



**Image of the day - by Paul Henry**

## People and places

### Parish celebrates the Centenary of NI

**Derryvullen  
North Parish in  
Clogher diocese  
held a special  
service to  
celebrate the  
Centenary of  
Northern Ireland**

The Select Vestry  
commissioned  
special  
commemorative

bookmarks for the occasion and thanked Sam Johnston for all the work he put into this project - the bookmarks feature the Church of Ireland's centenary collect, a photograph of the Church, the centenary crest and a Bible verse. These can be collected at church and people may take some to pass on to friends and neighbours who are not able to be out.

The Rector was very pleased to be joined by the Rev Canon Betty Thompson who gave the blessing. The soloist at the  
[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)



August 27, 2021

Service was Neville Scott who sang "My forever friend" and the organist was Florence Barrett.

## **Linfield Football Club appoints Rev. Bill Lavery Honorary Club Chaplain**

**The Linfield Club web site reports - King Solomon of Israel was perhaps the wisest man the world has known and his poem, from Ecclesiastes - with its universal advice - is one that Rev Bill Lavery will know better than most.**

And now the time comes that Rev. Bill Lavery, Chaplain to Linfield Football Club for over thirty years, has made the decision to hang up his 'boots' and take a well-earned retirement.

Bill has given exemplary service going back to the late 80s when he invited Linfield FC to a "Sports Service" at the Newtownards Road Methodist Church. During hospitality afterwards, he expressed a keen interest to become involved with the club in a low-key pastoral care background capacity.

Sports chaplaincy was coming to the fore with the Rev John Bowyer of Man United being the key driver throughout the U.K. John later visited and addressed a symposium at Windsor Park. For some years Bill was just an enthusiastic regular at training sessions, match days and events and probably would have put in crosses, had he been allowed to!

In 2002 Linfield FC took the decision to appoint an official chaplain, with Bill being the very first in this new role. Making himself readily available, not only in matters spiritual but with everyday concerns and problems common to us all, Bill throughout was an avid Linfield Supporter with strong opinions on the game, expressing the tensions of a match day but always in a more 'controlled' way than many of us could.

As official chaplain, he led various club celebratory services and functions and introduced a Linfield Carol service at the conclusion of the home game just before Christmas. A brave outreach as the mood was highly dependent on the match result! It was also his sad duty also to officiate at many funerals of Linfield personnel down through the years. Much of his work will forever be confidential and we can only guess at the extent of this.

In his recent conversation with club officials, Bill expressed his deep appreciation of being afforded the privilege as LFC Chaplain for so long, and his sadness that the time had come to relinquish the voluntary position.

The LFC Board, recognising the long, devoted, and unstinting service given by Rev. Bill over these many years is not only deeply grateful for the contribution he has made to the welfare of the club but wish to mark this in a very special way.

As from now, the Rev. Bill, Lavery, a life member, becomes the Honorary Chaplain to Linfield Football Club.





Rev Bill, seen here with the Rev Harold Good (former President of the Methodist Church), former team doctor Cameron Ramsey and sports therapist Terry Hayes

Former Linfield midfielder Philip Mitchell paid tribute to the Rev Bill Lavery saying,

“Bill Lavery was one of the pioneers of Sports Chaplaincy and Football Chaplaincy in Northern Ireland - and I still have all my pages of notes he gave me when I first took on the job as coordinator in 2015, as to how his role had developed over the previous 12 years.

His service at Linfield set the tone for Chaplaincy - that it wasn't just about being available in a crisis - it was about being present and available every week, getting to know people, taking an interest in everyone at the club (not just

August 27, 2021

players) and their families and providing a non judgmental listening ear, or a word of encouragement on training nights, match days or away from the football arena.

He organised Christmas Carol services and Sportsman services for everyone and in particular, he led the way in supporting injured players. All of this done at times against the back drop of difficulties of his own.

I would like to thank Bill for his many years of service at Linfield, particularly in those formative years and the example he set for so many other chaplains who followed.

