



**Image of the day -  
Organ at St David's Cathedral**

## Reports

### **New Wine is not the Church of England**

**Today, Monday, the Archbishop of York, the Most Revd Stephen Cottrell, will present to the General Synod the latest report from the Vision and Strategy group, including the target of 10,000 new predominantly lay-led churches in the next ten years.**

This is an initiative backed by the London-based Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication, and is led by the head of church-planting development at New Wine, Angela Tilbey writes in the Church Times.

All this was reported in the week that ordinations were taking place all round the country. It seemed ironic that, just as ordinands were making the Declaration of Assent, the Church they were committing themselves to was looking to a model of the Church which is very different from that in which they were being ordained.

I suspect that few of our new ministers will have given much thought to the implications of the Declaration of Assent. If they read it before they made it, they would have discovered that the Church of England is not a network of informal churches based on Bible classes, upbeat worship, and regular supernatural intervention, but merely “part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church worshipping the One True God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit”.

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They would have also discovered that they are required to promise that they will use only forms of worship authorised or allowed by canon. The declaration is short, subtle, and dry. By way of contrast, read New Wine's Values and Principles of Christian Ministry and you will find an amazing rush of aspirations. Joy! Freedom! Supernatural gifts! Heartfelt worship! With such abundant blessing, a million new worshippers sounds almost modest.

But New Wine is not the Church of England. The contrast between what the C of E believes about itself and the aspirations of the Evangelical networks that many are linked into seems so extreme as to be unbridgeable. The reality is that, in spite of the Decade of Evangelism, church-planting, Fresh Expressions, and other initiatives, the decline in numbers of Church of England worshippers has continued.

I now wonder whether, in a desperate attempt to avoid facing this reality, we have entered a state of corporate psychosis: a leap into false consciousness. We are pouring our efforts into a last desperate bid to stay alive, like a delusional person gambling away their lifetime's savings.

My GP used to say that depression is reality. I think she was right. The "mixed ecology" has not worked. These are hard times for the faith, fallow times for the C of E, with its cautious, grounded via media so needed, yet currently unwanted. It takes courage to face this. Friends, there is no obvious harvest round the corner right now. The Declaration of Assent is a call not to success, but to faithfulness. "Take no thought of the harvest. But only of proper sowing."

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## **Killaloe Cathedral could be a ‘light in the economic darkness’**

**Ambitious plans have been unveiled to transform St Flannan’s Cathedral into a “world class” national and international venue for cultural events following a proposed €300,000 investment, Dan Danaher reports in The Clare Champion.**

State agencies are being asked to support a major refurbishment of this iconic historical protected building as part of the provision of a new downstairs washroom, catering area and upgrading of the vestry, subject to planning permission and funding.

The select vestry committee is liaising with Clare and Tipperary County Council on how to increase its use as a cultural and community space.

It has engaged conservation architect, Conor Hourigan and historian, Judith Hill to complete a conservation plan for future development.

The Dean of the St Flannan’s Cathedral, Roderick Symth and Dean Vicar, Rev Paul Fitzpatrick, are very supportive of plans to increase the use of this iconic building for cultural purposes.

They administer clerical duties in the Nenagh Union of Parishes, which now contains the Nenagh and Strabably group of parishes including Mountshannon, Castleconnell,

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Tuamgraney, Templederry, Nenagh, St Flannan's Killaloe and Killordiernan.

Rev Fitzpatrick told The Clare Champion they want to reinvigorate St Flannan's because it is a fantastic, iconic, historic building. "It is historically rooted in the ancient centre of Killaloe and Ballina.

"The challenge is to make St Flannan's a centre that locally, nationally and internationally we can be proud of and transform it into a world class centre.

"We want St Flannan's' to be open to the local, national and international community and available to all faiths and none. We are part of the Anglican Church of Ireland tradition and the Christian Catholic tradition.

"We have a brilliant community, people who worship and select vestry committee, visitors and tourists who care deeply about the Cathedral. It is not just about bricks and mortar. It is rooted in St Lua and St Flannan.

"St Flannan's Cathedral is situated in a pivotal position on the waterway straddling the Killaloe and Ballina community. I believe its location is unique.

"It is a real treasure in our midst and we need to open it up to realise its potential.

"It could act as a light in the economic darkness of these times to support local businesses".

