



Image of the day

Parishioners walked 50 miles to meet their former rector

Accredited youth ministry training course for leaders from the Republic of Ireland

Aurora Youth is a youth ministry training course, available for applicants from the Republic of Ireland. It is designed to meet the needs of volunteer youth leaders who have busy lives and no formal youth work qualifications.

This ecumenical course is delivered by the Church of Ireland's Youth Department in co-operation with St Peter's College (part of Sheffield Diocese).

Anyone aged 16 or older from any Christian youth work setting is welcome.

Aurora Youth will provide you with the essential skills, knowledge and understanding you need to be effective in youth ministry.

Running from September 2021 to May 2022, the organisers hope to deliver the course using a mixture of modes. Depending on restrictions nearer the time, they hope to host one face to face day each term (full day Saturdays, venue to be confirmed) and deliver the remainder online (Wednesday evenings).

Students complete a portfolio of learning to gain the President Bishop's Certificate in Youth Ministry, and may also work towards the St Peter's College Certificate in Youth Ministry by completing a number of assignments.



Cost: €300 per student (some discounts and bursaries available)

Applicants are asked to express their interest before the end of August 2021

For more details and to book a place, visit www.auroratraining.org.uk/eire

Archbishop Dermot Farrell offers blessing to Leaving Cert Class of 2021

In an open letter to the Leaving Cert Class of 2021 throughout the State, Archbishop Dermot Farrell published the following message ahead of the start of the public examinations today:

The Archbishop's letter states -



I wish all the 2021 Leaving Certificate students, those who are going through the Predicted Grades System or sitting the written examination every good wish and God's blessings.

This year's Leaving Certificate students have been challenged in their preparation for the Leaving Certificate by the Covid pandemic during the school years 2019 – 2020, 2020 – 2021. I want to thank the Principals, Boards of Management, Teachers, Staff, School Chaplains, Pastoral Care Teams for the dedicated care of our Post Primary Students especially this year's Leaving Certificate Students.

I am grateful to Minister Foley and the officials of the Department of Education and Skills for the work and support they have given to this year's Leaving Certificate group. May the Holy Spirit guide and direct the Leaving Certificate students now and in all the decisions they will make about their future.

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I pray that Our Lady will protect you all and that St. Joseph, her husband, in this year dedicated to St. Joseph, will watch over you as he protected his foster son, Jesus.

C of I Board of Education (NI) thanks schools and youth organisations



The Church of Ireland Board of Education (Northern Ireland) has expressed its concern for the welfare of children and young people, who as a group have been severely affected by the Covid–19 pandemic, and its thanks to all schools and to all organisations that support children and young people.

The Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd John McDowell, Chair of the Board, said: ‘As a Board of Education and as a Church, deeply involved in education at all levels, we wish to commend the work of all principals, teachers, staff and governors in their work to maintain learning, and to support children and young people in their education at this time of

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great social upheaval. It is difficult to think of words which are emphatic enough to commend the achievement of our schools.

‘The Board is also conscious of the vital work being undertaken by youth workers and volunteers (including those serving through activities run by the Churches) and other statutory and voluntary services. The Board wishes to particularly thank those involved in work to calm tensions and provide positive leadership to young people in areas where there has been a potential for violence.’

Dr Peter Hamill, Secretary to the Board of Education, stated: ‘For many years, youth workers and volunteers have been the unsung heroes of supporting young people with their mental health and many other issues.’

The Board welcomes the Independent Review of Education being undertaken as a commitment from the New Decade New Approach agreement, and the Board looks forward to engaging with the panel once it is appointed.

People and places

‘Being Presbyterian’ comment on resignation of Rev Ian Carton

The BP Committee has issued a statement following the resignation of Rev Ian Carton. Ian and June have been valued colleagues and members of this group. Ian was a

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guest speaker at an event where many listened with care and concern to his story, told with great honesty and dignity.

