

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Derry parish’s international cricketers

People and places



Derry parish's two international cricketers

Leckpatrick and Dunnalong parishioner Alana Dalzell made her international cricket debut this week, playing with the Irish Women's Senior side in the one-day international series against South Africa in Dublin.

The parish is also celebrating the call-up of another member, Conor Olphert, to the men's senior squad ahead of the two T20 Internationals against India in Dublin at the end of the month

The second match in the women's ODI series proved a baptism of fire for Bready pace bowler, Alana, as the strong South African side ran out winners by nine wickets.

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However, Alana's performance was described on the Cricket Ireland website as a "bright spot" for her team. She was "the most economical bowler on display for the hosts", conceding just 15 runs from her four overs. She also scored her first four runs in the green shirt.

The Rector of Leckpatrick and Dunalong, Rev Canon Paul Whittaker, has congratulated Alana on making her international debut and hailed what he called "a proud day" for Alana, her family, Bready CC and the North West.

"Alana is a phenomenal cricketing talent," Canon Whittaker said, "who represents her club and her parish with distinction. She will carry the prayers and best wishes of all of us here in Leckpatrick and Dunalong as she pursues her career in the sport. With youth on her side, and her God-given talent, there is no limit to what she might achieve."

It was a proud moment for Alana when she received her first international cap from the Ireland captain Laura Delany. Alana became the first North West cricketer to feature in a one day international in over quarter of a century.

Canon Whittaker has congratulated Conor Olphert on his good news, too. "We've great cricketing tradition in these parts. Conor's father, Mark, was also capped by Ireland back in 1998; and Bready has produced players of the calibre of Boyd Rankin and Craig Young. So, Conor has a lot to live up to. But, with the prayers of our whole parish behind him, and the support of his colleagues in the Bready club, I'm hopeful he will emulate his father's achievements and confident he'll do great things in the sport."

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Queen's open house for the Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union has announced that Frogmore House and Gardens will be open to the public this year for their annual charity open days from 30th August to 1st September.

Mothers' Union is one of the



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charities that will benefit from the proceeds from the open days on 31st August. This is a rare opportunity and you don't want to miss it - bring a picnic and make a day of it!

Go ahead and purchase your tickets here. Under-fives go free: <https://visitfrogmore.eventbrite.co.uk>

Open invite to General Assembly's 'Grace Works'



With only a week to go, the Incoming PCI Moderator Rev Dr John Kirkpatrick

has issued an open invitation to the General Assembly's Evening Celebration 'Grace Works'.

The worship event takes place next Thursday evening in Belfast. Worship will be led by New Irish Arts and the keynote speaker will be Peter Lynas

See: bit.ly/3HxK2rs

Northern Ireland Protocol: Presbyterian Church says Protocol has 'unbalanced the delicate settlement' of Good Friday Agreement

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The Presbyterian Church in Ireland says the NI Protocol has “unbalanced the delicate settlement” of the Good Friday Agreement and that if talks to resolve the issues fail, unilateral action by the UK government to address the situation should be “a last resort”.

Rev Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly, made the comments in a press conference ahead of the forthcoming General Assembly of the denomination’s elders on 22-25 June, Philip Bradfield reports in the News Letter

Next week the church will be outlining its concerns and calling on both the EU and UK government to engage constructively to address all the issues of concern to different sections of the community regarding the Protocol. Specific resolutions will be tabled to enable the church’s collective elders to affirm and express clear position on the issues.

Rev Gribben was speaking as the UK government comes under intense criticism for publishing draft legislation to unilaterally amend what the unionist political parties see as major failings in the Protocol.

He said that the effects of the Protocol “were either not envisaged or were underplayed by those on both sides who signed [it]”.

“And the Protocol is not working. There is a lack of confidence in the unionist community. There is a lack of buying-in to some of the principles of how we are governed.

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“It is about trade, yes, but it is about more than trade. The protocol has unbalanced the delicate settlement that is the Good Friday Agreement, the Belfast Agreement.”

He said that the north-south elements of the GFA are “important” and that “there should be nothing that hinders that growing harmony on this island as good neighbours”.

But he added the east-west aspect of the agreement between Northern Ireland and GB “is also important”.

“So the protocol should be dealt with. Our view is that it is best done by negotiation.