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Submissions are being made to various agencies to secure grant funding and the select vestry committee also welcome corporate donations, which are tax deductible.

He said Tipperary and Clare County Council are very supportive of their plans. Next week, a meeting is planned with Clare Arts Officer, Siobhán Mulcahy and her Tipperary counterpart Melanie Scott.

Officials from the Office of Public Works have also been briefed about their plans.

Project co-ordinator, Catherine Caball said Killaloe Cathedral has a lot of historical, religious, social and economic significance.

Having helped St Mary's Cathedral address similar financial challenges through concerts, exhibitions, talks and a major corporate banquet, Ms Caball recalled she met a very enthusiastic vestry committee to discuss the proposed upgrading project, while people in the wider community are also very supportive of plans for its future development.

When the Cathedral is properly refurbished, Ms Caball said it could act as a venue for regular concerts and other events that would create a local economic spin-off for hotels, restaurants and bars, subject to Covid-19 guidelines.

The proposed upgrading is in addition to extensive renovation and repair work that is required in the Cathedral.

Committee member, Deborah Dudgeon is excited about their development plans.

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“It is our most historic building and is the jewel in our crown. It is a 13th century building with artefacts going back to the ninth century.

“It is very medieval and has connections with Brian Ború. It is a huge piece of our history. It is an underutilised space.

“The chancel part is used for the regular Sunday service and the nave, which is huge could be used for exhibitions and events.

“It belongs to people in Killaloe and the surrounding area and is not just a place of worship.

St Flannan’s Cathedral hosted five Sunday music selections and the Killaloe Music Festival recently.

The children of Ballina National School drew peoples’ heads, which were placed on all the pews for the festival.

She recalled during the live streaming singers were socially distanced in the Cathedral.

“Because of the filming for the live streaming you could see the interior of the Cathedral without distraction. It really showcased the Cathedral and showed us what is possible.”

Major funding is needed to provide downstairs toilets and make the entrance inside the main door accessible for people with disabilities.

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Citing the example of St James' Church in Dingle, she recalled Other Voices stage concerts in the church, which illustrates what can be achieved in St Flannan's.

On Saturday, July 10, local musician and singer songwriter Norma Manley streamed a concert from the Cathedral to celebrate Féile Brian Ború.

Report courtesy The Clare Champion

## **C of E Bishops under fire for leading heavenly lifestyle as parishes near collapse**

**Bishops' "lavish lifestyles" cost £100,000 a year on top of their salary, the Church of England has revealed, amid fears that the parish system will collapse under financial ruin, Gabriella Swerling writes in the Daily Telegraph.**

Houses with more than six bedrooms, gardeners, chauffeurs and entertaining account for the "opulent" spending by 42 diocesan bishops – each of whom earns £46,180 per year.

**£70,310 - The average amount spent each year maintaining bishops' houses. A further £36,976 went on local expenses**

Church officials released the financial data ahead of a sitting of General Synod, the Church's legislative body, which is running from Friday until Monday.



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The figures revealed that bishops receive up to £100,000 as well as their salary, triggering criticism from Synod members who are calling for them to stop “living like kings or queens while the Church of England goes bankrupt”.

It comes after the Archbishop of York, the Rt Rev Stephen Cottrell, came under attack last year for his vision of “a revitalised parish system within which new and inherited worshipping communities flourish together” amid fears it was being dismantled.

Senior figures are also trying to recruit churchgoers following a decline in congregation numbers.

In written questions submitted ahead of the conference, Sam Margrave, a lay member of General Synod, asked Church Commissioners, responsible for managing the Church’s £9.2 billion investment fund, details relating to bishops’ spending last year.

The published figures show that the average annual cost of the maintenance of bishops’ houses is £70,310 per house, that 26 bishops live in houses with more than six bedrooms, and that “a number of bishops have staff who will on occasion do some driving for them in particular situations”.

It also showed bishops had an average local expenses spend of £36,976, and their average spend on meetings and hospitality was £3,200.

However, in 2019, for a pre-Covid comparison, average local spend was £53,446, and average spend on meetings and hospitality was £15,238.

The last time such data was published was in 2015 when the average annual cost of the ongoing maintenance of bishops' houses was £61,079 per house and 11 bishops had drivers (four of whom also acted as gardeners) .