The full statement is available on the BP website

<https://beingpresbyterian.com/>



Fleming Fulton confirmation

On Sunday past this group of young people celebrated their confirmation. Some had to wait a year due to Covid 19... Congratulations to you all - you looked amazing!

The Last Supper is the revelation of who Jesus really is, and what love really is. It challenged everything the disciples knew about power and the divine. Many of our assumptions have been challenged this year too. May we see God afresh in those who wash feet in our communities -

Archbishop Justin Welby

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

Parishioners sponsored walk to meet former rector...



The Bishop of Derry & Raphoe (second from right) welcomes his former parishioners from Dungannon to Derry Cathedral at the conclusion of their 50 mile sponsored walk

It must have felt like the second 'Relief of Derry' for a group of weary parishioners from the Parish of Drumglass in Dungannon as they crossed Londonderry's iconic Peace Bridge near the end of their 50-mile fundraising walk from their home church to the Maiden City.

The two-day walk was the brainchild of their Rector, the Rev Bryan Martin who, on reaching his 50th birthday, challenged them to raise £5,000 by trekking from St Elizabeth's Church of Ireland, Moygashel, to St Columb's Cathedral, in Londonderry.

Waiting to meet the intrepid group, as they arrived at the Peace Bridge, was their beaming former rector – now Bishop of Derry and Raphoe – the Rt Rev Andrew Forster, who enjoyed renewing old acquaintances. Bishop Andrew completed the final stage of the journey with his former parishioners.

The ‘50@50 for £5,000’ initiative – 50 miles at fifty years of age for five thousand pounds – took them through Donaghmore and Pomeroy to the Sperrins on Friday’s 28.1 mile first leg, and from the Sperrins, through Claudy and Ardmore to the Walled City on Saturday’s 21.9 mile second leg.

“They thought we were clean mad,” the Rector said after they had reached their destination, “but we’ve done it.” Mr Martin said they had more than doubled their financial target. “There was incredible generosity shown to us along the route. The children in St Mary’s Primary School in Pomeroy gave us £50. A group of builders in Donaghmore gave us money. People in cars along the road handed us money.”

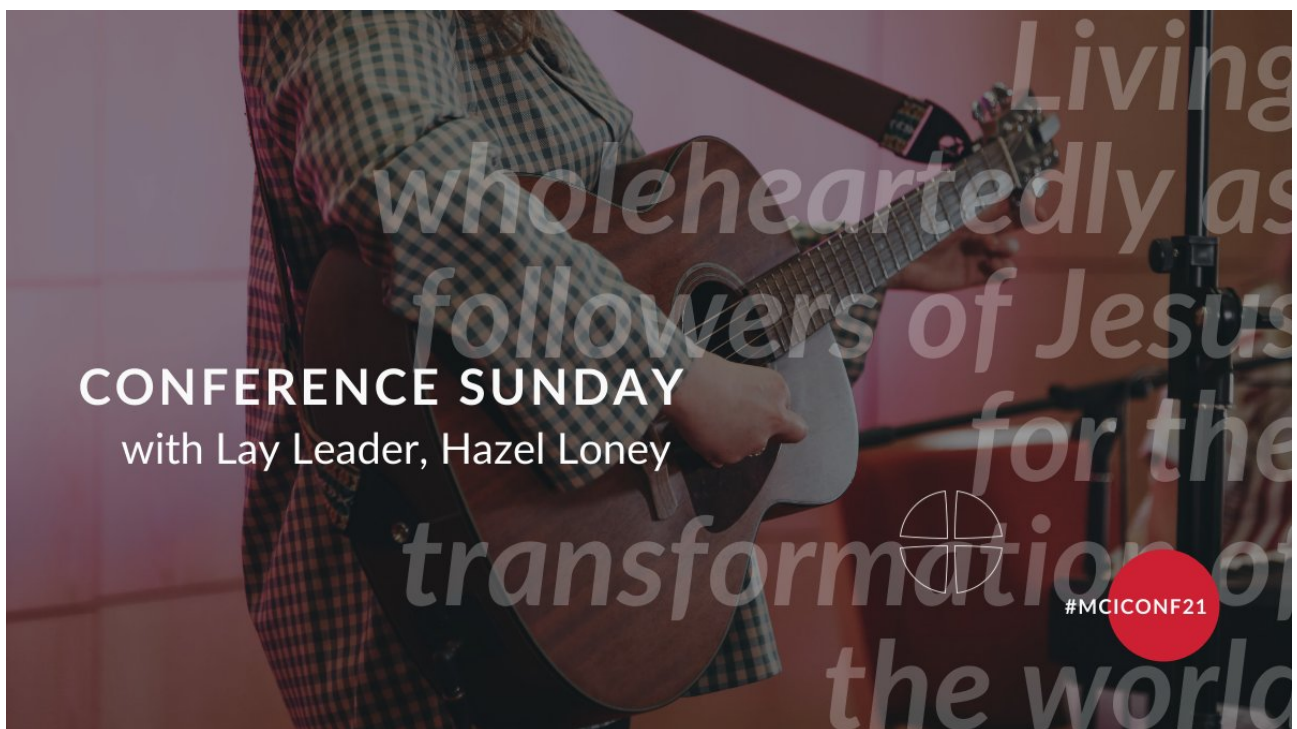
Mr Martin thanked all who contributed. He expressed his gratitude to Bishop Andrew for receiving them and walking part of the way with them. Most of all, though, he said he wanted to thank the walkers and their support team.

