



Dean from Belfast welcomes Queen at Royal Maundy service in Sheffield

***Very Rev. Peter
Bradley escorts
HM Queen
Elizabeth***

The Dean of Sheffield, the Very Reverend Peter Bradley, said he was delighted to be welcoming The Queen.

He said: “This is a historic moment for us in the life of South Yorkshire and the city of Sheffield.

“We are deeply honoured to be chosen to host the Royal Maundy Service on behalf of our nation. This service is a special opportunity to recognise individuals who have worked to make a positive contribution to the community.



“I have been moved to learn of the many unsung heroes in South Yorkshire who give their time and effort for the good of others”.

Dean Bradley whose parents, Mr & Mrs Basil Bradley, are parishioners at St Polycarp's Finaghy, was educated at RBAI and Cambridge University prior to ordination.

Scores of royal watchers gathered at Sheffield Cathedral to see [the Queen](#) at the Maundy Thursday service, also known as Royal Maundy. Britain's monarch, who has been attending the annual ceremony for over eight decades, looked full of spring cheer as she stepped out in a vibrant teal hat and matching coat over a floral dress.

After arriving in the South Yorkshire city by train, the 88-year-old royal, who will celebrate her birthday on 21 April, distributed the Maundy Money to 89 men and 89 women – one for each of her 89 years.

Recipients of the Royal Maundy coins are pensioners recommended for their service to the Church and the local community.

Each nominated recipient receives one white and one red purse. The red one contains a £5 coin and a 50p coin while the white purse contains uniquely minted silver Maundy coins.

The Queen has distributed the Maundy Money on **all but four occasions since coming to the throne in 1952.**

After the service, the monarch and her husband [the Duke of Edinburgh](#) signed a visitors' book in the cathedral before heading to Sheffield Town Hall for a lunch.

Good Friday Stations of the Cross walk in Nenagh

All are welcome to join in the Stations of the Cross walk in Nenagh this Friday, April 3rd. The Good Friday Ecumenical Walk of Witness with stations will follow a chosen route around the town and there will be stops along the route. It will start at Banba Square at 4.30pm and end at St Mary of the Rosary at 6pm. The walk takes in Wolfe Tone Terrace, Hanley's Place, Sarsfield St, John's Lane, Silver St, Kenyon St, Friar St, Pearse St, Summerhill and Church Road.

All welcome (whatever Church you worship with!). The event is organised by a joint Catholic/Church of Ireland team. It will be led by Fr Des Hillery, PP, and Rev Lucey Greene, interim

replacement of former COI Rector Marie Rowley Brooke.

Passion play tonight in Down Cathedral

The Passion of Christ will be presented on Good Friday by the Kilmore Parish Players in conjunction with other churches in the Lecale Area. Admission is free. Down Cathedral at 8.00 pm

Woman Church warden and mayor of new super council

Michelle Knight-McQuillan, who has had double cause for celebration this past week.

On Wednesday evening, at the parish's Easter General Vestry meeting, Michelle was elected to the post of People's Churchwarden for a third time. Twenty-four hours later, the Aghadowey (Derry diocese) woman – who represents the Bann electoral area – was elected Mayor of the new Causeway Coast and Glens District Council, after being nominated by her party, the DUP.

The 'double' has delighted fellow parishioners. The Rector of St Guaire's, Rev. Louise Crawford-

McCafferty, said: “Michelle has been a great churchwarden – hence the third term of office. We, as a parish, want to congratulate her and look forward to seeing the wonderful things she gets up to this year.”

Enniskillen teacher to give organ recital In St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh

The next organ recital in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh will be given by Mr Phillip Elliott on Sunday 19 April 2015 at 4.15pm. Phillip received his early musical training on the organs of Manchester and Derby Cathedrals. He was awarded the ARCO diploma while still at school, and read Music at Oxford University, where he was Organ Scholar at Hertford College and Clothworkers' Scholar at St Catherine's College. After a year of teacher training, he began work as Assistant Director of Music at Bradford Grammar School, West Yorkshire, and moved to Northern Ireland in 1999, also gaining the FRCO diploma in that year.

Phillip is Vice-Principal of the Collegiate Grammar School, Enniskillen, and still manages to find time to show his love of music as the

Organist of St Mark's Parish Church, Tandragee, and as a performer on BBC and RTE radio and television, and in Belfast Cathedral and the Ulster Hall. He is also a regular accompanist for many local choirs, including the Priory Singers, Counterpoint and the Lowry Singers and was Organ Tutor for the Armagh Church Choir Union for some years.

His programme for Armagh Cathedral will include works by Salomé, JS Bach, Hollins and Hurford.

The Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, Dean of Armagh, said, *'Phillip's work as both a teacher and performer is well known. Only last month he joined The Priory Singers in the Cathedral for a beautiful evening of music for Lent and Passiontide. It's a great pleasure to welcome him back to the Cathedral, for a solo performance.'*

As with all the recitals in this series, admission is free, with a retiring collection towards the further endowment of the Cathedral Choir through the Archbishop's Choir Fund.

Exhibition of stage clothes to benefit Dungarvan parish

An exhibition of celebrities' clothing including Imelda May, Moe Dunford & the Clancy Brothers + vintage stage costumes & much more takes place on Friday 10th, Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th April. Afternoon teas also being served 12 - 5pm at St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Dungarvan Co. Waterford. All in aid of GROW & Church repair fund.

Imelda has kindly donated her dress to be auctioned for the charities at 5pm on Sun 12th April.

Engage Connor Youth Plans Streetreach In North Belfast

This summer brings an opportunity for young people aged 16 and over in Connor Diocese to get involved in an exciting mission project.

From 30 June until 3 July, the Engage Connor Youth Council will be facilitating Streetreach in north Belfast, giving young people the opportunity to put their faith into action by showing God's love through practical acts of love and kindness.

And to really inspire young people to sign up, Engage Connor Youth has produced a video

featuring Connor / Church Army Pioneer Evangelist Stephen Whitten, who has been working in north Belfast since taking up his post four weeks ago. You can view the video at <https://vimeo.com/123338567>

Sharon Hamill and Zara Genoe, joint chairs of the Engage Connor Youth Council, explained: 'We hope to draw together a group of 40–50 young people and young adults from across the diocese who will serve alongside Stephen and the Rev Emma Rutherford (Glencairn Parish).

'The team will support the existing work being done in Whiterock and Glencairn among children, young people, families and the elderly.

'The Youth Council is so privileged to be playing such an active part in mission this summer and look forward to further opportunities in various other parts of the diocese in the future. This is just the beginning.'

You can download further information and application forms (under 18 years and over 18 years) from the Diocese of Connor website (<http://connor.anglican.org/2015/03/30/your-invite-to-get-involved-with-connor-streetreach/>)

Sharon and Zara added: “We believe that this will be a significant experience for all involved and would like as many young people as possible to have the opportunity to take part.”

Seedtime and Ploughman's Service



Ballyblack Presbyterian Church, Newtownards was recently the venue for the annual Seedtime & Ploughman's Service.

News Letter - The service was conducted by Rev Simon Henning B.A., B.D. minister of the congregation and the special guest speaker was churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Mr Clarke Black, C.E.O. of the Ulster Farmers' Union. Clarke spoke about his view of the challenges currently farming industry but was optimistic about his hopes for the future.

Mr Stephen Weatherup, Secretary of the Society of Ploughmen, N.I. and members of the wider farming community took part in the service. The very generous offering of £740 was donated to Rural Support and Fields of Life and supper was served in the church hall following the service.

First Palm Sunday Walk of Witness in Belvoir

Belvoir Parish (Down diocese) had its first ever Walk of Witness on Palm Sunday with over 100 people plus two donkeys (Elvis and Priscilla) taking part!

Despite the hour changing and the wet and windy weather, the group set off from the Belvoir Activity Centre with guitar, drum, brass ensemble, singers, palm leaves and a police escort.

The walk aroused some interest and a few joined in as they made their way up Dunseverick Avenue to the church where coffee was waiting.

Revd Canon Jack Mercer - a lovely and godly man

The former rector of the Parish of Ballyholme, Revd Canon Jack Mercer, has died. The funeral will be on Saturday 4 April at 12 noon in St Columbanus, Ballyholme.

Bishop Harold Miller of Down and Dromore said, "Canon Jack Mercer had retired before I came to the diocese, but I had the privilege of getting to know him in his retirement. He was so blessed to have 24 years of ministry in those years, and was a blessing to every person with whom he came in touch. Jack was a lovely and godly man, and we mourn his loss.

"He died on Maundy Thursday, will be put to rest on Easter Eve, and in Christ, is a partaker of the Resurrection."

Church of Scotland says more must be done to get Scots online

The Church of Scotland is highlighting the price paid by the one in five Scots households who do not have internet access. As the Scottish

Government launches its latest initiative to improve digital participation, the Church says too many Scots are still facing barriers to getting online.

