

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Portadown mission  
to Washington DC**

## Image of the day

### Portadown mission to Washington DC

**David Blevins a Sky News reporter from Portadown is spending a month covering Washington DC.**

On Saturday he tweeted - "Went shopping in Washington DC. Heard a young guy speak with a Northern Irish accent. "Where are you from?" I asked. "Portadown," he replied. "It was their leader - pink t-shirt, far right".

Janine responded "My daughter is there now with a group from Seagoe Youth group working with homeless charities....it's probably them..... us Portadown ones get everywhere...

...And the powers of social media to track them down! They are there until next week, if you see my girl just say you mum sent me to keep an eye on you."

## People and places

### 'Kingdom Come' at Belfast Cathedral

**Following the conclusion of 2022 Lambeth Conference for anglican bishops from across the world, Belfast Cathedral is the venue for an evening of worship, prayer**

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## **and shared experience organised by CMS Ireland and SAMS.**

Involving some 36 Bishops and many of their spouses from across Africa, Asia and South America, this evening event on Friday 12th August is open to all to attend.

Featuring worship and 'Kingdom Come' stories from around the global Church, the main programme begins at 7:30pm. However there will be opportunities to engage with Church leaders from Africa, South America and Nepal from 6:45pm and again after the event, when refreshments will be served.

With introductions from the Bishop of Connor and the Bishop of Down and Dromore, this very special event at St Anne's Cathedral is open to all from local parishes and church communities. No registration is required.

This Kingdom Voices evening is an unmissable opportunity to share and experience the vibrancy of the world wide church in a single setting at Belfast Cathedral.

For further information please see:

<http://www.cmsireland.org>

## **Adopt a book at Armagh**

**Can you help Armagh Robinson Library to future-proof its collections? Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, founded the library in his cathedral city in 1771**

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**and saw it as embodying the 18th century spirit of enlightenment, discovery and learning.**

Armagh Robinson Library hosts over 40,000 literary gems – from medieval Books of Hours and early editions of the Bible to classic literature, books on science, mathematics, art, music and travel.

Now it is seeking support from individuals, families, groups or businesses to help it to continue developing, conserving and protecting these treasures.

It has set up an Adopt-a-Book scheme with a range of options to choose from – from £50 to £1000 – and until late 2023 the National Lottery Heritage Fund will match every donation, which means your donation will go much further to help the Library.

All donors to the Adopt-a-Book scheme will receive a certificate recording their donation and a bookplate will be inserted inside the cover of the book you have adopted.

If you would like to help the Library achieve its goals, please visit the website: [armaghrobinsonlibrary.co.uk/adopt](http://armaghrobinsonlibrary.co.uk/adopt), email: [admin@armaghrobinsonlibrary.co.uk](mailto:admin@armaghrobinsonlibrary.co.uk) or call the Library on 028 3752 3142.

**CNI**

## Meath and Kildare youth events review

### Geashill Youth Go Green



Eighteen young people in Geashill Union of Parishes spent the afternoon of the 20th of July tidying up the Church Yard and Parish Hall. Some much needed weeding was done.

The youth group also worked on the Church yard, plating Willow and creating a habitat for Bees behind the Church.

There was a lot of hard work put in, but everyone stopped mid-afternoon for some snacks and a look at the Bible. At the end everyone got a Supermacs before they went home!

### Summer Madness

At the start of July, 14 young people from across the Diocese went to Summer Madness in Northern Ireland. This was the first time the annual Christian Festival had been held since Covid-19 and it was the first time any of our group had been.

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Dodging the rain on Friday night, the group had good weather for the next three days, although the new tents held up well under the deluge anyway! This left plenty of time for football, water sports, live music, volleyball, dodgeball and Bible teaching.

This year the main speaker was Pete Greig, founder of the 24/7 prayer movement, and so the theme was 'pray without ceasing.'

Everyone had a great time and all want to come back next year with friends, so keep your eyes peeled for announcements!

## **Confirmation Celebration Day**

On the 28th of May over 50 of our young people, who were all Confirmed in the last 12 months, attended a celebration day at Wilson's Hospital School.

Throughout the day people enjoyed cage soccer, a slip'n'slide, a drum workshop and a wide game, all broken up by short Bible talks on the theme of Living Water.

We learned that life after confirmation is a journey, but one where God sustains us by his living water and through other Christians.

Everyone had great fun and more events like this will be taking place throughout the next year.

Report by Luke Hawkins – Diocesan Youth Officer and Chaplain at Wilson's Hospital School

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## Walk raises £2000 for World Development

**Ivan Kirkpatrick recently raised over £2000 for Irish Methodist World Development and Relief by walking 18 miles along the Causeway Coast.**

Ivan has just stepped down from the committee and wanted to mark this by completing his own StepUp challenge!



