

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Irish Youth Choir at Kilkenny Deanery



Irish Youth Choir at Kilkenny Deanery

It was glorious this week when the Irish Youth Choir, under the direction of Patrick Barrett, performed on the Deanery lawn as part of the Kilkenny Arts Festival secret garden series.

The choir were in fine voice and the appreciative audience loved it. Well done Dean Stephen Farrell and the cathedral team complete with Bishop Adrian.

Father John Murray's family appreciate kindness shown

The family of Father John Murray who was recently seriously assaulted in his Downpatrick parish church have stated -

We would like to express our appreciation for the many kind messages received by either the parish or ourselves since the sad events of Sunday morning. We are truly humbled by the love and support shown for our brother.

John remains in a stable condition following his serious injuries. We would like to thank those who came to his assistance at the scene, and we would also like to thank the countless medical personnel who have provided (and continue to provide) such wonderful care.

For the time being, visits are confined to immediate family only. We are grateful for your understanding in this regard.

We wish to commiserate with the Brannigan family on their sad loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with them. We will continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Stephen.

We would also like to thank the PSNI for their work and assistance.

Finally, many thanks also to the parish staff for their help and support

Concerns raised over discipline, governance in Presbyterian Church

An independent Presbyterian Facebook site comments - You may have seen the articles published by RTE News and Belfast Telegraph - they report on a second email having been sent by 'Troubled Presbyterians' to all PCI ministers.

The email notes that John Alderdice's complaint lodged with the Charity Commission NI three years ago has not been dealt with. The cases outlined in the dossier relate to people who've reported that they've been poorly served through



Learn to Paddle: Multicraft Sessions



Wednesdays, 7pm
Enniskillen Open to all - 13yrs+



PCI's governance structures. CCNI is the regulatory body for charities.

PCI and all its Presbyteries and congregations became charities in 2016 - every elder is a charity trustee and must undertake to uphold charity law to manage the charity- ie the congregation transparently, with integrity and in an accountable way fulfill the charitable purposes identified. They also commit to doing no harm.

To our knowledge, many elders have not had ongoing training as charity trustees and are not always clear on what their responsibilities are - apart from financial responsibilities.

If you're an elder or minister reading this, when did you last update your knowledge of your responsibilities as a charity trustee?

<https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2025/0812/1527991-presbyterian-church-concerns/>

Father Brown is officially on its way back

Great news for fans of cozy crime dramas! Father Brown is officially on its way back for its 13th series on BBC One and iPlayer, and filming has already wrapped.

Mark Williams is leading the cast once again as the sharp and charming clergyman, with fan favourites Tom Chambers, Claudie Blakley, Ruby-May Martinwood, and John Burton all returning. In a special treat for fans, Sorcha



FATHER BROWN RETURNS FOR THIRTEENTH SERIES

Cusack is also making a special guest appearance as Mrs. McCarthy in the opening episode, marking her first appearance since season nine.

The new series will bring seaside adventures, rock'n'roll surprises, and a major shake-up as Canon Fox becomes Bishop-Elect, putting Father Brown's future in Kembleford on the line. While an official release date hasn't been set, the series is expected to air in early 2026.

Education

Ballymena Grammar School pays tribute to teacher with 46 years service.

A former school principal who has died leaves a legacy “etched in the hearts and minds” of many, her former school has said.

Dr Elma Lutton, who served at Cambridge House Grammar School for almost 50 years until her retirement in 2020, passed away on Tuesday.

She had been the longest serving principal of the Ballymena school — her overall involvement with the school spanned 46 years.

Mrs Lutton began teaching in Cambridge House in 1974. Initially, she taught English, both Language and Literature, Latin and Drama at Cambridge House Grammar School for Girls, becoming Head of Drama in September that year.

In 2001, she was appointed vice-principal of the newly formed Cambridge House Grammar School, the amalgamation of the girls' and boys' schools.

Mrs Lutton was then appointed as the principal in 2012 and led the school to be one of the top-performing grammars in Northern Ireland.

She lived in Kells with her husband Jim. The couple had two daughters, Christina and Rebecca.

Speaking to the Belfast Telegraph in 2014, she said: “I've always been a teacher. My best job, though, is being principal.”

In a statement, the school said: “It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Dr Elma Lutton, the longest-serving former principal of Cambridge House Grammar School, who left an indelible mark on our community.

“Elma dedicated over four decades to our school and her legacy is etched in the hearts and minds of every pupil, teacher and parent or guardian who had the privilege of knowing her.

