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Peata Therapy Dog Carol Service in Christ Church  
Cathedral**

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## People and places



### Official opening of newly refurbished and extended Derry Cathedral Youth Club

**The Education Minister, Michelle McIlveen, was among political, community and religious leaders who gathered in the Fountain Estate in Londonderry this afternoon for the official opening of the newly refurbished and extended Cathedral Youth Club.**

The Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, said the modern, state-of-the-art premises was “a joy to behold”. It served the young people and the whole community in the Fountain Estate and beyond.





“The Cathedral Youth Club was founded 49 years ago, in 1972,” Dean Stewart told guests, “by Jeanette Warke, her late husband David, and the Dean of Derry at that time, George Good. The club met initially in London Street and had a membership of 11 members. Today, there are 86 members of the Youth Club. The club moved to these premises in 1980.

“Cathedral Youth Club was founded at the beginning of the Troubles to provide a place of learning, recreation and social gathering for the young people of this area and it has fulfilled its role admirably for almost five decades.

“The youth club is managed by a wonderful lady, Jeanette Warke, whose vision, dedication and enthusiasm has encouraged so many young people and volunteers over the years. Jeanette is a lady who works passionately for the



people of the Fountain Estate and of this city, and this centre is here largely because of her vision and drive.”

Her Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant for the City of Londonderry, Dr Angela Garvey, said it was a special day for the whole Warke family and especially for Jeanette. “You work in sometimes difficult circumstances,” Dr Garvey told Mrs Warke, “but you’ve always managed to try and think outside the box – in fact not to be kept inside the box – and you’ve always wanted to share with your whole community, and I think that is one of the trademarks of the Cathedral Youth Club.”

The presence of Mrs Warke’s son, Graham – in his official capacity as Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District – added poignancy to the occasion. “For me as Mayor” he said, “this is a special one. When I was born, I grew up with

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this youth club in the Fountain community and it's always been in our hearts. I hear his name mentioned, there – my father, David – and he'll be looking down on us and seeing what's here for the young people of the Fountain, and he'll be so proud."

Alderman Warke said his mother had expanded on the founders' early vision. "You have a family – and it's not the Warke family, it's all the young ones around this community and further afield – who mean so much to you and you're an absolute credit to this city." The Mayor looked forward to many more families and generations coming through the centre.

The Education Minister, whose department supported the premises' expansion with £640,000 in funding, said she was pleased to be present to celebrate the official opening of the newly refurbished facility. "It's vitally important," Miss McIlveen said, "to continue to provide young people with a safe and friendly environment, in which to meet and develop their own individual skills, which in turn would allow them to enhance these skills within their local community and hopefully improve their own educational outlook." The minister hoped that the refurbishment would allow Cathedral Youth Club to continue for another 50 years.

Local MLA Gary Middleton said that being a local person, he saw at first hand the great work that went on in the Cathedral Youth Club. "Whether it be patchwork, or computer classes, or youth groups and cookery classes, all of it happens underneath the roof here at the youth club. So, this additional money that has been secured – that's been worked hard for – by Jeanette and her team here at the

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youth club, that will ensure that for the next 50 years there's a legacy in place for Cathedral Youth Club, going forward." Mr Middleton said the Warke family should be very proud that they had sustained the club through their leadership and the support of the Fountain community.

Mrs Warke thanked the many partners who had helped to make the new centre possible, including the club's volunteers. "It's alright giving me all this glory," she said, "but it's the volunteers who make this club." She also paid tribute to the Fountain community who had put up with much disruption while the refurbishment work had been carried out, and thanked the church leaders for their support.

After the speeches, the Mayor unveiled a plaque on the ground floor of the centre to mark the occasion.

## **Barks ring out for Christmas as Peata Carol Service returns**

**The service honours the work of the therapy dogs who visit people in caring institutions with their owners giving their time on a voluntary basis.**

The carols were sung by a cohort of the Cathedral Girls' Choir and Archbishop Michael Jackson gave the traditional pet blessing giving thanks for the contributions animals make to our lives. Donations received at the service went to Peata and the Peter McVerry Trust.

