



C of E unveils logo for Queen Elizabeth's 90 birthday

The Church of England has unveiled the [logo](#) that it will use for its celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II's 90 birthday, after running a design competition through church schools. Ten-year-old Lucas Salinger from Potten End C of E Primary School in Hertfordshire, part of the St



Luke Sallinger with his winning design which will be used in the C of E's celebrations for Queen Elizabeth II's 90th Birthday

Albans Diocese, drew the winning design, which was selected from more than 1,000 entries.

It depicts a circular crest bordered by children holding hands. It is dissected by a cross, reminiscent of the one that hangs above the altar at Holy Trinity, the village church. It has two candles and the number 90 in the quarters; and is topped by the Royal Crown and the E-ii-R

insignia, representing in Latin Elizabeth Regina II – Queen Elizabeth II.

“I feel amazed that my design was chosen,” Luke Salinger said. “I feel lost for words!”

His school’s head teacher, Andrew Morris, said that he was proud that the winning entry came from one of his pupils. “Lucas is a thoughtful and talented young man who thoroughly deserves recognition for his hard work on the logo,” Mr Morris said. “I so am pleased that Lucas has incorporated the cross design that hangs in our church in Potten End.”

The school’s 199 pupils, aged from four to 11, will be celebrating the Queen’s 90th by studying her life and having a street party to celebrate.

The Queen’s actual birthday is on 21 April; but it is traditional for public celebrations of the Monarch’s birthday to take place on an “official birthday” in the Summer. The exact date varies throughout the Commonwealth. In the UK, it is marked on a Saturday in June. This year it will be marked on 11 June and there will be a weekend of celebrations from Friday 10 June through until Sunday 12 June.

Official events taking place on the Official birthday weekend will including a thanksgiving

service at St Paul's Cathedral, a Birthday Parade on Horse Guards Parade and a street party in The Mall.

It is envisaged that church events will be integrated into local community celebrations that take place that weekend.

“The birthday celebration weekend offers churches the opportunity to share local stories from the last 90 years through exhibitions and oral histories, securing these memories for future generations,” a C of E spokesperson said.

Trócaire's 43rd Lenten campaign

Trócaire, the Irish Catholic Church's overseas aid agency, raised over €8.3 million during its Lenten campaign in 2015 it was revealed last week.

Speaking at the launch of Trócaire's 43rd Lenten campaign, Executive director Éamonn Meehan said, “This year's Trócaire box is a recognition of ordinary people who are doing extraordinary things in the pursuit of justice and a fairer world.”

“The people featured on the box are schoolchildren, teachers, grandparents, clergy, volunteers and families.”



Pictured launching the 2016 Trocaire Lenten Campaign are two and half-year-old Jessie Rogers from Celbridge, Co. Kildare and three-year-old Luka Farrell from Longwood, Co. Meath. For the first time the Trocaire box features Trocaire supporters from across Ireland who are fighting for justice for the world's poor by fundraising, campaigning and volunteering.

“All of them have something in common. They cannot ignore poverty and they want to make a difference in whatever way they can. Together, they are fighting for justice for the world’s poor.”

According to Mr Meehan, thanks to support from people in Ireland, Trócaire supported 2.4 million people across Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East in 2015. This included 45,000 poor families who got access to local resources, including land and water.

Trócaire protected over 700 human rights defenders who were abused and attacked in Guatemala and over 6,000 women, who survived abuse, got healthcare, counselling and legal aid to get justice.

“Sometimes, it is easy to look at the scale of global poverty and think ‘what can I do?’,” said Éamonn Meehan.

“This year, our Trócaire box is dedicated to thanking the thousands of people who say ‘I’ll do what I can’.”

Trócaire’s 2016 Lenten Campaign runs from Ash Wednesday 10 February to Easter Sunday 27 March.

Parish support for South Belfast Food Bank

St Aidan’s Parish in south Belfast has partnered with the Trussell Trust and now sends a monthly

collection and donates food four times a year to the South Belfast Community Food Bank.

One of the initiatives of local churches working together in the area has been to set up a hub for the food bank in Blythe Street. This is situated at Friendship House and managed by a team of volunteers from the churches, overseen by Alison Shaw, St Aidan's Family Worker.

The Food Bank benefited from a retiring collection lifted at the Community Carol Service last December, which was also the launch of the St Aidan's Christmas Tree Festival. The service was held in St Aidan's as it is the only church in the area big enough to cope with large numbers. Almost 200 attended from local congregations with all the ministers participating in the service.