And I look forward to seeing him in and around football and sports gatherings in the years ahead”

Philip Mitchell,  
Coordinator for Sports Chaplaincy in Ireland

## **International speaker at Down & Dromore Bible Week**

**Down & Dromore diocese is looking forward to having Revd Mark Aldridge with them as their speaker at Bible Week 2021.**

Mark has been Assistant National Leader of New Wine England since 2020 after spending the previous 10 years overseeing the international ministry of New Wine.

This former role took him to about 30 nations worldwide to declare and to demonstrate the good news of Jesus. He



also serves as Director of Church Leadership development with a particular passion to mentor leaders and help develop deep disciples of Jesus.

As well as his New Wine roles he has been a vicar in two inner city London parishes over the past 30 years and he continues to play an active role in his local church of St John's in Leicester.

Mark and his wife Kate have four adult children. Kate is a paediatric nurse. They both love to camp, walk, host open house meals as well as dinner parties for friends and enjoy living in a small village in south Leicestershire.

Mark also enjoys reading theology, fiction, autobiographies, walking his Fox Red Labrador and drinking the occasional glass of wine. For some unknown past misdemeanour he is a lifelong Bristol Rovers fan with a soft spot for Leicester City when he needs something to cheer him up!

Join us at Bible Week 2021

You are warmly invited to join the bible teaching, worship and ministry in Shankill Church Lurgan. Mark will lead four

August 27, 2021

studies in Jonah and explore why we can be confident in God and the Gospel as we emerge from a global pandemic.

In-person at 7.45 pm from Wednesday 1– Friday 3 September. Book via Eventbrite:  
[ [downanddromorebibleweek21.eventbritestudio.com](https://downanddromorebibleweek21.eventbritestudio.com) ]

### **Wednesday 1 September**

Grace, Resurrection and a Bolder Confidence (Jonah 2:8–3:3)

### **Thursday 2 September**

Confidence in the Toughest Places (Jonah 3:4–3:10)

### **Friday 3 September**

Confidence in the Compassion of God (Jonah 4:1–11)

Watch Mark introduce the series here -

[[] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oWihMvg60o> ]

## **MCI's Response to the devastation of Haiti**

**The Methodist Church in Ireland has a long association with Haiti with some of its ministers serving as Mission partners on the island.**

The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev. Dr. Sahr Yambasu, has along with the Rev. Paul Maxwell, been in contact with the President of the United Methodist



Church, offering not only sympathy but the promise of financial aid.

To this end a letter from the President has been circulated to all minister of the Methodist Church in Ireland, in which he says:

“I encourage the members of the Methodist Church in Ireland not only to support this Appeal generously but also to pray for those who have been bereaved and for strength and wisdom for those seeking to respond to this humanitarian crisis.”

## **Presbyterian Church climate change initiative in the run-up to COP26**

**In the run up to the start of COP26 in November, the United Nations’ climate conference which meets in Glasgow, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) is encouraging its congregations across Ireland to set aside one Sunday as a ‘Climate Sunday’, to focus on God’s creation and humanity’s responsibility to be good stewards of it.**

In a letter to its 500-plus congregations, PCI’s Moderator, Right Reverend Dr David Bruce, set the scene for the ‘Climate Sundays’ initiative, saying that as disciples of Jesus Christ, His followers have been given the privilege and responsibility to use and care for the planet as good stewards of God’s Creation.

“Over the last few months we have witnessed some of the most destructive weather events in different parts of the world. Described as ‘terrifying’ and ‘surreal’, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland were caught up in floods that were as surprising as they were devastating. Raging wild fires in Canada and the United States became so big they created their own destructive weather patterns. It is also disturbing to learn that parts of the world’s largest tropical wetlands in South America are on fire again,” Dr Bruce wrote.

“This August alone, for the first time on record, rain has fallen instead of snow on the summit of Greenland’s huge ice cap. We have also seen devastating wild fires in Greece. It is no coincidence, when launching its landmark climate change report earlier this month, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres described what is happening around the world as ‘a code red for humanity.’