Welcoming the congregation, Dean Dermot Dunne said it was a delight to see the Peata dogs back in the cathedral





Deirdre Murphy O'Reilly and Magic with Dean Dermot Dunne at the Peata Therapy Dog Carol Service in Christ Church Cathedral.

and thanked their owners for having the courage to come to be part of the celebration. He said the service was part of the cathedral's efforts to bring back some normality. "This year more than any other year, it is important that we recognise the contribution our pets make to us in keeping us going and keeping us calm," he said.

Chairperson of Peata Ian Sutton said he was delighted the service could go ahead in recognition of the joy the therapy dogs bring to those they visit. He said that the visits to



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caring institutions had had to be suspended but hoped to have good news next year.

Peata is a voluntary organisation which provides a pet therapy service to caring institutions. Its visiting scheme involves approved volunteers and their dogs who generally pay weekly visits.

Peata therapy dogs and their owners made a very welcome return to Christ Church Cathedral for their traditional Peata Carol Service yesterday (Tuesday December 14). After a gap of one year the service went ahead and while numbers in attendance were reduced, the dogs and their owners enjoyed a joyful reunion.

## **Irish Methodists generosity to Haiti**

Further donations from Irish Methodists have been sent to Haiti to support the ongoing work in the aftermath of the earthquake in August.

Donations totalled £40,364.38

Thank you to everyone who donated.

## **Festive tractor parade at Clabby Church**

**The farming community around Clabby got into the festive mood on Saturday when the annual Christmas tractor run was held to raise funds for St.Margaret's Parish Church in Clogher diocese.**

The event would not be complete without the tractor drivers dressed in Santa hats or in some cases a complete Santa



outfit. Welcoming the drivers to the Parish Hall car park was Rector, Canon Maurice Armstrong, who said the event has been running for a number of years despite the weather.

Most of the tractors on parade were modern vehicles with heated cabs! The tractor run left the hall after drivers were given a warm cup of tea and headed on a 23-mile route via Fivemiletown, Brookeborough, Maguiresbridge, Tempo and back to the hall again. Several motorcyclists acted as outriders at the head of the parade of vehicles followed by Ronnie Coulter in his New Holland T6050 with a sign announcing the fundraising venture. The co-ordinator of the event was Jim Monteith, driving a 1953 David Brown 25D.



## Following the Star in Knockbreda

**A 'Follow the Star' event in and around Knockbreda Parish Church on Saturday 11 December proved a big hit with local families.**

Participants picked up their star maps and then headed off in search of the star clues in order to break the Christmas code and discover the meaning of Christmas. Once they had completed the trail everyone was then able to share the decoded Christmas message with Santa himself who gave everyone a Christmas gift for their efforts.

Santa was very happy to hear the true message that "God is with us" in the middle of a crazy year like 2021.

The evening finished with carol singing and a community Christmas tree light up. The Revd Canon Bill Press shared God's Word with those in attendance and many families with no church connection got to hear the good news of the gospel.



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## **Framed Disestablishment Stamp presented to RCB Library**

**A framed first day cover of the Disestablishment Stamp was presented to the RCB Library on Tuesday December 14 in recognition of the contribution of the library and its staff to the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland.**

The special stamp was issued in January 2021 by An Post to mark the milestone anniversary and was the first time that the state had recognised the Church of Ireland in such a way.

The €1 'N' rate stamp, by Dublin's Vermillion Design, features an image of the Sun, Moon and Stars stained-glass panel in the Cathedral of Saint Fin Barre in Cork City.

Making the presentation to Librarian and Archivist Dr Susan Hood, Archbishop Michael Jackson said the stamp, which now occupies a prominent position in the Library would act as a reminder of the gift of Disestablishment.

“The Library plays a pivotal role in the life of the Church of Ireland and in our connection with the wider scholarly world,” he stated. “The Stamp represents a unique recognition of the role played by the Church of Ireland through its Disestablishment in the life of Ireland over a century and a half.



Dr Susan Hood, Librarian and Archivist at the RCB Library and Archbishop Michael Jackson with the framed first day cover of the Disestablishment Stamp.

