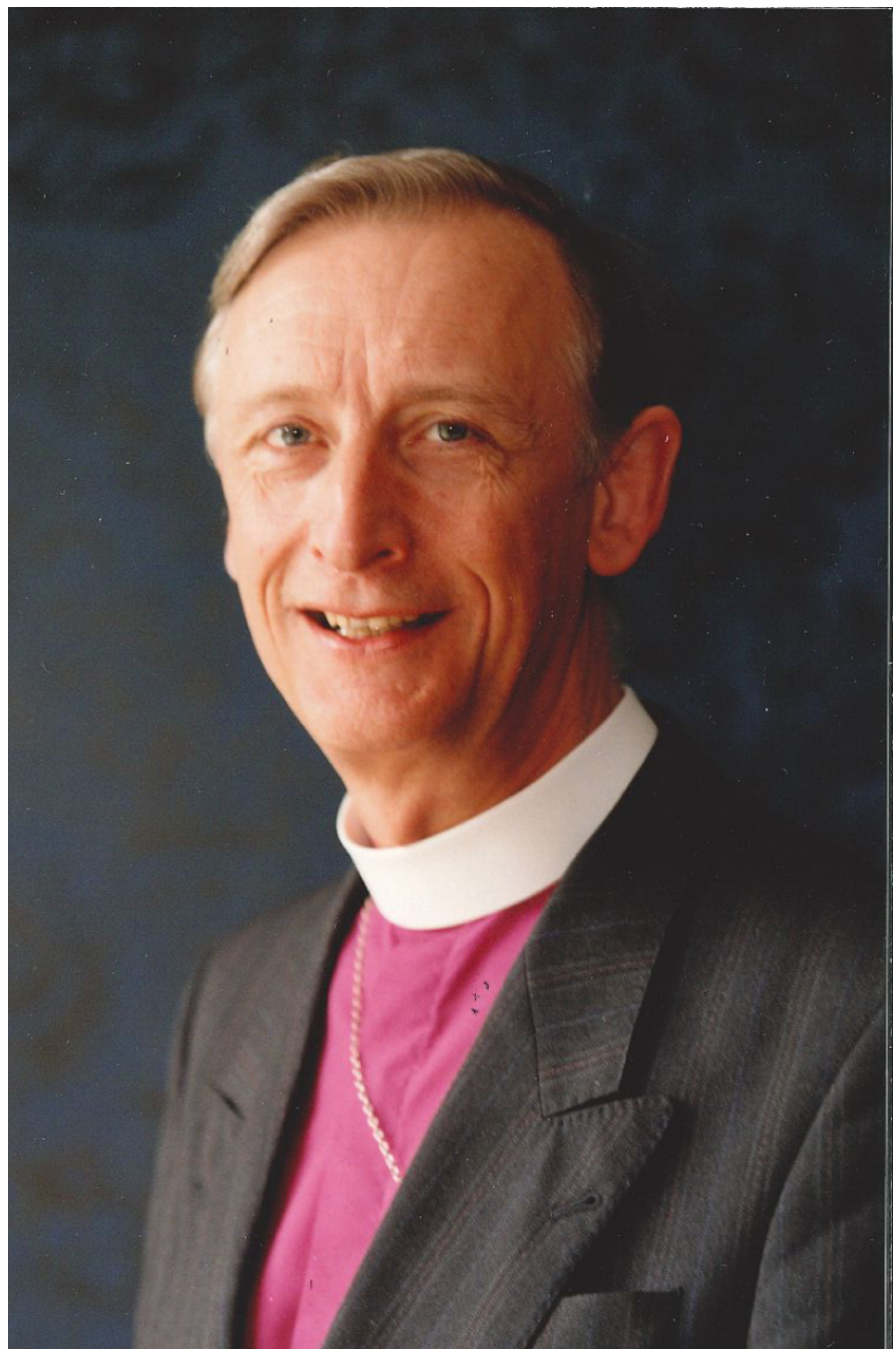


**Image of the
day**

**Rt Rev Brian
Hannon when
Bishop of
Clogher**



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People and places

Parishoner's passion for drama recognised

Mrs Maureen Dunn, a parishoner of the Church of the Ascension, Cloughfern, was awarded an MBE in Her Majesty the Queen's New Year Honours.

Maureen, 79, was honoured for her services to drama and the performing arts. Honorary secretary of the Newtownabbey based Theatre 3, Maureen is also vice chairperson and honorary secretary of the Association of Ulster Drama Festivals and has been secretary of Newtownabbey Drama Festival for more than 30 years.