Dr Bruce continued, “Today, the overwhelming scientific consensus is that many aspects of human activity over the last 300 years have led to critical consequences for our climate. It is widely agreed that if nothing is done the geophysical changes that we are witnessing will accelerate. The negative effects of this upon those living in poverty around the world, especially in drought-ridden countries such as South Sudan, will be most severe. As God’s people we are commanded to love our neighbours as ourselves – whoever and wherever they are - by not behaving in ways which harm them. We need to respond.”

To encourage and support congregations, PCI has produced a suite of resources centrally at [www.presbyterianireland.org/stewardshipofcreation](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/stewardshipofcreation). These

August 27, 2021

include suggested prayers and hymns, a biblical reflection and Scripture references, 10 practical steps congregations can consider taking, and a short video of Dr Bruce in conversation with Environmental Management student, Olivia Elwood, a young woman who is passionate about God's creation and worships at Bloomfield Presbyterian in Belfast.



Speaking about the initiative, Dr Bruce said, “The theology that really works is the theology that makes a difference to life. It is one thing to say that a thing is true, but if it doesn’t impact the way that we live our lives as Christians, then it is just a thing we say that is true. But a piece of theology that actually structurally changes the way we live our lives is what the Bible is for.

“We know from Genesis 1:31, for example, that what God created He declared to be ‘very good’ and through Adam, we were asked ‘to take care of it’ (Genesis 2:15). The Psalmist also explains that “The highest heavens belong to  
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the Lord; but the earth he has given to humanity” (Psalm 115:16.) In effect God remains the ‘landlord’, for ‘The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it’ (Psalm 24:1). While there may still be some debate regarding the degree of climate change and its causes, as Christians we can agree on this: God does not change, and neither does His word.”

Dr Bruce continued, “Over the years, we have been developing a theology of ‘creation care’ that has been brought to the fore by our changing environment and a recognition that it is delicate, our ecosystems are fragile and we have a fundamental God-given responsibility to look after it. I hope and pray we can all play our part.”

Supporting the initiative, Rev Dr Allen Sleith, a member of PCI’s Global Development Committee and Stewardship of Creation Agent said, “If creation care has for too long been a neglected aspect of our Christian faith, surely now there is a fresh urgency to address this as creatively as possible. This is a new era of repentance and transformation, one in which Jesus’ great command to ‘love God and neighbour as you love yourself’ asks us to faithfully extend that to love of our ‘neighbourhood’, each local patch as well the entire earth.

“As a church, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we can contribute something that is distinct: the revelation and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and the theological and ethical insights that they give rise to in our search to fulfil our vocation with creative fidelity and loving care. I hope that as many of our congregations as possible are able to take part in this initiative.”



The Moderator concluded by saying, “What is happening to the earth will affect all of us in different ways for generations, but those living in abject poverty around the world will be affected the most. We need to be challenged by climate change and view it as an essential aspect of discipleship, so that we can stand in solidarity with those most affected and do what we can on this island, north and south, to stem it.

“The good news is that God hasn’t given up on us. Our Creator is in the business of re-creation, of fixing things - broken people, broken relationships, even broken planets, but that doesn’t absolve us from our responsibility to be good stewards of His creation. We all have our part to play and I would encourage our Church to pray for those in Glasgow this November. Pray that progress will be made.”

BBC - What is COP

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-56901261>

## Reports

### **Church of Scotland appoints first dedicated minister for veterinary community**

**Rev Allan Wright from Glasgow is a working vet himself and has run a practice with his wife, Sharon, in Birtley, County Durham for the past 18 months.**

August 27, 2021

Glaswegian reverend in Newcastle has been appointed the Church of Scotland's first ever dedicated minister for the veterinary community.

Rev Allan Wright is a working vet himself and has run a practice with his wife, Sharon in Birtley, County Durham for the past 18 months.

The 33-year-old was ordained at the Parish Church of St Andrew in Newcastle on Saturday and inducted as the Presbytery of England's Pioneer Minister to the Veterinary Community.