## **Adam Watson funeral: His trust in God didn't change and didn't waver during his illness, mourners told**

**The funeral took place last week for a nine-year-old boy from Banbridge who bravely fought leukaemia with God by his side, by Graeme Cousins in The Newsletter**

At his funeral in Holy Trinity Church in Banbridge, Archdeacon Roderic West told a sizeable congregation, which spilled into an overflow hall and outside the church, that Adam was “an amazing young man”.

He said: “Adam may not have lived a long life, but in his life and through his life he has impacted on many people’s lives, and will continue to impact on many people’s lives.”

Adam attended Banbridge Nursery School and Abercorn Primary School and was a member of the scouting organisation, progressing from the squirrels to the beavers and into the cubs.

He was the cymbal player in the William Sterritt Memorial Flute Band and also made a guest appearance in the Downshire Guiding Star Flute Band as their first ever cymbal player.

Archdeacon West said: “I still remember the phone call from David on Monday, October 21, 2019 telling me that Adam was in hospital. There were those initial traumatic hours in Newry Hospital before Adam was transferred to Royal



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Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, and there have been many up and downs on the journey since then.

“There have been prolonged stays in hospital in Belfast and Manchester.

“David and Sara [Adam’s parents] have asked me to express publicly their gratitude to Dr Bethany Mitchell and all the medical team at the Children’s Haematology Unit in the Royal, including those known to Adam as his angels, to express their gratitude to Professor Rob Wynn and the team in Manchester, and to the community nursing team in Banbridge.

“Throughout his illness Adam was sustained by his faith in God, a faith that was real and personal. He invited Jesus into his life, he put his faith in Jesus as his Saviour at our summer Bible club in 2019. His faith in God, his trust in God, didn’t change and didn’t waver during his illness. He talked to others about Jesus, about God being with him.”

During his illness Adam initiated a new charity called B positive.

Archdeacon West said: “The name of the charity is linked to Adam’s blood group changing from O+ to B+ following his transplant. The aim of the charity is to help provide improved patient and parent experience on the ward.”

He added: “Adam was an amazing young man, he was polite and well mannered, he looked for the best in people, he liked things to be right and for people to do what was

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right. He was bright and intelligent, and he had a hunger and thirst for knowledge.

As a mark of respect Downshire Guiding Star Flute Band did not parade tonight on the day of Adam's funeral, but tomorrow night they will be commemorating him in Waringstown.

Members of the band will be taking a break from a 24-hour walk in Adam's name and taking part in Clogher Protestant Boy's annual parade. They plan to play a hymn and have a moment's silence on Main Street.

## **Events this week**

### **New series of recitals St Ann's church, Dawson Street, Dublin**

In St Ann's church, Dawson Street, Dublin, a new series of recitals begins on Thursday when Lidia Jewloszewicz Clarke, Cillian O'Breachain, Beth McNinch, and Ailbhe McDonagh will perform works by women composers. The recital starts at 1.20pm and the 10 euro entrance charge will go to performers' honoraria, organization costs, and to fund the restoration of the organ.

### **Wexford institution**

The Revd Norman McCausland will be instituted as Incumbent of the Wexford and Kilsoran union of parishes in St Iberius church, Wexford, on Friday at 8p.m. Mr

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McCausland, who was ordained in 1989, has been Rector of Raheny & Coolock in since 2013.

## Summer Music in Sandford

On Friday, at 1.10pm Summer Music in Sandford continues in Sandford parish church, Ranelagh, where pianist Orly Watson will play Liszt's titanic Sonata in B minor.

## World News

### Scotland has become 'secular society' says church moderator

**Church of Scotland moderator, the Rev Dr Iain Greenshields, says he believes Scottish society "feels little need for God".**

The moderator, writing in his church's in-house magazine 'Life and Work', said Scotland – home of iconic 16th century Protestant reformer John Knox – is now one of Europe's most secular countries.

Rev Greenshields adds: "There was a time when we believed we belonged to a Christian nation, living in a Christian UK and Europe. That day has gone. We live in a secular culture in Scotland."

Dr Greenshields drew attention to dwindling congregations across the nation.

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According to church data, Church of Scotland membership fell by a third in the past decade, with an average church member being 55 years and middle-class.

“The Church of Scotland that at least nominally had over 27% of the country as active members now [has] under 10%,” the moderator relates.

Historically, the Scottish Kirk, dating back to the Ulster Plantation, has been known as the ‘Mother Church’ of Irish Presbyterianism.

A Kirk report confirmed a 34% drop in membership between 2011 and 2021, but the church has put meaningful measures in a bid to reverse the trend.

“We need to face up to a new reality – the road ahead will not be easy, it will need hard work, innovation, faith and renewed gospel commitment,” the moderator adds.

## **Former Church official accused of defrauding £5m from charity**

**A former Church official was accused of clocking up more flights than globetrotting broadcaster Alan Whicker as he appeared in court charged with defrauding a charity of £5 million.**

Martin Sargeant, 52, worked as operations manager for the Church of England’s Diocese of London from 2008 until his retirement in August 2019 and was clerk of the City church grants committee.

