Projects for 2023/2024 and hearing from guest speaker, Rev Ali Calvin, the current rector Christ Church in Kilkeel,” explained Pauline.



The theme for the year is always launched at the Annual Conference, and this year it is ‘Being Transformed’. “Coming from Romans 12:2, it is really the essence of our journey with Christ. In his Letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul reminds us that we should not conform to the pattern of the world but, instead, we should be transformed by the renewing of our minds. When we do this, we are promised that we will be able “to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2). I am very much looking forward to Ali helping us understand more about being transformed when she speaks to us at the first session at 2pm and again at our evening celebration at 7.30pm,” Pauline said.

With the exception of PCI’s General Assembly, which will meet towards the end of June, the Annual Conference of Presbyterian Women is the largest annual meeting held by the Church. The non-ticket event is open to women of all ages and looking forward to the Conference, Rev Ali Calvin said, “My deepest prayer is that we will know God’s presence with us. When we unpack His Word with hearts open to His Spirit there is no limit to what He can do.”

For more details www.presbyterianireland.org/pw.



 **WEST WINDS**
COMMUNITY CHURCH

COFFEE MORNING

- to launch our Baby Bank •

Saturday 29th April
West Winds Community Centre
10am - 12 noon

Help launch a Baby Bank ministry in West Winds

Next Saturday, the church family from West Winds Community Church, Newtownards, invites you to a Coffee Morning which will launch a new Baby Bank ministry supporting local young families by providing clothing for babies and infants.

Initially they are only in a position to offer clothing.

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There will be lots of new (NEXT clothing available) and nearly new clothing on offer for parents, grandparents and carers to come along and put to good use.

Donations may be made in support of our church family ministries.

Please spread the word and help West Winds Community Church support others:

Saturday 29th April, WW Community Centre 10am-12noon

Eglinton's war time legacy remembered

The WW2 Plane in Enagh Lough

| The Crash |
On the 29th August 1944, a Barracuda aircraft taking off from Moydown crashed into boggy ground near Enagh Lough. Sadly the three crew were killed. They remained in their aircraft until 1971 when their bodies and large parts of the wreckage were recovered.

| The Fleet Air Arm Museum need your help! |
The recovered parts of the Barracuda are being rebuilt by the staff at the FAA Museum, Yeovil, England. On the 22nd April, Museum staff will be giving an illustrated talk on their exciting plans to complete the restoration of this rare aircraft. They also want to hear from you!

| Photographs and Recollections |
Do you have any memories, family recollections or photos of the 1944 crash or the recovery of the aircraft in 1971? The FAA Museum staff are very keen to hear from you and see your photos which will ensure that the final display captures all our Enagh memories. So please come along to the talk. Admission is free.

**Crashed 1944
Recovered 1971**

Barracuda DP872

**Enagh Lough
Plane FAA
Museum Talk**

**Saturday 22nd
April 2023**

1-4pm

**St Canice's
Parish Church,
Eglinton**

BT47 3YP

**FLEET AIR ARM
MUSEUM**

Foyle College Aviation Team

An interesting talk was given in Eglinton about at the weekend recalling how a Barracuda plane crashed in 1944 at the moss near Enagh Lough with 3 airmen aboard.

They all were killed. The talk recalled how the bodies and the plane were recovered in

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1971 and told about the efforts to rebuild it as a sole surviving Barracuda in the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton.

A memorial service was held in the morning prior to the talk at the graves located in St Canices Graveyard.



MCI President recalls his adventures on the Camino

Omagh Methodist Church was the beautiful setting for a great evening with our MCI President, Rev David Nixon, who captured the imagination of his listeners with the details of his adventures on the Camino Walk...

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...How he felt worry, burdened, challenged and changed as he made the long walk. How he was excited by his sons joining him and for their guidance on helping him to slow his pace, both walking and his general life style.



Thank were expressed to Rev David for taking time out of his busy timetable to be present. Thank also were conveyed to Vice President, Maeve Wilson for organising this great time

and to Rev Eleanor Hayden for her welcome.

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“Like all Methodist events, supper was exceptional.....thank you so much to all who planned, prepared and presented such beautiful goodies. It was a wonderful evening. To God be the Glory.”



Glendermott and Newbuildings parishioners generosity towards fellow Christians in Africa

The parishioners of Glendermott and Newbuildings have been congratulated by Bishop Andrew Forster for their generosity towards fellow Christians in Africa.

The Bishop of Derry & Raphoe’s comments came in his sermon in Newbuildings Church, on Thursday evening, where he commissioned a team who will be heading to



Burundi, early next month, to further develop the parishes' strong links with the Matana Diocese, in the Great Lakes region of East Africa.

Glendermott Curate Rev Jonny Lowden and his wife Emily will be leaving on May 4th, and will be accompanied by Rev Roger Thompson of CMS Ireland. The trio will spend a fortnight in the diocese. They will meet the local Bishop, Rt Rev Seth Ndayirukiye, and hope to visit one of the two Burundian churches built with the support of the Glendermott and Newbuildings congregations.

