

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Menin Gate remembrance**

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## Image of the day

### Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial remembrance

#### A Gate of Death and Glory

On 24 July 1927 the unveiling of the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial featured in one of the first ever BBC outside broadcasts. The official opening by Lord Plumer, took place in the presence of the King of the Belgians. The event attracted millions of listeners as people were able to mass participate in a ceremony for the first time.

The In Flanders Fields Museum at Ypres estimates that almost 100,000 British Empire soldiers were killed in the Flanders campaign of 1917 which lasted from June 1st to November 17th.

Of the 99,253 men who died, almost 5,000 (4,901) were Irish or from Irish regiments.

The overall total of dead at Passchendaele number at least 150,000 including 43,154 confirmed German dead with between 10,000 and 15,000 still unaccounted for.

The worst day for the Irish at Passchendaele was August 16th, 1917. The 16th (Irish) Division and 36th (Ulster) Division suffered almost 1,200 dead between them in the doomed assault at Frezenberg Ridge.

The name of Menin came home to Northern Ireland after the war and influenced the very street names. For example, in

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Antrim there are housing areas which were built specifically for returning veterans and their families. Two such are titled the Menin Road and the Bournal Road.

## **The unveiling of CWGC's Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial on 24 July 1927**

The dedication of the memorial gate and the public reaction to it was described by a Belfast newspaper on 11 November 1927 as "A Gate of Death and Glory"

The newspaper commented:

"Many monuments have been raised in various parts of the world to the honour of our Glorious Dead, but none has



THE MENIN GATE, JULY 24TH, 1927.

*By permission of "The Times."*

stirred the heart and gripped the imagination of the public in the same degree as the Menin Gate Arch; and to its noble “Hall of Memory,” hallowed with the names of 56,000 British heroes, the thoughts of countless bereaved will be concentrated during the two minutes’ solemn silence. Since the official opening by Lord Plumer, in the presence of the King of the Belgians, on 24th July last, there has been a constant stream of British pilgrims to this beautiful memorial. By train, charabanc and private car, people have poured into Ypres. The signatures on the visitors’ book have averaged 500 a day, that number probably representing about one-third of the total who have made the journey.

“In itself, of course, Menin Gate is not historic in the sense that the scenes of actual fighting a few miles away are historic, save for the fact that it was the focal point in that colossal waste of mangled desolation. It may be said that practically every soldier who fought in the defence of Ypres must at one time or other have passed through its narrow portals. Those who survived have been rewarded by the knowledge that their heroic efforts contributed to victory and kept us a free people, but to thousands, nay, tens of thousands, Menin was the gate of death.

“Many gallant lads marched through it to the rolling ground that leads to Hooze, strong, reliant and fearless in their manhood, never to return; or perchance to crawl falteringly back helpless wrecks, gasping and choking with poison gas slowly destroying their lungs, until, their strength completely sapped, they fell exhausted, only to die alone on the roadside. Alas! too frequently in the hateful mud and water-logged ground, churned up on every side by shell-fire, their identities were lost with their lives; and no man knows their grave to this day.”

## People and places



## Feed the Next Child challenge

**Volunteers and supporters from across Northern Ireland are once again pulling on their walking shoes for the Step by Step to Feed the Next Child challenge to raise money for Mary's Meals.**

They set off last Saturday, 23 July, and the challenges continue until Monday, 15 August. 🚶👏



Best of luck to all the walkers as they cover 200km - with starting points in Newry, Coalisland, Lurgan, Enniskillen, Derry/Londonderry - and ending in Knock, Co Mayo.

For more info, to donate or get involved, please visit:  
<https://bit.ly/3yVYJ3B>

## **Moderator's first congregational visit**

**The Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Church paid his first visit to a congregation in his year of office, when he visited Newcastle Presbyterian Church yesterday morning.**



In the afternoon The Moderator visited River House (photo above), one of the church's residential homes in the afternoon.

Members thought the church were praying that the visit would be a blessing to both the congregation and the residents.

## **Influential role for Dublin cleric**

**Pope Francis has appointed Dubliner Bishop Paul Tighe to the influential Dicastery for Bishops.**

A priest of the Archdiocese of Dublin, he has served at the Vatican since 2007 in a number of roles and has worked in the Council for Culture for the past five years.

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The new role on the Vatican body which advises the Pontiff on choosing new bishops, will give Bishop Tighe a huge role in influencing future episcopal appointments in Ireland.