“We also feel that Europe has not moved enough.” He said that the EU needs to review the mandate given to its negotiators so that “some of the real issues can be talked about and dealt with” in talks. “And the British government in good faith must then go into those negotiations.”

Asked if the church opposed unilateral action by the UK government, he replied: “No, as a church we haven’t said that. We have said that negotiation is the best way forward and should be pursued.”

He added that the UK government feels that the mandate given to EU negotiators “is not wide enough to deal with some of the issues” and that when that is addressed “the British government has to be serious about engaging”.

“If negotiations cannot resolve the issues, he said, “the British government has a responsibility to attempt to resolve the issues in other ways. They need to listen to all voices in

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Northern Ireland in so doing. The detail of the protocol bill is not something we are saying we are content with or happy with – or indeed unhappy with. We haven't responded to that yet – but it should be a last resort if negotiations cannot resolve the problems.”

The church has 204,000 members in 530 congregations across the island.

Northern Ireland Secretary of State Brandon Lewis to use ‘sweeping powers’ to teach abortion in Catholic and state schools, Presbyterian Church warns

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has warned that the Secretary of State intends to use “sweeping powers” to control aspects of the Northern Ireland schools’ curriculum.

Rev Trevor Gribben, clerk of the general assembly, made the comments ahead of the forthcoming general assembly of the church elders from across the island on June 22-25, Philip Bradfield reports in the News Letter.

Rev Gribben said that one example of what Brandon Lewis is likely to influence “is what the Secretary of State has called health care – what we would call abortion”.

Mr Lewis has said that abortion and the legal position of it in Northern Ireland must be taught in schools in future.

“And he has said very clearly that he has been given power

not just to direct the department of health – but also the department of education with regard to the curriculum.”

But Rev Gribben said Mr Lewis’ assertions had caused some concerns. “There is a significant debate generally in society going on as to whether the ethos of a school should affect the emphasis of what is taught in school,” he said.”

The

Secretary of State is very clearly saying for the first time that a Secretary of State has the power and he will move... to overrule things like ethos in particular schools.”He added that this is “an issue of great concern to the Catholic church – who own their own schools” but also to Presbyterians as a transferor church – meaning the denomination passed all its schools into state care in the 1920s and 1930s.

This means that the Presbyterian church still has legal rights to seats on the boards of governors of schools, he added.He noted that the Presbyterian, Methodist and Church of Ireland denominations all had such rights as they all transferred their schools into state care at the same time.

“We transferred an ethos, we transferred buildings and we were given legal assurances that our representatives could either be on boards of governors or education authorities – which is still there. The reason for that is that ethos is important. The ethos of a controlled school is not denominational but it is a warm, caring open Christian ethos and we would argue that that has to be respected. And whatever the Secretary of State seeks to impose on schools – first of all he shouldn’t do – its a devolved matter – but if he does do it, it has done respecting the ethos of the school.”

New Rectors for two Dublin parishes



The Revd David White has been appointed Rector of Zion in the Diocese of Dublin. He has been the Rector of Carlow Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory since 2016.

Ordained in 2012, his deacon year was spent in Edenderry Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Meath and Kildare. His curacy was in Bandon Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, where he was also chaplain to Bandon Grammar School.

Before ordination he trained, and later worked, at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. Trained as a spiritual director, he is also interested in applied spirituality, ecumenism and the role of faith communities in the efforts to deal with climate change.

“Moments like these always involve a range of emotions,” he said.

“I’m very grateful for the past almost six years in Carlow which have been happy and fruitful. At the same time, I’m excited by the new adventures which lie ahead with the people of Zion. I’m especially grateful to those I share my life with for their love and support and would ask for everyone’s prayers for this time of transition.”



Canon Paul Arbuthnot has been appointed the new Incumbent of the Parish of St Ann with St Stephen and St Mark.

Originally from Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, Canon Paul Arbuthnot spent his childhood as a chorister of St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast. He was educated at Downshire School,

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Carrickfergus, Belfast Royal Academy and read History at Trinity College Dublin. During his time as an undergraduate and postgraduate he was a Lay Vicar of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

He was made deacon in 2010 and ordained priest in 2011 in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. He served his curacy in St Paul's, Glenageary. He subsequently became Precentor of St Albans Cathedral in Hertfordshire and Sacrist of Westminster Abbey. On his return to the Church of Ireland in 2018 he became Rector of Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes and was elected a Chapter Canon at St Patrick's Cathedral in 2021.