Rev Sally Foster- Fulton, who's Convener of the Church and Society Council, said: 'We welcome the Government's 'Let's Get On' campaign as a very necessary initiative. We remain concerned at the number of people paying a "poverty premium" when they can't buy goods cheaper online, can't access employment opportunities, or even meet benefit conditions. Statistics show poorer areas have the lowest number of households with internet access. Local churches across Scotland are already helping provide people with the knowledge and resources to get online. We want to see more done to tackle this problem and we believe the Church has the resources to play a big role in this.'

Church of Scotland supported initiatives include: Chalmers Church, in the Strutherhill area of Larkhall, have a programme aimed at helping people find work by providing guidance on job searching, providing assistance in preparing CVs, and in filling in online job applications. Rev Andrea Boyes, minister at Chalmers Church, said: 'In many ways its hard work, bit in other

ways it's a simple formula: Chalmers Church + Volunteers + Computers = Success!'

Cranhill Development Trust, based in Cranhill Church in Glasgow has received funds from the Scottish Government People and Communities Fund, supported more than 400 people to get online in 2014. Rev Muriel Pearson, minister in Cranhill Church, commented: 'As one of the participants in our projects said recently, "Getting online has given me my life back. I went to classes that improved my skills, I became a volunteer and I'm now applying for work. I thought it would have been a lot more difficult to get online but the tutors at my classes made it very easy. I would recommend getting online to everyone as the internet gives you another outlook, connects you with people and helps increase your knowledge and skills. It is great to see our Church being used in this way.'

Glasgow Kelvin College have a click and connect centre in the former Sunday school room in the Cranhill Church building, and provide tutors for digital inclusion classes. The latest development is that an employability worker will be running outreach sessions in neighbouring Ruchazie Church, and Glasgow Kelvin College have just agreed to place 5 new PCs there as a 'click and connect (light)' centre.

Mrs Foster-Fulton says these are just some of the initiatives already underway. "People need to be able to access computers and to get online. Libraries and other publicly accessible computers are often only available for an hour at a time. Churches have the flexibility to allow people to spend longer on their computers and to be supported while they are there. It can take at least 1.5 hours to fill in the Universal Credit form, even assuming you know what you're doing and feel confident with computers so some of us need extra time and encouragement. We would encourage churches which are not already doing so to consider how they might be able to be involved in this work.'

Nigerian bishop to be Anglican Communion's next Secretary General

The Most Revd Dr Josiah Atkins Idowu-Fearon has been appointed to be the next Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

Dr Idowu-Fearon currently serves as Bishop of Kaduna in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) where he has earned a global

reputation in the Church for his expertise in Christian-Muslim relations.



Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon (centre) with Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Bishop James Tengatenga.

He was selected out of an initial field of applicants from Oceania, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas.

Since 1998 the Most Revd Dr Idowu-Fearon has been Bishop of Kaduna, and he is the current Director of the Kaduna Anglican Study Centre. Before that he served as Bishop of Sokoto, Warden at St Francis of Assisi Theological

College in Wusasa, and Provost of St. Michael's Cathedral in Kaduna.

Responding to his appointment, Dr Idowu-Fearon said: "I am excited to take up the post of Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, and to continue the fine work undertaken by my predecessors in this office.

"It is a privilege to be so honoured and recognised by the Communion for this leadership position. I look forward to serving the Anglican family with my future colleagues at the Anglican Communion Office and the Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury."

Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, Bishop James Tengatenga warmly welcomed the appointment, saying: "I am delighted that Bishop Josiah has accepted the position. He will bring a vital new perspective on the Anglican Communion, its life and ministry. His experience and expertise in Christian-Muslim relations is particularly welcome at this time."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said: "I warmly welcome the appointment of Bishop Josiah and look forward to working closely with him in the renewal of the Anglican Communion amidst the global challenges facing us today."

Bishop Josiah has a PhD (Sociology) and Postgraduate Diploma in Education from Nigeria's Ahmadu Bello University, an MA in Islamic Theology from the UK's Birmingham University, and a BA in Theology from Durham University in the UK.

He has lectured and been published widely on the subject of Christian-Muslim relations. He serves on a variety of national inter-religious bodies and has previously worked with the Anglican Communion Office and Lambeth Palace on several projects.

Bishop Josiah has been awarded the Officer of the Order of the Niger, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Cross of St. Augustine's Award, and is a Canterbury Six Preacher.

The person specification for the role of Secretary General indicated that the next incumbent should "assist the Communion to become even more faithful to, and engaged in, God's mission of reconciliation.

"The successful candidate will be a committed Christian, a person of deep faith and prayer, a visionary ambassador for Christ and his Church, a bridge-builder to effect healing amongst the churches of the Anglican Communion, a creative and imaginative thinker, and an inspirational

leader who will help to renew the witness and effectiveness of the Communion, its structures, and its programmes."