## East Belfast Mission's Employability Service

Members of the Methodist Church's East Belfast Mission are in Tesco Newtownbreda fundraising for the

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**Mission's Employability Service, to provide childcare for parents starting their journey into the workplace.**

They tweeted, "Pop by and say hello when you're doing your weekly shop! All donations hugely appreciated (we can even accept cashless! "



## **Recalling Amelia Earhart**

**Amelia Earhart, a lifelong Episcopalian, was born on July 24 in 1897. She was the 16th woman to be issued a pilot's license and the first female pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic, landing in Ireland. In the USA, July 24th is designated as National Amelia Earhart Day.**

# Lambeth focus



## Scottish College of Bishops – Preparing for the Lambeth Conference

**As members of the Scottish College of Bishops prepare to travel to Canterbury for the forthcoming Lambeth Conference, they have issued the following statement and request for Prayer:**

The Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church are looking forward to attending the Lambeth Conference 2022 which starts next week.

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It will be an opportunity to deepen existing relationships within the Anglican Communion, to develop new ones and to engage with issues that face all Anglican Provinces, whatever their context.

The Conference programme includes a number of “calls” for the Conference to consider.

Human Dignity features as one of the topics, the call for which includes a reaffirmation of the 1998 Lambeth

Conference resolution I.10 and defines marriage as permissible only between a man and woman. The wording of that call does not represent the position of the



**Derry  
Marine  
Festival**

Scottish Episcopal Church as reflected in the Church's Canons, which recognises that there are differing understandings of marriage in the SEC.

The Conference calls are not binding on provinces and are yet to be discussed. The members of the College of Bishops will seek to amend the draft call on Human Dignity urging a more inclusive approach and will work in respectful dialogue both with those colleagues across the Communion who would share the position adopted by the Scottish Episcopal Church, and with those who may differ.

The Bishops ask the Church to join with them in praying for the Conference, for all those who attend, and for the Archbishop of Canterbury as he hosts the Conference.

## **The Lambeth Conference: Homophobic by Design**

### **Kelvin Holdsworth writes**

**Next week the long delayed Lambeth Conference gets underway. The conference is the gathering of bishops from around the Anglican Communion which used to take place every 10 years.**

The conference hasn't taken place for 14 years and was delayed by Covid and also because relationships within the Anglican Communion were so difficult that it has taken years of careful diplomacy from the Archbishop of Canterbury to get to this point, where there seems to be a viable quorum of bishops who would actually attend.

Famously, the last two Lambeth Conferences have been dominated by questions about the legitimacy of same-sex couples.

And yes, of course this is ridiculous. And no, it being ridiculous doesn't stop it from being true.

The touchstone of this argument is a resolution which was agreed by the bishops at the 1998 conference. The resolution is referred to as Lambeth 1.10. It says some platitudinous things about people who are described as having "homosexual orientation" but also simultaneously condemns same-sex relationships as being incompatible with Scripture.

An enormous amount of work has been done to try to get the bishops of the Anglican Communion together again. One of the things which seemed to many bishops to have been promised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who convenes and invites people to these affairs is that this conference was about people saying things which they were united about and some effort seems to have gone into suggesting that there would be no more voting on divisive resolutions.

One rather unpleasant fact of gathering the bishops is that the Archbishop decided to invite those bishops who happened to be in same-sex marriages but expressly disinvited their spouses. The Lambeth Conference exists in a pseudo-1950s age where spouses – usually wives, are invited too at great cost to the dioceses their other half leads. In the case of bishops from Scotland, it is costing £5000 per bishop to send them to the conference and a

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further £5000 for their spouse to go and I gather that 6 spouses are going to the tune of £30 000.

Thus, Scottish Episcopalians have been expected to fund a conference that was homophobic by design.

I must confess that I don't understand why any of the spouses of bishops from Scotland are going, much as I think they are collectively fantastic people with great skills and wisdom.

The Archbishop, like Archbishops before him has staked his own reputation as someone who takes reconciliation seriously, on bringing people together for the conference.

It has come as a considerable surprise therefore that a list of proposed resolutions (renamed as Lambeth Calls in order to maintain the fiction that there will be no more resolutions) has been published in the last two days. Indeed, it has been published so much at the last minute that many bishops from around the world were either already travelling or packing their smalls.

And lo! Buried deep in the Lambeth Calls we find that the bishops are going to be invited to affirm a resolution which suggests that Lambeth 1.10 represents "the mind of the whole of the Anglican Communion" and which once again suggests that it isn't legitimate for Anglicans to bless same-sex couples or marry same-sex couples.

Apart from anything else, it must be blatantly obvious to everyone in the world that the Anglican Communion is not of one mind about this. It bewilders me that anyone could

suggest that it is. For to state that it is is a bald, bare-faced lie.

Christians are not supposed to bear false witness or lie in public about things. (Lying is a sin that I presume we all do actually agree about).

In one sense, it is déjà vu all over again. We seem to have been here before, with the legitimacy of gay lives being up for debate. Such a debate is homophobic and seems even more so when one discovers that the bishops can't vote against it – they can only vote in favour or vote in a way that suggests that the resolution Call needs more work.

Up until now, I've believed that though there were problems with the conference itself, our bishops were right to be there. However, events of the last 48 hours have made me change my mind.