“The RCB Library is the right place for the stamp to be and I hope that future generations will be reminded of the responsibility and the opportunity given us by Disestablishment in being free to shape our future in the societies in which we live.”

Dr Hood added: “The RCB Library is honoured to receive this significant presentation from the Archbishop of Dublin, at the conclusion of the 150th anniversary year. It brightens our small display area, where it can be viewed by visitors in the short-term, and thereafter will be kept safe in the context of other Disestablishment anniversary archives for future generations.”

The Stamp is based on the West Window in St Fin Barre’s Cathedral, Cork, itself built in 1870, the year the Church of

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Ireland was disestablished. It depicts creation through images of the sun, the moon and the stars along with water, taking us back to Genesis chapter 1.

It is part of the work of William Burges whose design and execution of the cathedral are internationally renowned.

## **Church of Ireland Representative Body online meeting**

**The Representative Body of the Church of Ireland met in an online format on Wednesday, 8th December 2021.**

The Archbishop of Armagh opened the meeting in prayer and, on behalf of the RB, thanked Mr Henry Saville for his service as Chair of the Executive Committee since 2016.

Mr Saville thanked all members of the RB and members of staff for their enthusiasm and active and committed support to him in this role. The Archbishop welcomed Mr Henry Algeo to his first RB meeting as the incoming Chair of the Executive Committee, and welcomed re-elected and new members whose election to the Representative Body has been reported by dioceses.

The Representative Body approved the provision of a one-off grant to parishes, to be paid to each diocese on the basis of the number of cures, for onward payment to parishes. The grant will be the same amount for each cure. The Archbishop of Armagh remarked that the grant would be made in recognition of the fact that all parishes have gone



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through a difficult time over the course of the pandemic, and this was as much a pastoral as a financial expression of support.

Mr Mike Johnston provided an update on parental leave policies for clergy, currently being considered by the Stipends Committee in consultation

with the House of Bishops and Diocesan Secretaries.

Mr Algeo noted that new regulation required that the beneficial ownership of charitable trusts be recorded with the Revenue Commissioners. The implication for Church of Ireland trusts is being reviewed and guidance will be published on the Parish Resources section of the website in due course.

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The Representative Body received and adopted the recommendations of the Allocations Committee for Allocations expenditure in 2022, presented by Canon Graham Richards. The total budget for Allocations in 2022 is €3,397,588 – compared to €3,566,865 for 2021.

Canon Richards expressed gratitude to the Irish Government for its generous support towards the work of the Board of Education (Republic of Ireland), the Church of Ireland Youth Department, and the RCB Library. Following a request from Bishop Michael Burrows, in his capacity as Chair of the Anglican Centre in Rome, the Allocations Committee recommended support of €20,000 toward reducing the centre's current financial deficit and a further €10,000 annual commitment for five years from the Auxiliary Fund.

The Representative Body elected the following persons to fill casual vacancies in the memberships of committees: Mr Henry Saville (Executive Committee and Audit Committee); Mr Leslie Ruttle (Investment Committee); Mrs Cynthia Cherry (Stipends Committee); and the Very Revd Niall Sloane (Library and Archives Committee).

The Revd Nicola Halford was nominated as a member of the Commission on Ministry's sub-group on women in ministry.

In conclusion, the Archbishop of Armagh shared his best wishes for Christmas and the new year with members, and the meeting closed with the Grace.

## **Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books**

### **Gardaí perform 'Amazing Grace' in touching tribute to lost loved ones**

**Members of An Garda Síochána have led a touching tribute to all those who have lost loved ones in the coronavirus pandemic with a rendition of Amazing Grace.**

Members of the Garda band took a break from policing to perform-- while maintaining social distance-- the 18th century hymn in a Dublin park.

The five members dedicated the piece to everyone who has lost loved ones to the disease, including two members of the Garda band who have lost family members in recent days.

An Garda Síochána shared the poignant tribute on their official Facebook page, with a spokesperson writing:

"The Garda band taking a break from checkpoint duty, would like to dedicate this piece to their two Garda Band colleagues who have lost family members and all members of the public who have lost loved ones due to Covid 19."