Her passion for theatre began seven decades ago, when, at the age of 10, she won two tickets in a schools' art competition to the Grand Opera House Christmas pantomime, Cinderella, starring Des O'Connor.

“As soon as the curtain went up, I was just amazed by the whole spectacle and the beauty of it all,” Maureen recalls. “I thought, I would love to be on that stage, and in 1986 that dream came true when I played Theresa in Remembrance by Graham Reid at the Opera House with Theatre 3 in the finals of the Association of Ulster Drama Festivals.”

This was two years after she joined Theatre 3 – in the early days, Maureen was an actor and later artistic director.

Mrs Maureen Dunn

Her leading roles included playing Mrs Venables in Suddenly Last Summer by Tennessee Williams, Evie in The Gingerbread Woman by Neil Simon, Mrs Birling in An Inspector Calls by JB Priestly, and Mother Miriam Ruth in Agnes of God by John Pielmeier.

The group represented Northern Ireland in UK and All-Ireland Finals with plays such as The Rats by Agatha Christie, Plaza Suite by Neil Simon, The Dumb Waiter by Harold Pinter, Something Unspoken by Tennessee Williams, and recently, Bench at the Edge by Luigi Januzzi, which represented Northern Ireland in Harrogate in 2019.

As a mature student, Maureen gained a 2:1 BA Hons Degree in Theatre Studies and Anglo Irish Literature from the University of Ulster in 1997. In 2006, she established a

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Youth Drama Workshop for 8-18 year olds in Ballyearl Arts Centre.

With Theatre 3, outside of the pandemic, each year Maureen would do one full length play which would be entered into the competitions, a touring summer theatre show, and an one-act play each autumn, which would be entered into the autumn festivals.

She has travelled all over with the theatre group. “There is competition, but I meet so many nice people,” she said.

While drama and theatre are her passion, Maureen is a qualified dental nurse, and prior to retirement had careers as both a dental nurse and as a secretary.

She and her husband Norman were married in Cloughfern Parish Church, where Maureen has been a member since the age of 14. They have four children.

She founded the parish drama association, the Ascension Players, 20 years ago, offering parishioners the opportunity to take to the stage and raise funds for the church while doing so.

News that she was to be awarded an MBE had come as a big surprise, Maureen said.

“I am totally delighted and feel very honoured as I really I represent a brilliant organisation, and everybody who goes out and acts or directs deserves an award because they are all amazing,” she said.

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Maureen is looking forward to a visit to Buckingham Palace to receive her MBE in the coming months.

Presentation to Clogher organist

A presentation was made on Sunday morning to organist Ann Thompson who has received the honour of being awarded a BEM in the Queens New Years Honours List.



The Rector, The Reverend John Woods and congregations of Donacavey and Barr congratulated Ann on the good news of her award.

Tributes to the late Bishop Brian Hannon

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The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Most Revd John McDowell, the Bishop of Clogher, the Rt Revd Dr Ian Ellis, and The Archbishop of Dublin the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson have issued statements on the death at the age of 85 of the Rt Revd Brian Hannon. , formerly Bishop of Clogher from 1986 to 2001, which took place yesterday morning (Monday, 10th January).

The Archbishop of Armagh

Archbishop McDowell said “It is with a sense of deep sadness that I learned of the death of the Rt Revd Brian Hannon.

“Brian was deeply loved by so many people in the Diocese of Clogher who knew him well, and just as deeply respected right across the Church which he served with diligence, with good humour, and with dignity. His whole character and outlook on life were moulded by a lifelong discipleship of Jesus Christ, so any words he spoke in public carried the weight of his own integrity.

“He ministered in times and places which were amongst the most difficult during the Troubles, yet he did so without growing bitter or cynical. He spoke and acted always with compassion and understanding and did all in his power to work towards peaceful outcomes in a divided society.

“Brian had large affections: for the countryside of the west of Northern Ireland; for classical music which he played so movingly on the piano; for the family of the Church of Ireland. His love for his wife Maeve and for his sons,

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Desmond, Brendan and Neil, was deep and unclouded. His love for God and His Son, Jesus Christ, was unmistakable.

“My prayers, and I know the prayers of so many within and beyond the Church, will be with Maeve and the family as they come to terms with their great loss. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God.’”

The Bishop of Clogher

Bishop Ian Ellis commented: “Parishioners and clergy of Clogher Diocese and the wider community will be greatly saddened by the news of the death of the Rt Revd Brian Hannon.