The retiring collection, added to collections taken during the week at the tree display, amounted to £330 which was donated to the Food Bank, along with a large donation of food from St Aidan's, St Simon's and Donegall Road Primary School.

Methodist newsletter on vital congregations

The next issue of the *Methodist Newsletter* brings a 'postcard' from the Rev Byron Brought, churchnewsireland@gmail.com

who, having recently spent two years in Ireland (2010-2012), shares family and United Methodist Church news from his current home in the USA.

‘The American Church has a strong emphasis on developing “vital congregations”,’ he explains. ‘Vital congregations are identified by five characteristics: inviting and inspired worship; engaged disciples in mission and outreach; gifted, equipped and empowered lay ministry; effective, equipped and inspired clergy leadership; small groups that include children and youth designed to encourage, support and hold disciples accountable in their Christian walk.

‘Congregations are charged to ask themselves: What will we continue doing? What will we stop doing? What will we modify?’

Mr. Brought comments in the ‘postcard’, ‘Warm and loving greetings to our dear friends in the Methodist Church in Ireland! Mary Kay and I agree that among the most precious years of our lives were the two years we spent at Queen’s Parade.

1916, C of I primate visits forces and chaplains in France

On Saturday past, the News Letter reprinted a report about the C of I Primate's visit to France during the First World War.

It was titled - Lord Primate and the Army - His Grace's Visit to the Front. It stated - His Grace the Lord Primate (Most Rev Dr Crozier), continuing his visit to the front, spent part of last week with the 16th (Irish) Division, as the guest of General Hickie.

On Monday, 31st January, he went amongst the regiment at headquarters, speaking in his own happy genial manner to various units. The men everywhere gave him the heartiest welcome, and did not conceal their delight at having among them a distinguished fellow countryman. Differences of faith or politics were forgotten in the pleasure of meeting so thorough an Irishman as Dr Crozier.

On Tuesday, the 1st inst, the Primate's programme included a journey to some distant regiments of this division, and also a visit to the part of the trenches held by them. While at the 16th headquarters the Primate had an opportunity of addressing a large number of the members of his church at a meeting in a schoolhouse. The men were cheerful and happy in spite of much discomfort and strenuous

labours. They deeply appreciated the rousing and inspiring words spoken to them by the head of their Church. His Grace also visited the field hospital there.

His Grace expressed his unconcealed delight at the great privilege he has enjoyed of meeting face to face his cheerful and heroic fellow countrymen who are in arms in a foreign land. He has been particularly grateful to find that the chaplains with the Irish regiments are highly valued and respected, and are accomplishing a noble work.

Get Together : Bereaved families discovering Roadshow

Cruse Bereavement Care and Corrymeela Community invite you to attend the second Get Together - Bereaved families discovering Roadshow at 7pm on Monday 15th February 2016, in the Cruse Bereavement Care, 8 Prince Regent Road, Belfast, BT5 6QR.

Pope makes long-awaited visit to Our Lady of Guadalupe

On Saturday Pope Francis fulfilled his much-desired wish to pray in silence before the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

After celebrating the first Mass of his papal trip to Mexico, the Pope made his way to the “camarin” (“little room”) behind the main altar of the basilica dedicated to Mary. The miraculous mantle, which normally faces the congregation, can be turned around to allow a closer and more private moment of veneration.

Laying a bouquet of yellow roses in front of the image, the pope sat down in prayerful silence with eyes closed and head bowed. After roughly 20 minutes, the pope stood up, laid his hand on the image and departed from the small room.

About 12,000 people packed the basilica for the papal Mass and another 30,000 were watching on screens set up in the outer courtyard. Built in 1976, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe is located near Tepeyac hill, the site of Mary’s apparitions to St Juan Diego in 1531. With some 12 million people visiting each year, it is Catholicism’s most popular Marian shrine.

In his homily, the Pope reflected on the Gospel reading, which recalled Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth.

Mary's humility in saying "yes" to God's will, he said, is a response "which prompted her to give the best of herself, going forth to meet others."

That very humility also led her to appear to a poor indigenous man, he said. "Just as she made herself present to little Juan, so too she continues to reveal herself to all of us, especially to those who feel — like him — 'worthless,'" the Pope said.