“Under her stewardship, the school flourished academically and became a nurturing, inclusive and inspiring environment, demonstrating her passion, purpose and unwavering belief in the potential of every child and member of staff. She championed the holistic development of pupils and was never too busy to offer a kind word, a wise piece of advice or a helping hand,” the school continued.

“Her leadership weathered challenges, embraced change and always stayed rooted in the core beliefs that define our school. She believed in tradition, but also in progress and integrity. Whilst holding high standards, she led with compassion and never lost sight of what mattered most — the children.

“As we, her school family, reflect on the years of dedicated service, we do so with immense pride and affection. Her influence will be felt for generations, not just in the

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achievements of our school, but in the countless lives she touched and inspired.

“Elma, thank you for your vision, your courage, your wisdom and above all, your unwavering devotion; we will always be better for having walked the journey with you.”

A death notice said Mrs Lutton passed away peacefully at hospital.

A service of celebration for her life will be held next Monday, August 18, at 11am in Gracehill Moravian Church, followed by a private cremation.

Courtesy of Mark Bain and the Belfast Telegraph

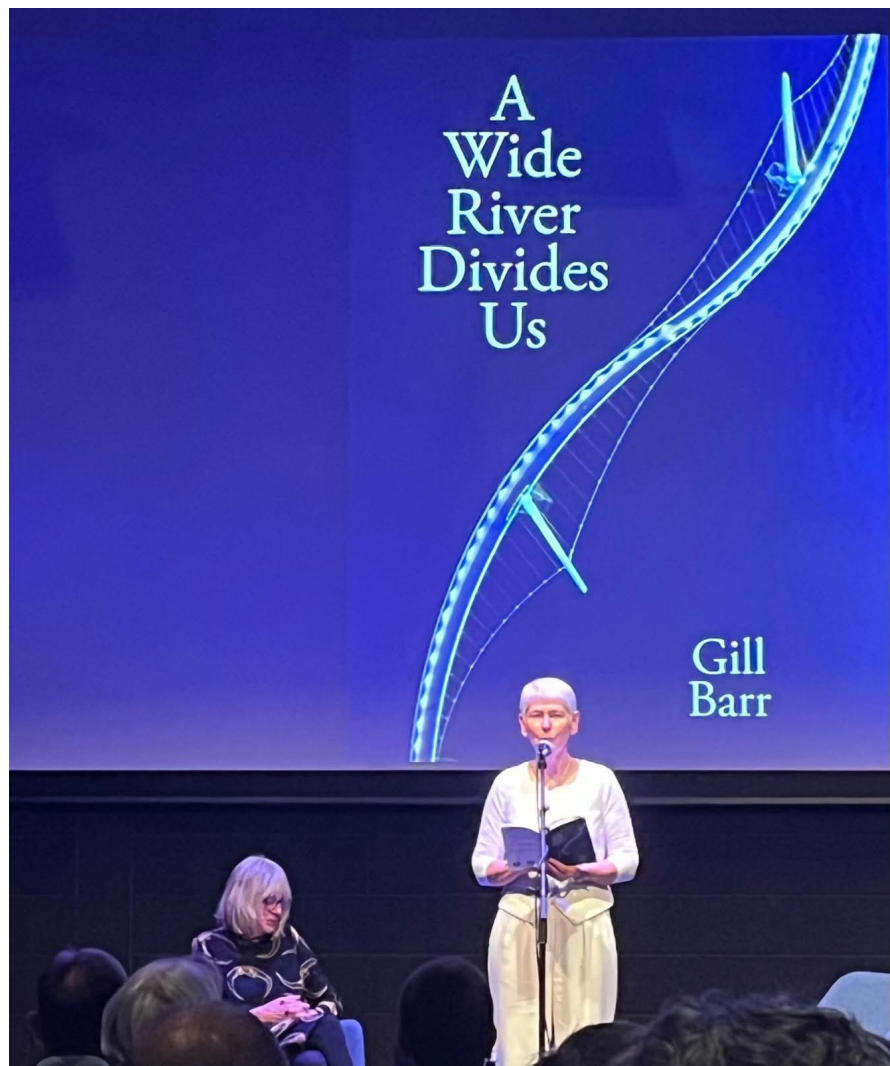


Inst rugby with Ireland in South Africa

Congratulations to Charlie O'Connor and Adam Boyd from RBAI who represented Ireland U18 Schools' vs. South Africa at Boland Landbao. Well done, boys!