Bishop Andrew congratulated the whole team behind the ‘50@50 for £5,000’ initiative, which he said would go to two deserving causes. The proceeds will be spent equally on the refurbishment of St Anne’s Hall in Dungannon and on boring a well in East Africa with Fields of Life.

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Anyone who wishes to support the '50@50 for £5,000' initiative can donate via the Just Giving page at – <http://alturl.com/6v37z> - or, alternatively, can send a cheque to Drumglass Parish, c/o The Rectory, 26 Circular Road, Dungannon.

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars



The Methodist Church in Ireland Conference Service

MCIconf21 - Sunday 13th June, 11am “Join us as Lay Leader, Hazel Loney, preaches on ‘Living wholeheartedly as followers of Jesus, for the transformation of the world’.” To access the Live Stream:

<https://buff.ly/3uPVLcU> | <https://buff.ly/3un4GSG>

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Christian leaders - Five Ways to Survive and Thrive 2021

Christian leaders - How are you doing? CPAS Leadership - "Our polls reveal that many Christian leaders continue to feel a combination of exhausted, hopeful and overwhelmed. We'd love to see you at our free webinar on 16 June on 'Five Ways to Survive and Thrive 2021' "

<http://cpas.org.uk/webinars>

Power and Prophecy: Black and White Women in the Church

London diocese - 15 June, 7pm, Online. Register for access. With @RosemarieMallet @ChineMcDonald the Revd Lucy Winkett of @StJPiccadilly and @paulargooder bit.ly/3coa5Tt

Talking about faith and-science - Lambeth Conference resources

"In this diocese, whenever, I go out for confirmation, it's now a rule - each child who is being confirmed must plant a tree." Bishop David Njovu, Lusaka Diocese, Zambia.

In this short film, voices of faith and science reflect on the huge role that churches can play to influence environmental issues.

There are a number of Anglican environmental initiatives working for change. 'Planet' will also be one of the Big Picture themes discussed by bishops at the Lambeth Conference when it meets.

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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On #worldenvironmentday2021 what can we be doing together to 'Reimagine. Recreate and Restore' the earth?

Find out more about environmental issues, faith and science:

<https://www.lambethconference.org/resources/talking-about-faith-and-science/>



The C of E Digital Labs Conference is back with 19 full sessions

From copywriting and storytelling, to creative online worship and digital giving in a hybrid church - there's a session for you.