Recalling the miraculous appearance of Mary's image, Pope Francis noted that through such a miracle, "Juan experienced in his own life what hope is, what the mercy of God is."

Pope and Patriarch hold historic meeting in Cuba

In an historic first meeting since the Great Schism of 1054, the head of the Roman Catholic Church and the largest Church in Eastern Orthodoxy met in Cuba on Friday and issued an urgent plea on behalf of the world's persecuted Christians.

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis issued a joint declaration in which they warned that whole families, villages and cities of

Christians in many countries of the Middle East and North Africa are being completely exterminated.

In Syria and Iraq, Christians are seeing their churches being “barbarously ravaged and looted, their sacred objects profaned, their monuments destroyed”.

They called upon world leaders “to act urgently in order to prevent the further expulsion of Christians from the Middle East.”

“It is with pain that we call to mind the situation in Syria, Iraq and other countries of the Middle East, and the massive exodus of Christians from the land in which our faith was first disseminated and in which they have lived since the time of the Apostles, together with other religious communities.”

They said that in raising their voices in defence of persecuted Christians, they wished to also express their compassion for the suffering experienced by the faithful of other religious traditions who have also become victims of civil war, chaos and terrorist violence.

“Thousands of victims have already been claimed in the violence in Syria and Iraq, which has left many other millions without a home or

means of sustenance. We urge the international community to seek an end to the violence and terrorism and, at the same time, to contribute through dialogue to a swift return to civil peace.”

They emphasised that large scale humanitarian aid must be assured to the afflicted populations and to the many refugees seeking safety in neighbouring lands.

The appealed to “all those whose influence can be brought to bear upon the destiny of those kidnapped, including the Metropolitans of Aleppo, Paul and John Ibrahim, who were taken in April 2013, to make every effort to ensure their prompt liberation”.

The joint declaration signalled a thaw in relations between the two wings of Christianity reflected in their statement, “We are not competitors but brothers”.

The Pope and the Patriarch also strongly defended traditional marriage and the family, describing the family as the natural centre of human life and society.

“We are concerned about the crisis in the family in many countries. Orthodox and Catholics share the same conception of the family, and are called to witness that it is a path of holiness, testifying

to the faithfulness of the spouses in their mutual interaction, to their openness to the procreation and rearing of their children, to solidarity between the generations and to respect for the weakest.”

“The family is based on marriage, an act of freely given and faithful love between a man and a woman. It is love that seals their union and teaches them to accept one another as a gift. Marriage is a school of love and faithfulness.”

“We regret that other forms of cohabitation have been placed on the same level as this union, while the concept, consecrated in the biblical tradition, of paternity and maternity as the distinct vocation of man and woman in marriage is being banished from the public conscience.”

They also called for respect for the inalienable right to life.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Irish medium schools placed on a pedestal, DUP

News Letter

Irish medium schools should not be “place on a pedestal” by the Education Minister while so many others are forced to close, Peter Weir has said.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/irish-medium-schools-placed-on-pedestal-dup-1-7213415>

NI abortion case hearing in June

News Letter

Appeals against a ruling that abortion law in Northern Ireland is incompatible with human rights legislation will be heard in June.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/abortion-case-court-hearing-set-for-june-1-7213444>

Refugees must respect Irish values, says bishop

Irish Independent

The intervention by Bishop of Cork & Ross Dr John Buckley represents the first time a Catholic **Church** leader has highlighted what the **church** sees as ...

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/refugees-must-respect-irish-values-says-bishop-34451350.html>

New Irish ‘feel pressure’ to allow children to be instructed in Catholic faith in schools

Irish Times

Describing himself as “a **Christian** secularist”, the evangelical pastor said the current system of denominationally controlled education in **Ireland** is ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/new-irish-feel-pressure-to-allow-children-be-instructed-in-catholic-faith-at-schools-1.2532330>

Mayo doctor honoured on 1916 centenary stamp

Connaught Telegraph

Born in Mayo, she was the daughter of a Church of Ireland rector and related to Countess Markievicz. After qualifying as a doctor, she set up a practice in Dublin and was a feminist, socialist and nationalist who assisted hunger-striking suffragists.

<http://www.con-telegraph.ie/news/roundup/articles/2016/02/09/4114012-mayo-doctor-honoured-on-1916-centenary-stamp/>

The outspoken vicar called Pearse a ‘mincing floor-walker’

Galway Advertiser

It will look at the Church of Ireland vicar as a revivalist and scholar in the field of traditional music and will contextualise his scholarship within the ...