Responding to the latest data, Mr Margrave said: "As a member of General Synod for over a decade I have questioned the cost of bishops' lavish lifestyles, and the opulence at the top, while parishes struggle to meet their bills, and even close their door.

"If we are to maintain a presence in every community and have a bias to the poor, we need to change the way money is shared out. Bishops should be helping the poor, not helping themselves."

## People and places

### Summer breaks out in Hollywood

**It was a fabulous week on the lawn at St Philip and St James in Hollywood.**

Pre-School Praise held their 'Summer Breakout' each morning with lots of activities for young families and on Wednesday, afternoon tea was served to some of the 'Seniors'.

Friday morning was extra special for the kids (and adults) with the arrival of an ice-cream van – free cones for all – and a visit from some small, mostly cuddly, animals!

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Congratulations to the Children's Worker Angela Megarry, Bridget, and the huge group of volunteers who made it all possible.

## **Cork parish walks raise 2K for charities**

**The parishioners of the Templebreedy Group of Parishes met for the third time on Tuesday 6th July to walk together and raise money for charities.**

In May 2021 they raised €1,300 for Christian Aid and in June another €700 for the Alzheimer's Society. The group walks from The Royal Yacht Club in Crosshaven to Rabbit Island where they all have tea, coffee, and cake.

Rev. Isobel Jackson, Rector of Templebreedy Group, said: Many of our parishioners would walk this way on different days of the week, especially throughout the pandemic, so we thought it would be a nice idea to all meet together once a month.

John Sweetnam and his mother Hazel, parishioners of the Glanmire and Cobh Union of Parishes, joined this walk in [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

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support of the Mother's Union in Ireland. John is doing 21 walks as part of the "21 in 21" challenge created by June Butler, the All-Ireland President of the MU. John has raised money for ongoing projects such as supplies for local women's refuges (CriTiCall), support for the Prison Resource Centre and Away From It All hampers and vouchers.

This month the Templebreedy Group of Parishes met simply to socialise but donations from this event and others in the future will go towards the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

## **The Ballina mission bus**

**The Ballina Centre of Mission, based in County Mayo is building bridges through schools work, Bible studies, and food distribution.**

The community bus project has been an important resource, parking up around the town and acting as a drop-in hub for people who are isolated, lonely, or those wanting to connect with Jesus.

Ballina is the largest town in County Mayo in the Moy valley surrounded by beautiful mountains. It is home to a divided and polarised community. 10% of the population are from the, often marginalised, traveller community, and there are many isolated farms that surround the town. The area sadly has a particularly high suicide rate.

Church Army's Emma Rodrigues (Lead Evangelist) and Marian Edwards (Pioneer Evangelist) are based here and

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catalyse churches and local agencies to help meet the practical, educational, and spiritual needs of people of all ages. They work as part of Ballina Churches Together, an ecumenical partnership formed of the four main Christian denominations – Catholic, Church of Ireland, Methodist, and Presbyterian. This partnership is particularly special in light of Ireland’s historical tension between Protestant and Catholic groups.

The community bus project launched in January 2019 after Ballina Churches Together bought and refurbished an old library bus. Eamon arrived at Catholic Cathedral where the bus was launched, saying he distinctively felt led to the cathedral that evening. Eamon, a musician and someone who had not really been to church for years, offered to become one of the bus’ first drivers.

Eamon was experiencing difficult things in his life – he had separated from his wife and was currently living with his mum; there was a lot to process.

During his time as a bus driver, Eamon had heard and seen Emma, Marion, and their team share gospel stories with children on housing estates and had joined the volunteer events. As he saw the team’s faith in action, he noticed something was different about them.

Eamon began speaking of how his life had started to change since being involved with the bus project, and how he wanted to know more about Jesus. Some of his musician friends also began noticing how his outlook had altered.

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Emma invited Eamon to a Bible study, and he started attending local Christian meetings. He was engaging with the discussions and began thinking about how Jesus was relevant to his life.

A spiritual hunger was awakened, and this overflowed into Eamon's song writing. He began writing Christian songs, and some of these were sung at the Methodist Church Service on Zoom last Christmas.

Emma tells of how Eamon "has recognised God's calling on his life and wishes to use his musical gifts to pursue this." God has been working in Eamon's life, and the relationships through the bus project have been pivotal in this.