Get your ticket today.

[\[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/digital-labs-conference-tickets-152374547373\]](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/digital-labs-conference-tickets-152374547373)

Heritage

Scotland's 'cradle of Christianity' on Iona is saved by small mercies

The Benedictine abbey on the Hebridean island reopens after a £3m renovation funded by bake sales and sponsored walks, Harriett Sherwood writes in The Observer

A Christian community on a tiny Hebridean island which for centuries has attracted pilgrims from all over the world will reopen on Monday after a mammoth campaign raised £3.75m to save it from closure.

The Iona community, centred on a Benedictine abbey in whose grounds John Smith, the late Labour leader, is buried, has spent the past three years making its buildings fit for the 21st century. The upgrade includes the installation of a renewable energy system and connection to superfast broadband.

Princess Anne, patron of the appeal, will visit the island for a blessing ceremony, and thousands of people are expected to join in online celebrations of the successful appeal for the work.

In 2016, the community warned that without significant action its facilities would be unfit for purpose within a few

years, which would put its presence on Iona “in serious jeopardy”. The initial estimated cost of the work was £2.1m, but the final costs were significantly higher.

Raising the money had been a “daunting prospect”, said Christine Jones, the coordinator of the appeal. “We had some large donations but most of it came from individuals and church communities.” About 2,500 people from 22 countries contributed, raising money from bake sales and sponsored walks.

The new energy system will pump hot water from underground to the historic abbey, village hall, schools, homes and businesses on the island. Residential accommodation has been made accessible to wheelchair users, the refectory renovated, a new kitchen and scullery installed, and complete rewiring undertaken.

“We’ve tried to be as green as possible, which is really hard in a Benedictine monastery,” said Ruth Harvey, the community’s leader. The work was complicated by the abbey’s listing as a building of significant historical interest and its location on a remote island off the west coast of Scotland.

Iona is known as the cradle of Christianity in Scotland. In 563, the Irish monk Saint Columba established a monastic settlement on the island. This week the group will also celebrate the 1,500th anniversary of Saint Columba’s birth.

In the middle ages it became the site of a Benedictine abbey, and in 1938, the Iona community was founded by George MacLeod. He took unemployed skilled craftsmen

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and young trainee clergy from Glasgow to Iona to rebuild the monastic quarters of the ruined medieval abbey.

Visitors to the community take part in daily chores, and join in worship and other activities. “This is not a hotel or a conference centre,” said Harvey. “People come for reflection and inspiration, and to explore issues of importance – the environment, poverty, migration, equality – in the context of a Christian community and in a beautiful, rugged landscape.”

The community is open to all – “we don’t just cater for signed-up Christians”, said Harvey. Visitors pay to stay with the community, with subsidies available for people on low incomes. The journey from Glasgow can take up to six hours: “Train, boat, bus, boat, walk,” said Harvey.

In the year after Smith’s burial in the abbey cemetery following his sudden death from a heart attack in 1994, thousands of people visited his grave. Locals said the site was being “desecrated” with plots surrounding Smith’s tomb trampled and gravestones damaged.

Iona, one and a half miles wide and three miles long, has a permanent population of about 120, and 130,000 visitors each year. The community particularly hopes to host people who have been adversely affected by the Covid pandemic in the coming months, said Harvey.

Courtesy The Observer/ Guardian 06/06/2021

Media review

No Covid-19 patients being treated in ICU in NI hospitals and no deaths.

For the first time since mid-August there are today NO Covid-19 patients being treated in ICU in NI hospitals.

£6.2 billion and still rising – cost of pandemic revealed.

The cost of responding to Covid-19 in Northern Ireland has risen to more than £6.2 billion, according to a new Audit Office report.

'Shambles' as NI holidaymakers still cannot prove they have had two jabs of Covid-19 vaccine.