The heart-wrenching tribute drew comments of love and support from people on social media, with many offering their condolences to the families and friends of those who have passed.



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Earlier this month, two members of An Garda Síochána's band were filmed performing a traditional Irish tune while taking a break from regular policing, with one member on the piano and another on the tin whistle-- you can check that out here.

[[] <https://www.irishpost.com/entertainment/watch-gardai-take-break-policing-brilliant-impromptu-trad-session-183024>]

## News Reports

### Moderator's deep disappointment as MLA's reject Givan bill

**Speaking after MLAs voted by a very narrow majority earlier on the evening of 14 December against the Severe Fetal Impairment Abortion (Amendment) Bill during its Consideration Stage at the Northern Ireland Assembly the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), Right Reverend Dr David Bruce, said that the rejection of the Bill 'sends a profound message to society about the value that is placed on all human life.'**

In a statement, Dr Bruce said, "We are deeply disappointed that this legislation was rejected by a very narrow majority of MLAs. The Bill sought to provide protection for children where there is a diagnosis of non-fatal disability before birth, including conditions like Down Syndrome. We recognise that today is a setback in realising parity of esteem and equality for unborn babies diagnosed with non-fatal disabilities, and protecting their rights as has been policy for political representatives here in the past.



Dr Bruce continued, “The decision by MLAs sends a profound message to society about the value that is placed on all human life. Within

PCI we affirm that all human life has value and dignity, because of our belief that we are all made in the image of God. We believe that our worth and identity derives from this principle, rather than a subjective judgement about quality of life, and the ability to make a contribution to wider society.

“In giving evidence to the Health Committee one of our ministers, Rev Stephen Lowry, convener of PCI’s Disability Services Committee, and father of a child born with severe mental and physical disabilities, said the following:

‘I have been asked to share some lived experience as a parent of a child with a disability...We did not plan it. We did not choose it. If there is one thing that I want to express this morning to the Committee, it is that what is often seen as a tragedy is not. We think that it is, because disability cuts across the grain of our hopes for perfection. Disability can be seen as an intruder into how we expect our lives should be, or how we want our lives to be, but I have been asked to share my experience this morning, and my honest

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experience is as far from a tragedy as can be. My experience is not a tragedy; it is more of a love story.'

The Moderator continued, "To provide abortion services to full-term on the grounds of non-fatal disability has the potential to create a culture where termination is considered to be an option 'just in case' quality of life is not as good as had been expected with a child without a disability.

"We have vigorously opposed the imposition of abortion legislation by Westminster on Northern Ireland, as we believed at the time, as we continue to maintain today, that it would create the most extreme and liberal abortion regime anywhere in these islands. We are deeply saddened and disappointed that this continues to be the trajectory."

## **Episcopalians join communities responding to deadly, destructive tornadoes in central US**

**Episcopal leaders and church members are working with their communities to provide disaster relief and assistance to areas affected by the powerful storm system overnight Dec. 10 that produced deadly and destructive tornadoes across a wide swath of the central United States.**

Communities in western Kentucky were among the hardest hit. At least 64 people there were killed in the storms, Gov. Andy Beshear said in an update on Dec. 13, and more deaths were reported from the tornadoes that ripped



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through parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

The Diocese of Kentucky, based in Louisville, announced on Facebook that it was working with Episcopal Relief & Development and the staff of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to coordinate assistance to those impacted by the storms. Episcopal Relief & Development is accepting donations online.

“As we continue getting updates from around the diocese, we want to thank you for the incredible outpouring of support from around the church—our neighboring dioceses and dioceses around the country, and caring people from literally around the world have been in touch,” the diocese said. It also encouraged donations to its Bishop’s Discretionary Fund and the state government’s relief fund.

Some of the worst destruction was found in Mayfield, a city of about 10,000 people about a half hour south of Paducah. The tornado leveled a Mayfield candle factory where an estimated 110 people were working, raising fears of mass casualties. At least eight people died in the factory, though the latest updates suggest most workers survived the disaster.