"I am delighted to have been appointed to St Ann's and St Stephen's. I am looking forward to getting to know the people of the parish, engaging with those who pass by our churches on a daily basis and returning to the diocese where I was ordained," Canon Arbuthnot said.

"However, moving to pastures new is always tinged with an element of sadness. Everyone associated with Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes and the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross has shown me much Christian love and deep generosity. The people of the parish and diocese will always have a special place in my heart and will always be in my prayers.

"But I eagerly look forward to fulfilling my calling to this new and exciting ministry in Dublin city centre. I especially look forward to the annual 'Black Santa' Christmas appeals. In this parish there are endless possibilities to proclaim Christ

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in sacrament, word, and deed in this rich and varied setting, and I look forward to getting started,” he added.



Bishop of Connor speaks of ‘sense of joy’ as Synod meets in person

In his presidential address to the first in-person diocesan synod since June 2019, the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, said that he had called the meeting with ‘a genuine sense of joy.’

“Whilst we have managed to conduct our business in the intervening years using the technology available to us, there is nothing quite like meeting together,” Bishop George told the 250 or so Synod members gathered in St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, on Thursday June 16.

Acknowledging that the purpose of the meeting was to conduct business, the Bishop added: “Beyond the pages of our agenda today happens other important business – as friendships are renewed or we are introduced to someone new, conversations are shared or ideas are picked up; encouragement is given or problems are shared. And so it should be!

“For we are not simply an organisation gathering to transact business, but rather, as a small part of the body of Christ, we come together to support and encourage and help one another to overcome challenges and difficulties so that we may thrive and grow and work together for the good of the kingdom of God.”

The Bishop said he was immensely thankful for so much faithful work being done across the diocese by clergy and the lay leadership in parishes to shape parishes as places where people may come, find a welcome and be invited to discover who they are in Christ.

“Much of this work is done through the familiar activity of maintaining parish churches to provide opportunities for worship, fellowship activities and faith development. It’s work that happens week in and week out through the activity of clergy colleagues who work faithfully at their teaching and pastoral ministry; Select Vestries who maintain and care for buildings and provide resources for parish life; volunteers who give of their time and gifts to serve in ministries of music, organisation leadership, cleaning, flower-arranging and making tea – to name but a few.”

The Bishop spoke of the importance of reaching out to welcome those who are newly arrived in this country.



The Reverend Tim Close with synod members from Cloughfern parish

“When a congregation gathers gifts to give to ‘Baby Basics’ for those who are in need, or to an appeal to assist Ukrainian refugees, it says we recognise that we are called to see Christ in each person. It gladdens my heart when I see church families saying ‘welcome’ or ‘we care’ to those who are not identifiably part of their little church community.”

Bishop George spoke of the challenges and how parishes responded ‘amazingly’ in the face of lockdown and the pandemic. “People adapted, learned new skills, found imaginative ways of keeping connected and altered the way that they worked to meet a new situation,” he said.

“And yet I hear reports that, even as we begin to resume the normal patterns of church life again, congregations find that a portion of their previous worshippers have not yet returned.”

Other challenges, he said, included changing patterns of life, people moving away from the parishes where they used to belong and some churches finding themselves disconnected from the communities in which they are located.

The Bishop also spoke of challenges of finance and resources; of increasing burdens of ‘red-tape’ and compliance required by civil authorities; and the difficulty of finding the volunteers needed to do everything that needs done.

“As a diocese, I want us to nurture a sense of the support that we can be to one another. I frame it in that language because I think that it is vital that we understand the diocese as part of who we are, part of that wider network of relationships that connects and supports us as Christians.” The Bishop highlighted some issues he said were significant in how parishes support one another in the diocese – sometimes the structures which have served a parish well in days gone need to be looked at and new ideas discussed and tried, he said.

“Across the diocese, but particularly in the Archdeaconry of Belfast, we have seen changes that have caused us to recognise that we need to try new things in order to grow and revitalise the church,” the Bishop told Synod.