A significant number of people in Northern Ireland are unable to book holidays because they have no official way of proving that they are fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Edwin Poots announces Paul Givan is to be NI's new first minister.

DUP leader Edwin Poots has announced that Lagan Valley MLA Paul Givan is to replace Arlene Foster as Northern Ireland's new first minister

Out with the old guard: Edwin Poots sacks Arlene Foster's other ministers.

Twelve days after being confirmed as DUP leader, Edwin Poots has finally moved to demonstrate his authority by sacking every one of Arlene Foster's ministers – except himself.

Ruth Dudley Edwards: Trevor Ringland is just the man to portray Northern Ireland positively in US.

“I was delighted for two reasons on Sunday afternoon when I saw this tweet from the Northern Ireland Office”

NI Protocol: LCC warns Maros Sefcovic of ‘people power overthrowing tyranny’

The Loyalist Communities Council has issued an ominous warning to EU European Commission vice president Maros Sefcovic over the NI Protocol.

MPs to hear additional ‘loyalist perspectives’ on NI Protocol

Westminster MPs will hear further evidence today, Wednesday, of the impact the post-Brexit arrangements are having on Northern Ireland, from a loyalist perspective.

Parties across chamber agree to amend religious discrimination exemptions in education

Belfast Newsletter

... to amend legislation which allows religious discrimination in education. ... Article 71 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order ... the best Northern Ireland and UK news and information online and on our app.

Rector to 'shear' one of his own flock to aid church renovations

Irish Farmers Journal

Reverend Kingsley Sutton, the rector for the parish of Timoleague, will shear ... “From the outside, the church looks a regular Church of Ireland church,” ...



Pointers for prayer

Lord, you have taught us
that all our doings without love are nothing worth:
Send your Holy Spirit
and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love,
the true bond of peace and of all virtues,
without which whoever lives is counted dead before you.
Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake.

Your hand is upon your people, O God,
to guide and protect them through the ages.
Keep in your service
those you have called and anointed,
that the powers of this world may not overwhelm us,
but that, secure in your love,
we may carry out your will
in the face of all adversity. Amen.

O God our ruler and shepherd,
you anointed Jesus

as the king and servant of your people.
Make us attentive to your word,
that we may accept your reign over us
and serve you alone. Amen.

Friends in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbours as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.

...

Intercessions

....

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.
As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.

...

Intercessions

....

Move us to praise your gracious will,
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of
death
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.

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We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.

...Intercessions....

Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbours. Amen.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.

Speaking to the Soul

Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38 NLT

I was very fond of my first satnav. It became a great friend to me and I knew that I could completely trust its wise directions. On one occasion I was taking a group of friends to a railway station at the end of a conference. I spoke movingly to them about the excellence of my satnav and the

help that it had been to me. We weren't far away from the station when my passengers expressed some surprise at the route we had taken. There was grass growing up the middle of the road and it certainly didn't look ideal. And then, to my horror, the road came to an abrupt halt. It was a dead end! The only way to remedy the situation was to turn around and retrace our steps, and I had to admit that my wonderful satnav was, after all, not infallible.

There are times when the only way to correct a situation in our lives is by admitting that we have done wrong, and do a U turn. That's called repentance and it was precisely what Peter told his audience on the day of Pentecost. They needed to turn around and start a new life. Their sins had caused the death of Jesus and now they needed to head in a completely new direction which would be marked by baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit. If they were willing to turn their lives around in this way the result would be the gift of forgiveness. They would be set free to live a new life with God.

It's always hard to admit that we have done wrong. It wounds our pride and so we will always be eager to find excuses for our actions. But when God shows us that we have sinned against him, the best response is to admit that we have let him down, and to turn right around and claim his gift of forgiveness.

QUESTION

What is your own experience of God's forgiveness?

PRAYER

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Lord God, I admit that I have sinned against you. I repent of my sins and ask for your gift of forgiveness. Amen