That tornado reached wind speeds estimated as high as 206 mph along a path that stretched more than 200 miles, according to state and federal authorities.

No Episcopal churches are located in Mayfield. Some of the congregations in surrounding communities offered their



support, including St. John's Episcopal Church in Murray, southeast of Mayfield.

"We are praying for all those affected by the tornados and storms, especially the people of Mayfield," St. John's Episcopal Church said in a Facebook post on Dec. 11. The storms had knocked out power to St. John's.

Bowling Green, Kentucky, was another community hit hard overnight Dec. 10 by a tornado, which killed at least 12 people, leveled homes and left a shocked and battered community to pick up the pieces.

The Rev. Steve Pankey, rector at Christ Episcopal Church in Bowling Green, told Episcopal News Service in a phone interview that the tornado cut its path of destruction mere blocks from his home. From his porch he said he can see

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where neighbors lost roofs or sections of their homes in the storm, which packed winds estimated at 155 mph.

The homes of two members of his congregation were destroyed, while about a dozen other members reported lesser damage, such as roofs blown away or falling trees hitting the structures. The power remains out for much of the city, Pankey said, but no one in the congregation was killed or seriously injured.

“Yesterday, in a sort of big empty parking lot, there were just dozens, if not hundreds, of pick-up trucks and folks unloading chain saws and trash bags, whatever they could, and walking into the affected neighborhood and helping people,” Pankey said. Members of his congregation also spent part of the day clearing and sorting through debris with one of the parishioners whose homes were destroyed.

“It’s been pretty awe-inspiring, seeing the community come together,” said Pankey, who also serves on The Episcopal Church Executive Council.

Christ Episcopal Church didn’t lose power, but its internet and phone services had yet to be restored as of Dec. 13. The congregation, meanwhile, was raising money online for its clergy discretionary fund to be used for disaster relief.

For her Dec. 12 sermon, the Rev. Rebecca Kello, associate rector at Christ Episcopal Church, sought solace in the words of the prophet Zephaniah: “You shall fear disaster no more.”

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“Many of us woke without power after a restless night of sheltering from the tornado that has racked our town,” Kello said, according to text of the sermon posted to her blog. “Those of us who were unharmed realized the depth of devastation and disaster that our neighbors faced as they lost everything.”

A tornado that touched down in Monette, Arkansas, killed one person and injured five at a nursing home while damaging other buildings in the small northeastern city near the Missouri state line. The few Episcopal congregations in that part of the state reported no injuries or building damage, according to the Diocese of Arkansas officials.

“We are currently checking on families in the Monette-Leachville area with whom we have relationships and will determine the best ways we can assist them once we know more,” communications director James Matthews told ENS by email on Dec. 13.

– David Paulsen is an editor and reporter for Episcopal News Service.

## Poem for today

### Exposure by Seamus Heaney

It is December in Wicklow:  
Alders dripping, birches  
Inheriting the last light,  
The ash tree cold to look at.



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A comet that was lost  
Should be visible at sunset,  
Those million tons of light  
Like a glimmer of haws and rose-hips,

And I sometimes see a falling star.  
If I could come on meteorite!  
Instead I walk through damp leaves,  
Husks, the spent flukes of autumn,

Imagining a hero  
On some muddy compound,  
His gift like a slingstone  
Whirled for the desperate.

How did I end up like this?  
I often think of my friends'  
Beautiful prismatic counselling  
And the anvil brains of some who hate me

As I sit weighing and weighing  
My responsible tristia.  
For what? For the ear? For the people?  
For what is said behind-backs?

Rain comes down through the alders,  
Its low conductive voices  
Mutter about let-downs and erosions  
And yet each drop recalls

The diamond absolutes.  
I am neither internee nor informer;  
An inner йmigрй, grown long-haired

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And thoughtful; a wood-kerne

Escaped from the massacre,  
Taking protective colouring  
From bole and bark, feeling  
Every wind that blows;

Who, blowing up these sparks  
For their meagre heat, have missed  
The once-in-a-lifetime portent,  
The comet's pulsing rose.

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