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“Under the leadership of the Rural Dean of Mid-Belfast, the Rev Tracey McRoberts, and with the co-operation and support of local clergy and parishes, steps are being taken towards a more collaborative way of working across the deanery.

“In South Belfast it has been gratifying to see how an initiative between All Saints Parish, University Street and St Nicholas Parish on the Lisburn Road is working well and bringing new people into the life of both congregations.

The Bishop continued: “I’m grateful to the Diocesan Council for approving my request for support for a new five-year partnership project between the diocese, the RCB and the parishes of St Aidan, St Mary Magdalene and St Simon with St Philip, Belfast.

“This support will see Archdeacon Forde leave his current role in the Chaplaincy at Queen’s University to work in a new role which supports the developing of Pioneer Ministries and facilitates reshaping for mission across the Archdeaconry and does so grounded in the particular context of the parishes of Inner South Belfast.”

The Bishop said this was ‘an exciting project.’

“I have no doubt that the experiences and learning which is done in the context of Belfast will quickly have application across the wider diocese and indeed the Church of Ireland.” Another important issue is safeguarding relationships, Bishop George said, stressing that it is vitally important that those who engage in the life of our churches can do so safely.

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“I’m very grateful to Archdeacon Stephen McBride for his lead in facilitating the support for parishes in this diocese around Safeguarding Trust and to our new Church of Ireland Safeguarding Officer for Northern Ireland, Mrs Gillian Taylor, for her advice and help. Gillian is new into the role, but is already demonstrating her ability to support and help us follow best practice in this area.”

Outlining the support that is being provided to parishes, the Bishop said: “It is in the interest of every leader and child in every parish and organisation that our procedures are carefully in place so that everyone is protected.”

The Bishop extended a welcome to the Rev Jacob Mercer (St Brigid’s, Mallusk) and the Rev Andrew Irwin (St Paul and St Barnabas) and expressed thanks to the Rev Philip Benson who left the Parish of Kilwaughter and Cairncastle with All Saint’s, Craigyhill, during the year to take up an incumbency in the Diocese of Derry. Philip also served as Chair of the Diocesan Youth Council.

He also extended thanks to Mr George Briggs for all his years of service on Diocesan Council, and to Dean Stephen Forde and Dean Sam Wright for their leadership of the two diocesan cathedrals and for their work this year in organising his ‘two contrasting but very meaningful’ services of installation.

Bishop George went on to thank Dean John Bond, Diocesan Curate, and the team of retired clergy and lay readers who provide for worship in vacant parishes; the Archdeacons; and the diocesan staff team

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He concluded his address by saying it had been ‘a privilege to share in the life of this diocese as your bishop.’

He continued: “I have enjoyed the opportunity to begin to nurture my own relationship with many of you in that role and I look forward to what God will have for us together in the year that lies ahead. May we all serve Him and his church with faithfulness and joy.”