On top of his plan to visit all vet practices within 30 minutes of Newcastle, Rev Wright will also carry out pastoral support duties with the Kirk north of the border – all while keeping his own job as a vet.

He said: "I am excited and daunted about taking up this new role, a calling which enables me to combine both my passions.

"The profession needs a supportive ear, pastoral support, a wholistic approach to the welfare of staff and a real anchor in someone.

"I understand the struggles and the pressure because I am a vet and I will be there for all those who work in practices without judgement and agenda.

"Veterinary medicine is a stressful, time consuming and mentally-draining occupation and is often an overlooked industry in society.

“There is so much in the Bible about caring for creation which is what we do on a daily basis – vets follow God’s command to look after nature.”

Rev Wright grew up in Jordanhill Parish Church and studied at the University of Glasgow and has now been a vet for 10 years as well as a father of two children.

He added: “It is a disjointed network of people and every practice works independently with very little collaboration, communication and support between businesses.

“Due to the increased expectation to work on Sundays those vets who previously attended church find it difficult to become part of a new worshipping community.

“This results in the veterinary community becoming a very isolated, disparate, group of people.

“Mental health is a major issue, made worse by Covid-19, and veterinary surgeons are four times more likely to commit suicide compared to the general population.

“It can be an emotional rollercoaster because they make life or death decisions against a backdrop of increased expectations from clients and increased risk of litigation.

“Many feel isolated and undervalued because they are often underpaid in comparison to their medical counterparts.”

Rev Alistair Cumming, the Kirk’s clerk to the Presbytery of England, said members appreciated vets faces different

pressures to other occupations, hence why Rev Wright's role was created.

He said: "The presbytery felt that there was a need for a ministry to get alongside that community, to offer an ear to listen and to provide spiritual support if they wanted it.

"The appointment of the pioneer ministry is very much an ecumenical one, working with vets from many different denominations.

"We hope that through this ministry we will reach out to the community in the north-east of England and develop the mission of the Church of Scotland "

## **Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars**

### **Doing Church online**

Videos can be very complex, but by no means do they have to be. Just like anything else, you can do an amazing amount with something extremely simple.

People have a hunger for authenticity, and simplicity is on your side for this.'

- Rev Elliot Swatridge

Discover what St Peter's and St James, Hereford have learnt from doing church online in a rural parish, at [ [cofe.io/DoingChurchOnline](http://cofe.io/DoingChurchOnline). ]



## **Book on John Smyth who abused many young men**

Guardian preview of book on John Smyth who abused many young men in the 70s and 80s.

[ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/aug/21/bleeding-for-jesus-book-tells-story-of-qc-who-pitilessly-abused-young-men> ]

## **St. Olaf Cantorei and Congregation - "Abide With Me"**

The St. Olaf Cantorei, Congregation, and organist / conductor James Bobb sing the hymn "Abide With Me".

Words by Henry F. Lyte; music by William H. Monk.

This performance was part of the St. Olaf Cantorei's "Choral Evensong" service, October 28, 2012. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkXI-8no9ZE>]

To view the complete service, visit

<http://stolaf.edu/multimedia/play/?e=731>

## **Crisis communication in disaster ministry**

Crisis communication is an essential element of disaster ministry. A little bit of preparation now can help ensure everything goes more smoothly at your church when disaster strikes. Check out the URC's Crisis Communications Plan

[ <http://bit.ly/URCcrisisplan> ]



## Poem for today

### Father and Son by Frederick Robert Higgins

Only last week, walking the hushed fields  
Of our most lovely Meath, now thinned by November,  
I came to where the road from Laracor leads  
To the Boyne river-that seems more lake than river,  
Stretched in uneasy light and stript of reeds.  
And walking longside an old weir  
Of my people's, where nothing stirs-only the shadowed  
Leaden flight of a heron up the lean air-  
I went unmanly with grief, knowing how my father,  
Happy though captive in years, walked last with me there.