<http://www.advertiser.ie/galway/article/82679/the-outspoken-vicar-who-called-pearse-a-mincing-floor-walker>

Ind/Guard/Tel/BBC/NewsRT

Range of reports on the reaction to a tweet posted by the CofE (@c_of_e) offering prayers for Richard Dawkins (and his family) who has suffered a stroke. *Independent* said some tweets accused the CofE of ‘trolling’ as Dawkins is an atheist. Others then followed up the story, after [a blog by Rev Arun Arora](#), director of communications for the Archbishops’ Council, saying the CofE has defended the tweet stressing it was genuine.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/richard-dawkins-church-of-england-deny-trolling-biologist-by->

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

[sending-prayers-following-minor-stroke-a6871966.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/12156297/Church-of-England-denies-trolling-Richard-Dawkins.html) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/12156297/Church-of-England-denies-trolling-Richard-Dawkins.html> <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/feb/14/church-of-england-defends-prayer-tweet-for-richard-dawkins-after-stroke> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35571588> <http://www.newsrt.co.uk/news/church-of-england-defends-richard-dawkins-prayer-tweet-3914506.html>

Mail

Report on a play that portrays Jesus as a transgender woman, being staged today at St Chrysostom's church in Manchester's Victoria Park as part of the city's Queer Contact festival. The article focuses on a number of critical comments from senior church figures. A statement from Manchester diocese said: 'We do not accept that a bishop may use the power to issue 'general directions' regarding the use of churches for performances from 'time to time' as providing sufficient legal basis for the prevention of a specific event.'
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3446157/Unholy-row-church-s-play-portrays-Jesus-transgender-woman-refers-God-Mum.html#ixzz408DPXUqn>

Sun

Feature on proposed extension to Sunday trading hours for larger stores in England and Wales, contrasting with the longer hours already in operation in Scotland. Article notes the plans face opposition from unions, church leaders, the Labour Party and Tory rebels but points to research that the move could generate an

additional £200m a year and create 3,000 jobs. The paper is supportive of the proposed change.

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/6930245/Shoppers-want-to-ditch-outdated-Sunday-trading-laws.html>

Farmers Weekly

Report that Church urges help for crisis hit farmers, following comments made by Bishop of Salisbury, Nick Holtam at a meeting in Dorchester last week.

<http://www.fwi.co.uk/news/church-urges-help-for-crisis-hit-farmers.htm>

BBC/Tel (video)

Reports that Pope Francis and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill have called for restored Christian unity between the two churches at historic talks in Cuba. The meeting was the first between a Pope and a Russian Church head since the Western and Eastern branches of Christianity split in the 11th Century. In a [joint declaration](#), they also urged the world to protect Christians from persecution in the Middle East.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-35565085>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/12155123/Pope-Francis-meets-Patriarch-Kirill-in-Cuba.html>

Christian Today

Report that the Archbishop of Canterbury says the Church has a key role to play in the future of London, and cities across the UK and the world. Justin Welby was speaking at Lambeth Palace yesterday at the launch

of *From Battersea to the Barrier*. The Southwark diocese initiative seeks to use the "Church's history, lived experience and rootedness in community to bear" on the future of London – and particularly the riverside area.

Times

Personal reflection on marriage and leading a church by Rev Tim Hughes, vicar of the new Gas Street Church, in Birmingham.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4689535.ece>

BBC

Report that a row over whether a village's church bells could chime overnight has been resolved by a volume reducing device. Ashwell, in Hertfordshire (St Albans Diocese), had been divided by residents who said St Mary's quarter-hour chimes kept them awake at night, and others who liked them.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-35541894>

Times

Interview with Tom Hollander who starred in the BBC sitcom *Rev*, about the life of an inner city Church of England parish priest.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/life/celebrity/article4688544.ece>

Comment

Times

Times Chief football correspondent Oliver Kay writes that the roots of football, going back to Victorian times, are at

the core of our societies. “Football serves as a glue, in some respects. I feel we have almost taken the place of the church.”

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/sport/football/article4689627.ece>

Tel

Author Antonia Honeywell writes that she left the Church of England because of its views on same sex relationships.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12153784/I-was-driven-out-of-my-beloved-church-by-homophobia.html>

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