The Church in Matana – along with CMSI's other Global Partner in Burundi , Gitega Diocese – plays a key role in helping to provide hope, healing and rebuilding following years of conflict. Matana is the home of the Provincial Theological Institute, where students are trained for ordination, and a Bible School for training church workers (who are called Catechists).

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Thursday evening's Service of Commissioning was led by the Rector of Glendermott and Newbuildings, Rev Canon Robert Boyd.

In his sermon, Bishop Andrew said the team travelling to Burundi were going to meet great faith and tell stories of great faith. "They're going to see what it is that the Spirit is doing in Matana Diocese and [going to] help you as a parish get alongside it. And isn't it just brilliant that already there are believers in Matana Diocese worshipping in churches because of your generosity? Isn't that wonderful, when you think of that? So, I know that this is going to be a real blessing."

The reading during the Service came from Luke chapter 3, which recounts the ministry of John the Baptist, and it prompted Bishop Andrew to issue an appeal to the

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congregation in Newbuildings. “Tonight,” the Bishop said, “we delight in sending these people out to Burundi to do great things and hear of great things but I think the challenge is actually for all of us that, in the world that we live in, the Word of the Lord comes to us, and the Word of the Lord comes to the world around us through us. We’re all called to be missionaries.”

Events yesterday

The 175th anniversary of St. Mary’s Parochial School, Clonmel, was celebrated in the Model School Building from 2–5 pm. In St Fiac’s church, Clonegal, Co Carlow, at 4pm, there was a Songs of Praise Service at which the preacher was the Dean of Waterford, the Very Revd Bruce Hayes. At Evensong in St Patrick’s cathedral, Armagh, the Very Revd Peter Thompson will be installed as Archdeacon of Armagh and the Revd Matthew Hagan as Prebendary of Mullabrack.



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

A service to celebrate
the Centenary Year
of Seagoe Mothers' Union
Sunday 30th April at 10.30am

Everyone welcome **SEAGOE**
PARISH

14TH ANNUAL ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

DUNLUCE PARISH CHURCH

Dunluce Parish Centre, Bushmills

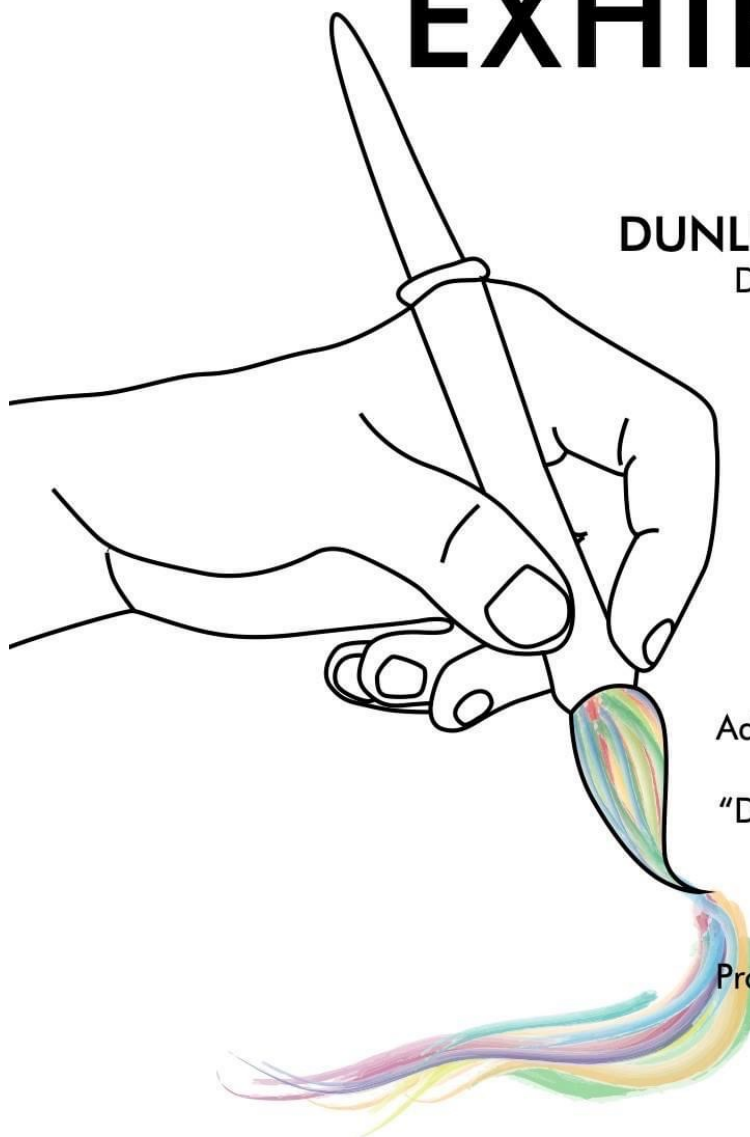
Fri 28 April - Mon 1 May 2023

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Friday | 7pm-9pm |
| Saturday | 10am-4pm |
| Sunday | 2pm - 4pm |
| Monday | 10am-2pm |