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

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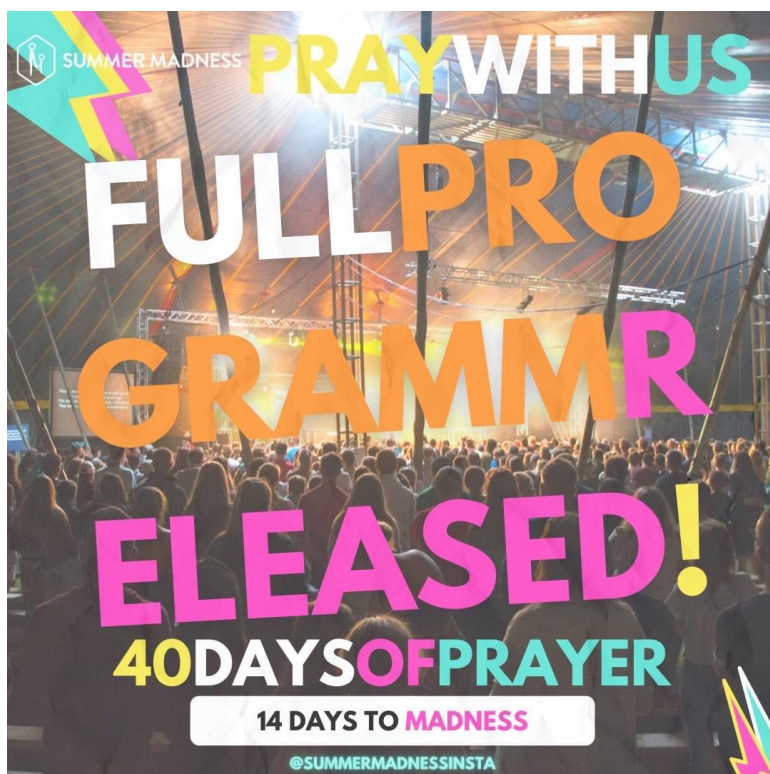
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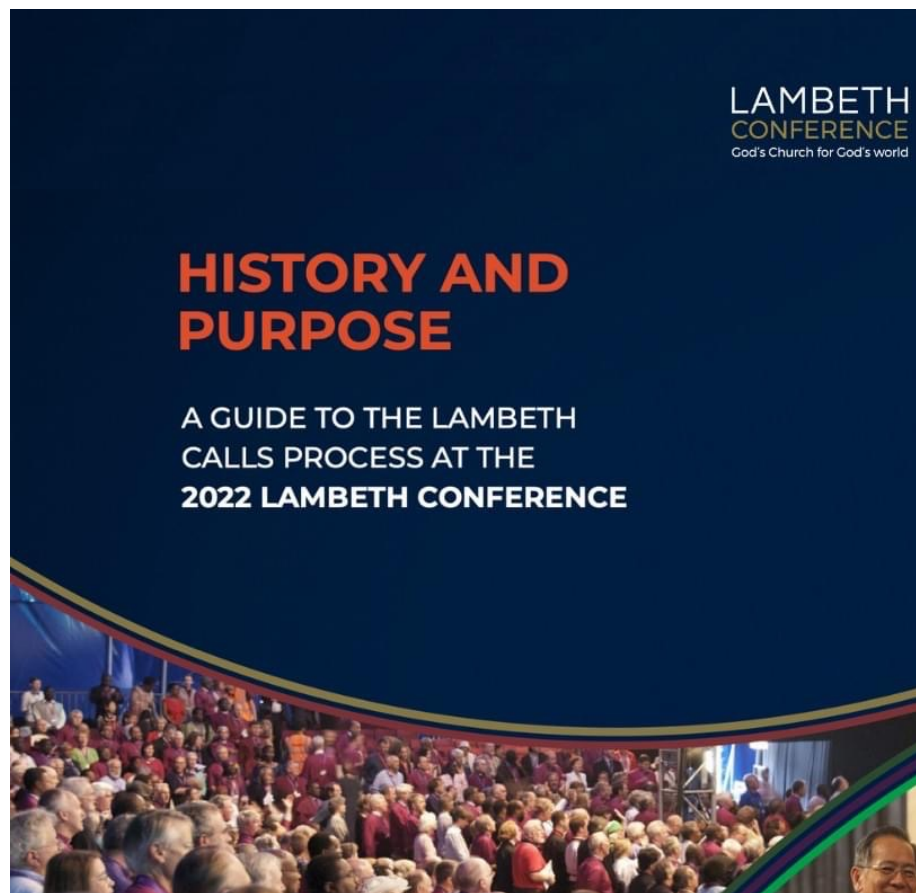
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<https://tinyurl.com/SM22app>

Thank God for all the amazing people who have helped shape this year's festival. Bless them. May every talk, song, giggle and hug remind those taking part of the love of Jesus and form us more into His likeness. Come in power, Holy Spirit, and prepare us for what You will do in 2 weeks! Amen!

Lambeth Conference resource

Lambeth Conferences have always been about prayer, conversations and conferring on issues impacting God's church and the world we live in. This year, the Lambeth Calls process will support bishops' conversations on church and world affairs. This short resource shares more about the History and Purpose of the conference since it started in 1867 and how this year's Lambeth Calls process will be an important feature of the 15th Lambeth Conference.



<https://bit.ly/3NIE9d8>

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Children & Families Ministry Summer Newsletter

Everyone involved in Children and Families Ministry around the Church of Ireland is encouraged to pick up its Summer Newsletter – available now by clicking here:
<http://ow.ly/PgtM50Jl48Q>

The newsletter is packed with ideas for summer camps, an exciting new Bible reading buddy pack, and three months free off a subscription to www.RaiseUpFaith.com



Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