Foyle College poetry

**Former pupil
Gill Barr at the
launch of her
new poetry
collection “A
Wide River
Divides Us”.**



Royal Military Academy Sandhurst graduation

Princess Alexandra of Kent, the late Queen Elizabeth II's cousin made a rare and touching public appearance when she attended her grandson Alexander Charles Ogilvy's graduation from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst during the Sovereign's Parade this past week.

For this proud occasion, HRH wore the same bright paisley coat that had once turned heads at Queen Elizabeth II's

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90th Birthday Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral in June 2016.

Cathedral Calls



**Armagh
Choral
Evensong
broadcast
on
September
3**



The Charles Wood Singers led worship in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, under the direction of David Hill.

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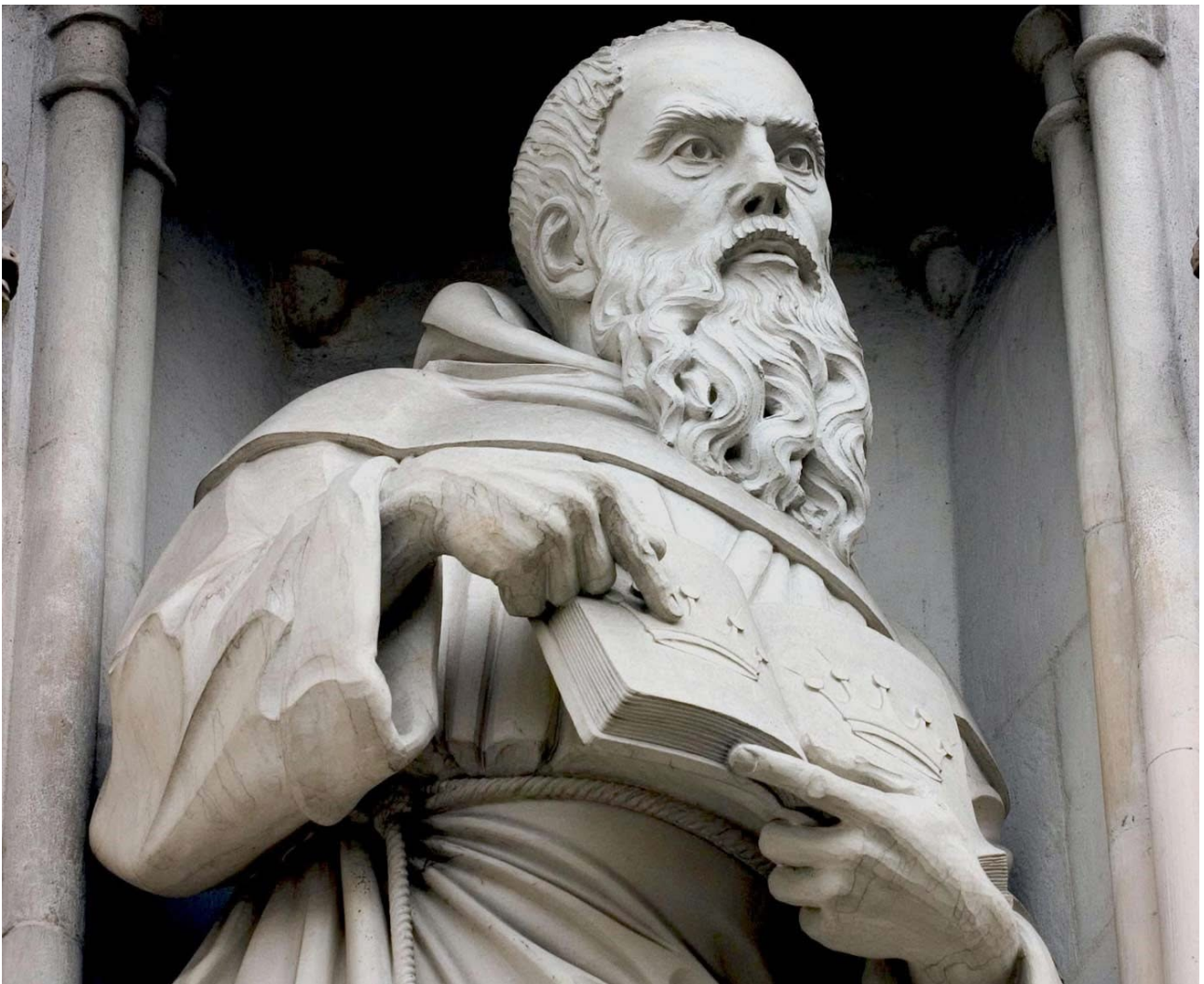
The service was recorded for broadcast in BBC Radio 3's Choral Evensong on Wednesday 3rd September at 15.00.