Admission: £2 (ages 16 and over)

"Drawing Room" café serving tea,
coffee, homemade scones
and shortbread

Proceeds to The Church of Ireland
Bishops' Appeal and Friends of
Pavestone Centre (Coleraine)



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In the media

Good Friday Agreement: How George Mitchell beat the odds in Belfast again

By Mark Simpson, BBC News NI correspondent

It is not easy to annoy Senator George Mitchell but he was irked by a question about the political stalemate in Northern Ireland 25 years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement.

During an interview in Belfast this week, he stared at me and shook his head as I suggested more political progress could and should have been made since 1998.

He took a breath, reached forward and then hit me... with numbers.

"During the Troubles 3,500 were killed in sectarian violence and 50,000 were injured," he said.

"In the 25 years since there have been, according to the Northern Ireland police service statistics' agency, about 164 security-related deaths.

"Life has improved dramatically."

He was making it clear the Good Friday Agreement was not all about good government.

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It is just as well. The stop-start Stormont assembly is hardly a model for good governance.

However, for Senator Mitchell that was never the absolute priority.

When he started chairing multi-party talks on a sunny day at the beginning of June 1996, the main issue was life-and-death rather than bread-and-butter politics.

His aim was to find something, indeed anything, that the main parties in Belfast could agree on.

'What human enterprise is perfect?'

A deal was eventually reached 22 months later on a snowy Friday in April 1998.

Looking back on the 30-page document, he said: "Could it have been better? Of course.

"What human activity or enterprise is perfect? None. And none will ever be."

Senator Mitchell has been lauded locally, nationally and internationally for his role in the negotiations.

He was the glue that kept the politicians together amid arguments, walkouts and controversies.

It is no exaggeration to say there was a row every week. As one of the few journalists who covered every day of the talks I went through a year's supply of notebooks in a month.

There was plenty of news but nothing was really happening. No movement. No progress. Until the final few weeks.

Much has been made about the 11th-hour involvement of three leaders - the then Prime Minister Tony Blair, Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Bertie Ahern and US President Bill Clinton.

Let me throw in three other names, two of which will be unfamiliar to most readers - Kelly Currie, David Pozorski and Martha Pope.

They were Senator Mitchell's team behind the scenes. All Americans, they all gave up two years of their lives to live in Belfast and work with the talks' chair.

They stayed at the Europa Hotel in the city at a time when it was still subject to bomb scares.

They eventually moved out into rented accommodation, not for security reasons but to try to lead a more normal life.

'Listening is hard when it goes on for years'

Martha Pope, a former sergeant-at-arms at the US Senate, was the main adviser.

During the final session of the talks when the deal was done and TV cameras were allowed into the conference room, she could be seen at the right-hand shoulder of Senator Mitchell.

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Where is she now? Back in America, enjoying life as a pastel artist.

She now inhabits a much more colourful world than the drab surroundings of Castle Buildings at Stormont where the negotiations took place.

In his keynote speech at the Agreement 25 conference at Queen's University Belfast this week, Senator Mitchell paid tribute to all of his colleagues in the international team which oversaw the talks.

He said: "I shared the role with two extraordinary men - the late Harri Holkeri, the former prime minister of Finland, and General John de Chastelain, the former head of the Canadian Defence Forces.

"Each of us was well served by small but very able staffs. For me they included Martha Pope, David Pozorski, and Kelly Currie."

Together they managed to overcome the language barriers at meetings with politicians from Northern Ireland.

Senator Mitchell reflected: "I listened to the same people saying the same things, over and over and over again.

"Many of them talked very fast, some in accents I wasn't familiar with.

"To improve my understanding I held many, many informal meetings, in my office and theirs, where I said little and listened as much as possible.

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"Listening, really listening to someone else is hard, especially when it goes on for years.

"But it's also a sign of respect. And I respected them for what they were trying to do."

The respect is mutual. The politicians who negotiated the agreement hold Senator Mitchell in the highest esteem.

[A bust by the artist Colin Davidson outside Queen's University shows the regard in which the 89-year-old politician-turned-diplomat is held generally.](#)

"When you're looking at a statue of yourself you know the end is near," said Senator Mitchell with a smile as the tribute was unveiled.

For the past three years he has been suffering from acute leukaemia and has been in and out of hospital.

Until the very last moment it was doubtful whether he would make it to Northern Ireland for events marking the 25th anniversary of the agreement.

When it looked like he might not be able to travel to Belfast there was a TV studio near his home in Miami put on stand-by for him to be able to contribute remotely.

Against the odds, Senator Mitchell made it.

Just like in 1998.

Acknowledgments to BBC NI. Photographs here -

[\[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-65337437\]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-65337437)

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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