He is accused of defrauding the charitable trust – set up to support and fund the restoration of churches – of around £5.2 million over the course of a decade. He is also accused of money laundering after allegedly spending the money on gambling and taking more than 180 flights. Malachy Pakenham, on the alleged travel, told Westminster Magistrates' Court: "Even Alan [Whicker] wouldn't have clocked up as many flights over this period."

### **Martin Sargeant is alleged to have spent the money on gambling and more than 180 flights**

Mr Sargeant appeared in the dock in Dudley, West Midlands, and gave no indication of plea when charges of fraud by abuse of position and money laundering were put to him. The fraud charge alleges he abused his position as operations manager to make a gain of approximately £5.2 million between January 1 2009 and December 31 2019.

He is accused of fraudulently requesting grants for dysfunctional churches and spending the money on "personal entertainment or frivolous things like gambling", said Mr Pakenham.

The magistrates decided the charges were too serious to be dealt with in the magistrates' court and the case has been sent to Southwark Crown Court, where Mr Sargeant will appear on September. He was granted bail on conditions he does not leave the UK and does not contact staff at Diocese of London.

## In the media

### **Larger than life exhibit on display in Belfast**

[<https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2022/0806/1314297-belfast-sculptures/>]

### **Galway hooker sets sail for Netherlands**

[<https://www.rte.ie/news/connacht/2022/0806/1314334-galway-boat/>]

### **Changeable summer weather dampens Northern Ireland's cricket season**

[<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-62433889>]

### **Gambling disorder: 'It took me to save Peter Shilton'**

[<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-62186923>]

### **Larne woman and her mother tell remarkable story in new book - the Russian tailor**

[<https://www.northernirelandworld.com/news/people/larne-woman-and-her-mother-tell-remarkable-story-in-new-book-3789698>]

### **Transformation of derelict courthouse to arts hub Bangor**

<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/transformation-derelict-court-house-arts-24657536?>

## Perspective

### Live as if God's Kingdom is already here by William Morton

**There is a beautiful musical motet by the contemporary German composer Heinz-Werner Zimmerman entitled 'Fear Not, Little Flock'.**

In one recording I listened to recently, Zimmerman's incomparable style was reflected in the fact that the motet had a syncopated rhythm that portrayed bounce and joy, which are still with me.

This piece of music struck a chord for me in more ways than one when, in preparation for this column, I read the Gospel reading for tomorrow: Trinity 8, from St Luke, Chapter 12, verses 32-40, in which Jesus said to His disciples: "Do not fear, little flock, because it is your Father's will to give you the Kingdom".

A few lines further on, Jesus advises His disciples to sell their possessions and give alms, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will also be".

By treasure, Jesus meant the realisation of God's love for us, and His love alive within us.

For Jesus that was the goal and destiny of life; to be fully in possession of God's love, and to be possessed by it.

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The views of the world were very different – success was to be measured in money, social standing, and public perception.

But for Jesus, heaven and the Kingdom of God are not merely some distant pie-in-the-sky promise, but rather a reality here already.

We live in the Kingdom in which, by faith, forgiveness can triumph over revenge, hope over despair, joy over sorrow, generosity over stinginess, love over apathy.

These are the characteristics of the Kingdom of Heaven and they gave Jesus daily power. These characteristics were the how He overcame the world.

The former Anglican bishop of Edinburgh Dr Richard Holloway has written that one way of thinking about the work and teaching of Jesus Christ is to see it as the creation of a community that would provide God's end time now.

He taught His disciples not only to pray that God's Kingdom would come on earth as it was in heaven, but to live as if it were already here.

Their community was to be marked by two characteristics rare in the power structures of the world: radical forgiveness at both the personal and political level, and to see the world from the bottom up, not the top down. God's Kingdom was downside up. It was identified with the rejected, the despised and ignored.



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With those at the bottom, the victims of power; not those at the top, the wielders of power.

Is not the great opportunity of the church today to become an instrument of the Kingdom, to bring to the world the realisation of God's love? By that way, and that way alone, can the world be a better place.

*By the Very Reverend Dr William Morton, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, in The Newsletter on Saturday past.*

## Poem for today

### Lament for the Poets: 1916 by Francis Ledwidge

I heard the Poor Old Woman say:  
"At break of day the fowler came,  
And took my blackbirds from their songs  
Who loved me well thro' shame and blame.  
'No more from lovely distances  
Their songs shall bless me, mile by mile,  
Nor to white Ashbourne call me down  
To wear my crown another while.

"With bended flowers the angels mark  
For the skylark the place they lie;  
From there its little family  
Shall dip their wings first in the sky.  
"And when the first surprise of flight

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Sweet songs excite, from the far dawn  
Shall there come blackbirds loud with love,  
Sweet echoes of the singers gone.

"But in the lovely hush of eve,  
Weeping I grieve the silent bills,"  
I heard the Poor Old Woman say  
In Derry of the little hills.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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