Introit: Bairstow - Let All Mortal Flesh

Responses: Burk - Preces & Responses

Canticles: Blair - Evening Service in B minor

Anthem: Rutter - Lord, Thou Has Searched Me Out



St Maximilian Kolbe at Westminster Abbey

This week we remember St Maximilian Kolbe who died in 1941, after offering his own life to save a fellow prisoner at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

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He is one of ten 20th-century Christian martyrs whose statues stand above the Abbey's Great West Door.

Discover more in this resource from @AuschwitzMuseum:
https://lekcja.auschwitz.org/en_18_duchowienstwo/

Clergy and ministry



Neil & Jenny Stewart, global mission workers, Spain

The Presbyterian Church requests prayer for Neil, Jenny and the children during their early months of settling in to life and work in Bilbao.

Pray that they would be able to manage their time well, establish effective routines, make good progress with language study and build good relationships with the other members of the Basque Country Project Team.

National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon (NESSL)

The Presbyterian Church requests prayer for God's protection for Christian and other minority communities in Syria.

Pray for the Government of Syria, that it would be committed to its responsibility to protect all its citizens, to safeguard places of worship, and confront discourses of hatred and incitement that undermine the foundations of peace and national unity.

Walking Together in the Killiney – Ballybrack Vineyard

New Chapter for St Matthias' Killiney–Ballybrack: "Ministry in the Kingdom of God is a vineyard – growing and maturing together over time" a packed St Matthias' Church heard on the evening of (Tuesday August 12).

Preaching at the institution of the Revd Scott Evans as Rector of Killiney–Ballybrack, the Revd Rob Jones said that Scott is called not just to lead but to equip, to walk alongside and to remind the parishioners that they too are branches on the vine.

The service was celebrated by Archbishop Michael Jackson. The Revd Scott Evans was joined by his wife Christina, parents Geoff and Margaret and sister Lindsay and the wider family circle. Parishioners of St Matthias' were joined in the pews by numerous friends and well wishers who have journeyed with Scott on his ministerial path as Chaplain in UCD and TUD and Curate in Holy Trinity, Rathmines, along with a great number of clerical colleagues.



The new Rector of St Matthias, the Revd Scott Evans (centre) with Gillian Keogh, the Revd Sean Hanily, the Revd Rob Jones, Archbishop Michael Jackson, Archdeacon David Pierpoint and Leslie Grant.

Welcoming the congregation, Archbishop Michael Jackson thanked everyone who had made the service possible and for coming to welcome Scott and his family as he and the parish embark on a fresh chapter of ministry and of God's ministry in Killiney–Ballybrack.

Rector of Holy Trinity, Rathmines, the Revd Rob Jones, said the institution is the beginning of the next chapter in Scott's calling and a new chapter for the parish and for Scott and Christina and their family.

He reflected on the concept of calling. He said the call is personal, pointing to John 15 when Jesus says 'I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.' "There's deep intimacy in this image — connection, relationship, organic growth, and the promise of new life," he said.

But Rob noted that Jesus begins by saying to his disciples 'Abide in me'. "Our first calling — before preaching, pastoring, or planning — is to abide.

To dwell in the love of Christ. To sit at His feet. To cultivate, as tonight's Psalm says, a rhythm of stillness, and listening, where we know — deeply — that God is our refuge and strength. Abiding is not a job description. It's not a checklist. It's not a chore. It's a relationship," he explained.

The Revd Rob Jones.

Yet while the call is personal, it is also to be shared. He said that the institution is not only about Scott or his family, it is about the community, the parish, the vine — "Because ministry in the Kingdom of God is never a solo act. It's not a

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performance. It's a vineyard — growing and maturing together over time.”



The Revd Scott Evans with his wife Christina (right), parents Geoff and Margaret and sister Lindsay following Scott's institution in St Matthias' in Killiney–Ballybrack.

He said Scott will be a leader who deeply cares and will tend the branches on the vine. He is not entering a consumer–driven ministry, but joining an organic community which grows together, bears fruit together and perseveres together.

The call is beautiful but can be costly, the preacher said.

He said there will be times when leadership feels more like a burden than a joy and that the call is not always to be strong or successful but it is to be faithful.

Finally, he said, the call is not conditional stating that Jesus said 'you did not choose me, but I chose you'. "Scott, God is with you —

in ways you can see, and in many you never will. The call is not something that is conditional on your effectiveness, or even your many gifts, it's saying yes to being chosen and trusting for all that is ahead. And this parish — these wonderful people — walking alongside you, will be part of something new and exciting," he stated.