Lay and clergy individuals from a member Church of the Anglican Communion were encouraged to apply.

Bishop Josiah, who is married to Comfort and has two children, Ibrahim and Ninma, is expected to take up the role in July 2015.

Influential black-led coalition breaks with US Presbyterians over gay marriage

One of the world's most influential black-led church coalitions has broken with the US Presbyterian Church over its endorsement of gay marriage.

Ruth Gledhill in Christian Today - The National Black Church Initiative, a coalition of 34,000 African-American and Latino churches representing nearly 16 million Americans, and which work to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing and the environment said it had split with the

Presbyterians because of their "arbitrary change of Holy Scripture."

The Presbyterian Church decided recently decided to redefine marriage as a "commitment between two people" to take into account same-sex marriage.

Anthony Evans, president of the National Black Church Initiative, called on the Presbyterians to "repent and be restored to fellowship."

He said the change in doctrine was a "sin" and represented a break with 2,000 years of tradition. "No church has the right to change the word of God. By voting to redefine marriage PCUSA automatically forfeits Christ's saving grace," Evans wrote.

Bishop Janice Hollis, presiding prelate of the Covenant International Fellowship, told Breitbart that she agreed with Evans.

Too many members of the clergy were "preoccupied" with secular values, she said. "God has the final say, but we all have to say something about what we believe and not live in hiding. We must share our faith and when we don't, we lose ground to our spiritual enemy that comes to devour and destroy."

Conservative Christians in America's African-American community are among the critics of US President Barack Obama's liberal attitudes on issues such as same-sex marriage.

Pope Francis told to lay off pasta after apparent weight gain



Pope Francis receiving a gift of a special pizza during his weekly general audience in Saint Peter's Square last month

Vatican doctors have told the Argentinian Pope to stop eating so much spaghetti and ravioli – and to do more exercise

Telegraph - Pope Francis has been told by Vatican doctors to lay off the pasta, after gaining weight since being elected as head of the Roman Catholic Church two years ago.

The 78-year-old Argentinian pontiff has appeared noticeably more upholstered during public appearances over the last few months, with doctors ascribing the weight gain to too much spaghetti and ravioli and not enough exercise.

Vatican doctors told Ansa, Italy's national news agency, that the [Pope needs to adopt a more "disciplined" regimen](#) in order to try to combat the stress and strain that he is under as the leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics.

They have advised him to eat pasta no more than two times a week.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/11509483/Pope-Francis-told-to-lay-off-pasta-after-apparent-weight-gain.html>

Media digest

Warning over early years budget cut in NI

Slashing £2 million from the Department of Education's early years budget is short-sighted and foolish, campaigners have warned.

News Letter - Thousands of people have signed an online petition urging Education Minister John O'Dowd to think again, amid claims the cuts could have a disastrous impact on the most vulnerable children.

Siobhan Fitzpatrick, chief executive of Early Years, the organisation for young children, said: "This will have a devastating effect on some of the most disadvantaged communities across Northern Ireland."

If the proposals go ahead, up to 153 playgroups, day care facilities and services for youngsters with disabilities may have to close with the potential loss of 177 jobs, it is claimed.

It could also mean the loss of 2,500 pre-school places -- including 600 for children with special needs and 250 for those who do not have English as their first language.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/warning-over-early-years-budget-cut-1-6666729>

NICVA issues warning of 'hundreds' of job losses due to cuts

An umbrella group of voluntary organisations in Northern Ireland warns that hundreds of job losses are likely as a result of cuts in the sector.

BBC - Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) chief executive Seamus McAleavey has warned hundreds of job losses are likely as a result of cuts in the sector.

Mr McAleavey said the scale of the job losses was unprecedented.

He is seeking an emergency meeting with Northern Ireland's first minister and deputy first minister to address the issue.

Groups in the environment, the arts and training are affected by the cuts.

"Skilled staff will be lost from our sector and the impact will be felt right across Northern Ireland with a loss of local walking routes, arts events and childcare facilities," Mr McAleavey said.

"Voluntary and community organisations provide highly specialised services in areas where government provision doesn't meet the needs of local people and often work with harder to reach client groups.

"It is obvious that the most vulnerable people will be harder hit with programmes focusing on training and support to help people get jobs, develop crucial early learning skills in children and rehabilitation being cut."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-32151145>

‘Unprecedented’ job cuts in voluntary sector- News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/unprecedented-job-cuts-in-voluntary-sector-1-6667052>

450 voluntary sector job losses across Northern Ireland 'unprecedented' - Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/450-voluntary-sector-job-losses-across-northern-ireland-unprecedented-31112435.html>

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