## **Papal Award for Peter Dunn of the Radharc Trust**

**On Tuesday afternoon Archbishop Dermot Farrell presented Peter Dunn with the Papal Award, Pro-Ecclesia et Pontifice in recognition of his leadership of the Radharc Trust.**

The collection of the ground-breaking Radharc series is large, comprising film and video tape formats, numbering more than 420 documentary films produced in 75 countries since 1962.

Speaking on the occasion of the presentation of the Papal Award, Archbishop Farrell said, "Peter Dunn brought that sense of service and commitment – and faith – to his work with the Radharc Trust. Since 1996, Peter has worked

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tirelessly with a steady determination to ensure that the Radharc programmes and the essential Christian values they embody should not be forgotten.

“The Radharc Trust mission statement captures the ambition: ‘Preserving the Archive and Celebrating the Legacy.’ Peter has led the work in:

- Digital media preservation and restoration;
- Negotiating proper care of the collection with national archives and institutions; and by,
- Encouraging new talent and challenging moral thinking through screenings, film festivals and awards – The Radharc Award at the Fresh Festival and the prestigious biennial Radharc Awards.

“Peter has also personally arranged screenings of Radharc programmes in parish halls and nursing homes, travelling around Dublin City and beyond.

“Peter has managed funding applications and raised nearly €500,000 for the preservation of Radharc Films.

“This undertaking has been very impressive. But it is only possible because the Radharc Archive is an immeasurably valuable historical and cultural resource of national and international importance.

“Yet, perhaps more importantly, the Radharc programmes tell a story of people of faith, in Ireland and across the world, coping with challenges and opportunities – always

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motivated by religious values. Indeed, we would do well to learn from those stories in the programmes. The circumstances of today may be different, personalities may have changed but the enduring Christian message of these stories must not be forgotten.

‘But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ... And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.’” (Corinthians 13)

Archbishop Farrell concluded, “Peter Dunn knows this. And we see these values of faith, hope and love, in Peter. His commitment to his faith and service to the Church is an inspiration to all who meet him.

“For all these reasons, it gives me the greatest of pleasure to present to Peter Dunn the Papal Award Pro-Ecclesia et Pontifice.”

## **Books, broadcasts, resources, and Webinars**

### **Virtual Tour of St Doulagh’s Church Balgriffen launched**

St Doulagh’s church is the oldest stone–roofed church still in use in Ireland. The present church was erected on the site of an earlier church dedicated to the



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6th century anchorite St Doulagh. The complex also comprises Ireland's only surviving standalone octagonal baptistry, built over a holy well.



The Revd Lesley Robinson (Rural Dean) Aidan Giblin, Anne Thornton, Susan Kennedy of Lensmen Photography, Mick Mongey, Fingal Heritage Officer Christine Baker, Derek Moffatt and Ken McAllister of Friends of St Doulagh's.

Community archaeology group, Resurrecting Monuments, working with the Friends of St Doulagh's have joined with Lensman Photography to produce a cutting-edge virtual tour of St Doulagh's Church, Balgriffen.

The purpose of the Matterport 3D Virtual Tour is to provide online access to a self-guided tour of the church building

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and baptistry. The Matterport 3D technology allows users to examine every aspect of the building via 'Hotspots' which allow additional expert detail to be provided on important aspects of the building.

“Fingal County Council is delighted to support the development of a virtual tour of this highly significant site,” said Christine Baker, Fingal Heritage Officer. “It highlights how technology can contribute to the interpretation of important heritage sites and the 3D Virtual Tour of St Doulagh’s provides access to this nationally important site to all sections of our community.”

“St Doulagh’s church is a difficult building to navigate except for the most physically abled visitors,” said Aidan Giblin, Chair of Resurrecting Monuments.

“The Virtual Tour will enable much wider access to the general public to this highly significant and interesting building. We hope this will be a portal not just for curious tourists but also be a platform for academics and students to further research the sites history and contribute to our knowledge of our past.”

“This Virtual Access Tour will allow all to see that St Doulagh’s is not just an interesting archaeological monument with a fascinating history but is still an active place of worship as it was intended when founded almost 1500 years ago,” added Ken McAllister of the Friends of St Doulagh’s. “We’re happy that the tour opens St Doulagh’s not just to the local community but globally to wherever the internet extends.”

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Dr Rachel Moss , Associate Professor of History of Art and Architecture from Trinity College Dublin provides the introduction to St Doulagh's in the tour.