The resolution now before the bishops (for debate in secret, closed sessions) isn't merely about the legitimacy of same-sex relationships. This time around it is expressly about the legitimacy of provinces of the Anglican Communion making it possible for same-sex couples to be blessed or indeed married.

The bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church have issued a statement today about all this. It isn't easy to find on the SEC website but it can be found here: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/a-statement-from-the-college-of-bishops-preparing-for-the-lambeth-conference/>.

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My personal view is that this is a poor response to a bad situation. Although I have much sympathy with our bishops having little time to formulate a response, they don't seem to understand that our church's legitimacy in making decisions about marriage is being debated this week, as is their own legitimacy in administering the decisions which our synod has made.

This isn't actually about same-sex couples any more. Actually it never was, it was always about power, but it has seemed to be about same-sex relationships to many up until now. It doesn't help for our bishops in Scotland to maintain that narrative any longer.

Nothing good comes from engaging with processes that are homophobic by design. Nothing.

It is my view that our bishops and those of other countries who share our values and ethics should have nothing at all to do with such a vote and should instead make it very clear that they have been invited to this conference under false pretenses.

I don't think the Conference would have been much of a starter if it had been known all along that a vote such as this was on the cards.

That's why it seems particularly deceitful for this to have emerged right at the last minute.

The Archbishop of Canterbury doesn't look like much of a reconciler right now.

Kelvin Holdsworth is the Provost of St Mary's Cathedral. He has served as Rector and Provost since 2006.

## Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches

**Archbishop Justin Badi, Chairman of the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches (GSFA) has sent a video message “to hundreds of would-be delegates of this month’s Lambeth Conference, setting out four priorities for ‘Orthodox delegates’ attending the 10-yearly global gathering.”**

In it he rallied his fellow orthodox brothers and sisters in the Provinces of the GSFA, who represent over 75% of all Anglicans worldwide. He said the four objectives of the conference (July 26-Aug 7) are to:-

>> Foster the Unity of the Orthodox, whilst being a faithful witness, and defender of ‘the faith once delivered’

>> Sound a ‘Clarion Call’ to Biblical Faithfulness, including seeking the ‘re-affirmation of Lambeth 1.10’\* as the ‘official teaching’ of the Anglican Church on marriage and sexuality

>> Stand by GSFA’s principle of not being a ‘breakaway group’ from the Anglican Communion. (GSFA sees itself, and seeks to be part of, the ‘holy remnant’ that God has preserved in the Anglican Communion), and to

>> Spur on the faithful in the Communion to get the Gospel out into the world, earnestly defending the purity of the faith

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in order that it might be propagated to a lost and needy world

## **Archbishop of York on BBC Radio Prayer for the Day**

**Archbishop Stephen Cottrell is giving reflections on BBC Radio 4 Prayer for the Day**



These will be aired at 5.43am on 25 to 29 July on themes relevant to the Lambeth Conference. Listen live or catch up on BBC Sounds:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qmpj>

## **Welby ready to lead Church for as long as he has support**

**Justin Welby has suggested that he intends to become the longest-serving Archbishop of Canterbury in half a century, Gabriella Swerling reported in the Daily Telegraph yesterday.**

The Archbishop, 66, will have served for a decade by next spring. However, he has revealed that he has no plans to quit before he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70.

In accordance with Church of England laws, clergy must retire when they reach 70. However, referring to his landmark anniversary next year, the Archbishop said that he will stay in post until he reaches retirement age in 2026, if he remains in good health and “people are happy” that he is still there.

If he continues in the job until he reaches 70 he will have served for almost 13 years and be the longest-serving archbishop of Canterbury in half a century. Michael Ramsey retired in 1974 after just over 13 years.

Lord Williams of Oystermouth was archbishop for 10 years, Lord Carey of Clifton and Robert Runcie served for 11 years and Donald Coggan for six.

“It’s not about me, it’s what’s best for the Church,” the Archbishop told The Times, in the run-up to the Lambeth Conference, a once-a-decade gathering of global Anglican leaders that starts next Tuesday in Canterbury.

“I will certainly take advice and if my health is good and people are happy that I’m still there, then I’ll still be there

“It’s not about me and what pleases me. It’s a decision that would be arrived at in prayer, thoughtful consultation with others, family, colleagues, friends.”

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Gabriella Swerling is Social Affairs Editor of the Daily Telegraph.

## Poem for today

### The Country Clergy by R.S. Thomas

I see them working in old rectories  
By the sun's light, by candlelight,  
Venerable men, their black cloth  
A little dusty, a little green  
With holy mildew. And yet their skulls,  
Ripening over so many prayers,  
Toppled into the same grave  
With oafs and yokels. They left no books,  
Memorial to their lonely thought  
In grey parishes; rather they wrote  
On men's hearts and in the minds  
Of young children sublime words  
Too soon forgotten. God in his time  
Or out of time will correct this.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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