“Bishop Brian was much loved and admired for his spiritual and pastoral support for his people, especially in providing leadership through days of disruption and violence in Northern Ireland. His patient, prayerful approach and commitment to enhancing education and community life is fondly remembered by all within this diocese, the Church of Ireland and the wider Anglican Communion. He and his wife Maeve devoted themselves to all aspects of diocesan life where their gifts of ministry were offered so generously.

“We thank God for everything Bishop Brian shared with the clergy and people of this diocese: for his kind and gracious manner, his caring and compassionate ministry, his musical talents, and wise and gentle leadership.

“As a diocese we hold in our prayers his dear wife Maeve, and sons, Desmond, Brendan and Neil, in their time of grief

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and loss. ‘The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.’”

The Archbishop of Dublin

The Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson who succeeded Bishop Hannon as Bishop of Clogher stated -

“It is with great sadness that we learn today of the death of The Right Reverend Brian Hannon, formerly Bishop of Clogher.

“Bishop Hannon and his wife Maeve loved the Diocese of Clogher and its people ever since he came to Enniskillen as Rector and Dean.

“He was renowned as someone to whom community at its most extensive mattered and he played his part ecumenically, not only in Ireland but internationally.

“I had the pleasure and privilege of succeeding him as bishop in 2002 and of doing my best to carry forward his legacy of faithfulness and vitality in a cross–border diocese.

“Our prayers and thoughts today are with his wife Maeve and their three sons Desmond, Brendan and Neil and their families along with all the people of the diocese who mourn his passing and grieve their loss of him and all he gave so generously in service and in leadership.”

The Rt Revd Brian Desmond Anthony Hannon

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(Born 1936) was educated at Trinity College Dublin and ordained in 1961; he served firstly in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe as Curate in Clooney (1961–1964), Rector of Desertmartin (1965–1969), and Rector of Christ Church, Londonderry (1970–1982). From 1982, he was Rector of the Parish of Enniskillen (St Macartin's Cathedral) in the Diocese of Clogher, firstly appointed Canon and becoming Dean of Clogher in 1985. He was elected Bishop of Clogher in May 1986 and consecrated in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, in June of that year. Bishop Hannon retired in 2001 on his 65th birthday.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books

To look like Jesus - Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

Sermon delivered by Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry at The Church of the Epiphany in Washington D.C., on January 6, 2022, as part of the "To Look Like Jesus" churchwide Epiphany celebration.

Due to audio issues with the livestreamed service, this sermon video is presented with English subtitles included on the video.

Find out more about the "To Look Like Jesus" service on the web at: www.episcopalchurch.org/tolooklikejesus.

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Sermon transcript: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/01/We-Must-Reclaim-Epiphany-transcript-ENG.pdf>

New Musical Director for Cappella Caeciliana



Cappella Caeciliana have appointed Matthew Quinn as their new Musical Director succeeding Donal McCricken who recently retired from the choir.

Matthew Quinn is a Northern Irish conductor, composer, singer, and music producer for BBC Music NI. Working across the UK and Ireland, Matthew has conducted a range of high-quality ensembles such as Northern Ireland Opera, Crouch End Festival Chorus, Hallam Sinfonia, and

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Manchester Philharmonic Choir. He has also recently made his professional debut with both the RTÉ Concert Orchestra and the Ulster Orchestra. He is currently a young artist at Northern Ireland Opera and Genesis Sixteen where he is studying under Harry Christophers and Eamonn Dougan.

Previous young artist positions include Crouch End Festival Chorus Young Conductors scheme, studying with David Temple MBE.

His music theatre piece he has created, 'Érainn', setting his own family story at the turn of the 20th century in Ireland is receiving its premiere in Belfast in Summer 2022, followed by a recording later in the year.

Matthew said "I am delighted to be joining Cappella Caeciliana as their Musical Director. They are a wonderful group of singers who have achieved a very high level of ensemble singing under their previous director, Donal McCrisken, and I am extremely excited to see what we achieve together in this exciting new chapter."

David Macartney, CC's Chairman, said "It is with great pleasure that we can announce that Matthew Quinn has been appointed Musical Director of our choir. Matthew is an exceptionally talented musician with the energy and vision to lead Cappella in an exciting new chapter, building on the wonderful legacy of our former Musical Director, Donal McCrisken. Matthew's skill in choral directing has already been recognised by the internationally acclaimed choral directors Harry Christophers and Eamonn Dougan, through Matthew's work with the Genesis Sixteen."