To access the Virtual Tour go to <https://www.fingal.ie/digital-heritage-projects> or <https://resurrectingmonuments.wordpress.com/st-doulaghs-church-3d-virtual-tour/>

## **Lambeth Conference Bishops' Conversations**

The Archbishop of York and other bishops have shared their impressions of the first week of Lambeth Conference Bishops' Conversations. Archbishop Stephen says: "These conversations aren't just the orchestra tuning up before the full symphony of the Lambeth conference takes place in Canterbury next year. They are the first movement. We are learning how to be God's Church for God's world. The words of this message remain the same. They are about the unconditional love of God shown us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But in a complex, diverse and changing world, we are learning to sing a few new tunes. And we are learning them from each other."

Read the full comment and others from Bishop Graham Usher, Bishop Eleanor Sanderson, Bishop Renta Nishihara and Bishop Peter Stuart on the Lambeth Conference blog: <https://bit.ly/BCReflections>

## Pointers for prayer

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee,  
that the course of this world  
may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance,  
that thy Church may joyfully serve thee  
in all godly quietness;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord of the Church, we pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world who acknowledge your presence and power in their lives. We pray for those who are laughed at or victimised because of their faith in you. We pray that you will give us strength to be true to our faith when it is questioned or belittled.

We pray for our church and our community and for a renewal of our vision and dedication to the work you have called us to do.

*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Lord of all nations, we pray for the needs of this world.

We pray for those nations where communities are broken by prejudice and hatred, where the fear of violence is never far away. We pray that where human endeavours to find peace and reconciliation seem so inadequate your power to draw people together will bring renewed hope for the future.

We pray for those who have knowledge and power in the fields of medicine and science. Let them not be corrupted by greed and ambition but grant them wisdom, integrity, humility and compassion to use the knowledge they have gained only for the good of all people.

Throughout the world-wide community of nations may there be a sense of responsibility for each other and a desire for equality and justice for all your children.

*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

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God of compassion, we pray for all those who are suffering with anxiety, stress, grief or pain and illness.

Long ago a woman believed she would be healed if she could just touch the clothes of Jesus. May we today believe that if we pray to you for those we know and love, your healing power will also flow into their lives bringing wholeness of body, mind and spirit.

In a moment of quiet our hearts reach out to you in prayer for the needs of those we love.

Grant us strength in our weakness, comfort in our sorry, peace of mind in our anxiety and stress and the renewed hope for life which only your presence and power can bring.

*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Lord of time and of eternity, we pray for those who have died and are now with you in your kingdom ....

We thank you for the communion we share with all those who have gone before us and pray that our lives may reflect on earth the light that surrounds them in your eternal kingdom.

*Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Lord, be present among us this morning and may the transforming power of your Spirit work in us and through us today and throughout the coming week.

Merciful Father accept these prayers, For the sake of your son, our saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Speaking to the Soul

**“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then**

**puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”**

Matthew 5:14-16 NLT

On the face of it, it seems really surprising that Jesus should be describing his followers as the light of the world. Surely that was his role. But Jesus was recognising that the only way in which people would see his light would be if his followers reflected his light into their communities. It is, therefore, our responsibility to find the most prominent place to put our light so that as many people as possible can see Jesus.

It is good that Christians should spend time together. We need the strength and encouragement of worshipping and sharing fellowship. But, at the same time, it is vital for us to be part of our communities in order to have opportunities to share the light of Christ. When our diaries are so full of church meetings that we have no time for anything or anyone else, something has gone desperately wrong.

How then will people see this light shining from our lives? Jesus says that it happens as people see our good deeds. We should never be looking for people's praise and recognition for our actions, but as we get on with being Christians in daily life sharing compassion and practical help, the light shines. I have seen this happening time and again through Christians getting stuck into the work of food banks, street pastoring, homeless projects and neighbourhood befriending schemes to name but a few. It is important that our actions are complemented by talking

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about Jesus, but it is so often the actions that show that our message has credibility.

We all have very different opportunities to shine the light of Christ. Your unique network of relationships will enable you to bring the light to places which may not be reached by anyone else. So, however minor and insignificant your good deeds might seem to be, keep them up and thank God that his light will shine through you.

## **QUESTION**

How has God enabled you to help others?

## **PRAYER**

Dear Lord, help me to live in such a way that others will see your light. Amen