Yes, happy in Meath with me for a day  
He walked, taking stock of herds hid in their own breathing;

August 27, 2021

And naming colts, gusty as wind, once steered by his hand,  
Lightnings winked in the eyes that were half shy in greeting  
Old friends-the wild blades, when he gallivanted the land.

For that proud, wayward man now my heart breaks-  
Breaks for that man whose mind was a secret eyrie,  
Whose kind hand was sole signet of his race,  
Who curbed me, scorned my green ways, yet increasingly  
loved me  
Till Death drew its grey blind down his face.

And yet I am pleased that even my reckless ways  
Are living shades of his rich calms and passions-  
Witnesses for him and for those faint namesakes  
With whom now he is one, under yew branches,  
Yes, one in a graven silence no bird breaks.

## Pointers for prayer

Pray for Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger

We are thankful for:

- the heritage of ancient trade routes, rich oral traditions and nomadic practices of people in the lands these countries now occupy

- humanitarian work to improve food security and livelihoods, especially for women

- pro-active efforts to preserve the environment in these desert lands

- welcome and provision for those who often must flee across borders.

We pray for:

those impoverished who lack basic needs and rights, that these will be met

desperate children and others who turn to crime or begging or become enslaved

effective response to the frequent droughts and hunger in this area

more stable political rule in these countries to stem violence and provide for all.

## PRAYERS

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Eternal God, we pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, for Mali, Chad, Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso.

We know that in our part of the world some people are getting carried away by hatred – people who are unable to think clearly, and turn furiously on the people whom you have placed in this part of the world to enjoy your creation and witness to you. We pray for girls and boys, women and men, children and adults, and the elderly, for you to grant them peace, your peace. In the name of Jesus Christ, Lord, change the hearts of all those who are carried away by hatred, that they may find in you the Hope of Salvation, and that they may become messengers of peace for ever.

We thank you, Lord, for you are faithful to your promise. Glory and praise be given to you for ever and ever. Amen



#PrayTogether  
#StaySafeTogether

Heal those, O Lord, who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fears, which prevents nations from working together and neighbours from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders...

Lord Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us Your peace...

*Continuation at [www.oikoumene.org/prayers](http://www.oikoumene.org/prayers)*



Photo: Albin Hillert / WCC

## Speaking to the Soul

**Next was Uzziel son of Harhaiah, a goldsmith by trade, who also worked on the wall. Beyond him was Hananiah, a manufacturer of perfumes.**

Nehemiah 3:8 NLT

I am so grateful to Nehemiah for the careful way in which he reported the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. He gives

us loads of fascinating details. He tells us that every kind of person got involved whatever their line of work, from priests to perfume makers. There is no reason to think that they had any background in building work but they wanted to play their part. Nehemiah clearly valued the work that they were doing and kept meticulous records of it. It is little wonder that under his inspired leadership the wall was soon rebuilt.

It is so important for us to value every single person, because that's precisely what God does. We don't all have the same gifts but we all have a part to play. This is fundamental to the apostle Paul's understanding of the church. He said that we are the body of Christ and that, therefore, every part of it is essential. When I was a teenager I was keen to help in my church and was asked to be what we called a sidesman. This basically meant that I was the person who said hello to people when they arrived in church and handed them a hymn book. This seemed to me the most basic and menial job. However, over the years I have learnt that the role of welcomers in a church is absolutely crucial. To be met by a warm smile when you arrive at a church can easily transform the whole experience of worship. I needed to learn that God doesn't ask people to do any unimportant jobs. Every person has a vital part to play.

It is good to know that what we do is important to God, but we also need to know that our leaders and those around us value what we do. Nehemiah was clearly good at this. He was only able to record what everyone had done because it mattered to him and he valued it. As we see people working

August 27, 2021

hard today it is good for us to recognise what they have done and thank them for it.

## QUESTION

In what way do you show people that you value what they do?

## PRAYER

Lord God, thank you that you have given me vital work to do for you. Help me to do it with all my heart. Amen