He urged Scott to remain rooted in the vine, lead with humility, preach with clarity and conviction and teach with wisdom. He asked the parish to continue to pray for Scott, encourage him and walk with him. He also asked them to help him cut down on the amount of Monster Energy drinks he consumes. He closed with the Prayer for the Eastern Church from the Book of Common Prayer.

Speaking after the service Kate Patterson welcomed Scott and his family on behalf of the parish community. "We have been eagerly awaiting this day," she said adding that the parish of St Matthias is dedicated to spreading the word of the Lord and living up to their motto 'Embracing life in all its fullness' [John 10:10](#). They reach out to their community with love and compassion, she said adding that they were so excited to meet Scott and his family.

Fr John Sinnott PP of the nearby Our Lady of Good Counsel Church said he is delighted to see the wonderful warm



welcome for Scott and his family on such a warm evening. As a fellow former Chaplain at UCD, he said he is very much looking forward to working with Scott in the field of the Lord.

The last word of the evening went to the new Rector who said he and his family have received an incredibly warm welcome to the parish. "During every step on the way, every member of the vestry, the nominators and those who have prepared the house, have been incredible," he stated. He thanked all who had taught him how to lead, including the preacher the Revd Rob Jones. He said he could not wait to get to know St Matthias' parishioners and prayed they would be gracious as they get to know him.

Events



CALLING ALL SINGERS

Ever wondered what it's like to sing with Belfast Phil? Here's your chance!

SWIPE <<<

Ever wondered what it's like to sing with Belfast Phil?

Join us for our upcoming Open Rehearsals:

Wednesday 3 September – 7:30–9:45pm

Wednesday 10 September – 7:30–9:45pm

St Bride's Hall, Belfast



Open Rehearsals

We're **opening our doors this September** for a series of open rehearsals – a perfect opportunity to experience what it's like to sing with Northern Ireland's leading symphonic chorus.

Whether you're a confident choral singer or returning after a break, we'd love to welcome you!

- 📍 Rehearsals in Belfast
- 🎵 All voice parts welcome – no pressure, just come and sing!

SWIPE <<<



Open Rehearsals

 **Wednesday 3 September – 7:30 – 9:45pm**

 **Wednesday 10 September – 7:30 – 9:45pm**

📍 **St Bride's Hall, Belfast, BT9 6FP**

Email
manager@belfastphilharmonic.org.uk
to register or find out more.

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Come along, sing with us, meet our members, and experience the magic of making music together.

If you enjoy the rehearsal and want to join, we'll arrange an audition for you afterwards.

Email manager@belfastphilharmonic.org.uk to let us know you're coming.

Events

Kids Inflatable Soft Play Ballycastle

Get ready for an action packed hour of bouncy excitement with our Inflatable Soft Play experience 14th - 17th August. Marine Hotel,

For just £7 per child, kids can enjoy 60 minutes of non-stop fun. The adventure includes a Disco Obstacle Course, Disco Bouncy Castle, Toddler Play Zone, Race Track and Mini Games. Choose your time slot & book online or call our team on 028 2076 2222

<https://www.marinehotelballycastle.com/shop/kids-events>

In the media

In maps: The war-ravaged Ukrainian territories at the heart of the Trump-Putin summit

BBC news

[\[https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgkrn433lk2o\]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgkrn433lk2o)(<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgkrn433lk2o>)

Fire and fallout in Ballymena: What's changed two months since the riots?

BBC news

It's been two months since scenes of hate and violence erupted on the streets of Ballymena, County Antrim – and the after effects are still evident weeks later.

Many homes remain boarded up on Clonavon Terrace, which bore the brunt of rioting described by the police as "racist thuggery".

The target of much of the aggression was the town's Roma (Gypsy) community and other foreign nationals. Some who fled say they are not coming back.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cedv5y9pv3lo>

University expansion will not create 'Derry Holyland'

BBC News

Increasing student numbers at Ulster University's (UU) campus in Londonderry will not turn parts of the city into "Derry's Holyland", a senior UU figure has said.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwye87yk0y7o>

BMA begins dispute over 4% pay hike for consultant doctors in Northern Ireland

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News Letter

<https://app.newsletter.co.uk/story/5270833/content.html>

South Sudan 'approves' Israeli plan to send Gazans to country

Daily Telegraph

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2025/08/13/israel-wants-to-send-gazans-to-south-sudan/>

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

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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