[\[https://caeciliana.org/\]](https://caeciliana.org/)

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News Reports

Sunday church numbers have halved in past 30 years

Campaigners say that rural parishes having to share priests is a reason behind falling attendances, Gabriella Swerling and Ben Butcher write in The Daily Telegraph

Sunday service attendance has nearly halved in 30 years, The Daily Telegraph can disclose, as clergy warn that priests covering more than one parish has sparked a “loss of confidence” in the Church.

The only area of the country to see an rise in the number of worshippers was London, where the diocese has stuck to the “one-priest-one-parish” model.

All 43 other dioceses have seen an average decline of 40 per cent in the number of regular Sunday worshippers, a new analysis of Church of England data shows.

@ @ @

1.7pc

The amount churchgoers increased in London, between 1987 and 2019, from 52,700 to 53,600.

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Between 1987 and 2019 the number fell from around 1.2 million to 679,000.

In London, over the same period, churchgoers increased from 52,700 to 53,600, an increase of 1.7 per cent.

Priests in rural areas are increasingly being asked to deliver services at several towns and villages in the community, with some using laypeople instead of clergy due to shortages.

Responding to the data, Rev Marcus Walker, founder of the Save the Parish campaign, said: “London, many decades ago, decided to buck the trend in the rest of the Church of England and stick to a one-priest-one-parish model. The fruits of this can now be seen.”

He added: “There has been a loss of confidence in the core claims of Christianity – both in the nation and in the church. If we want to bring people back to church, first we have to win people back to the God they would worship in our churches.

“For that we need theologically trained priests, embedded in their communities, with the time to know and love the people they serve.”

The new data come at a time when there are warnings that the church could “collapse” in rural communities as many struggle to attract congregations and funds.

A leaked Church document last year suggested the Covid pandemic was an opportunity for “radical change” which could result in the loss of the parish church model in a bid to remain “financially sustainable”.

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It warned clergy to prepare for changes and cuts as officials prepare to overhaul the system, sparking fears that churches in rural towns and parishes will not survive. There is also a debate about the future of the Church as it tries to attract more Christians in an increasingly secular society.

The Ven Luke Miller, Archdeacon of London, said that the reason that the capital has seen an increase is because “churches have seen [growth] where they have engaged with communities in new and creative ways, responding to local needs and changing demand”.

He added: “While experiences will differ locally, broader



Benone strand, Co. Londonderry

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societal changes over time have affected people's patterns of life, whether it be in their work, their leisure and family time, or in how they practise their faith.

“To compare church service attendance with historical data oversimplifies and overlooks the other ways in which our churches have been changing and responding.

“Sunday services continue to be an important part of parish life, but church today reaches people in so many ways.”

Debbie Clinton, the Church of England's Director of Vision and Strategy, said: “There is no doubt that patterns of church attendance have been changing for decades but the good news of Jesus Christ has not [changed].”

Perspective

The churches and gay rights: the road to irrelevance - by The Irish Times

The actions of the Presbyterian church are typical of a failure to keep up with changes in social attitudes

All main churches struggle with the issue of homosexuality. It is a reason why they are becoming more marginalised in societies where debate on gay rights now belong to history. That the Irish churches continue to obsess about it alienates them still further from the large share of the population.

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Meanwhile, all churches on the island have gay members and gay clergy, something most churches readily acknowledge – if sotto voce.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has, however, decided on a different approach. In June 2018 its General Assembly in Belfast decided that same-sex couples could not be full members nor could their children be baptised.

There was therefore a certain inevitability about what has happened at Dublin's Christ Church Sandymount, with its more liberal Presbyterian congregation. Gay man Steven Smyrl was an elder there from 2007 while in a relationship with another member. He and his partner entered a civil partnership in 2011 and married in 2018. In 2019 he was removed as an elder by a Church commission.

Minister Katherine Meyer and the local church council then co-opted him as a member and refused to remove him despite directions by Church authorities to do so. Employing language reminiscent of witchcraft trials, she and the council were instructed to “recant” or be dismissed. They are standing their ground.

In an increasingly tolerant society this episode and how it has been handled casts the already damaged reputation of religion on this island in an even poorer light, particularly when both jurisdictions show more compassion and acceptance towards gay people than any of our churches.

Commenting on the Sandymount situation Prof Sam McConkey, himself a Presbyterian elder, said the churches in Ireland had “completely lost the audience, the dressing

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room, the under 40s. The survival of organised religion in any form on this island over the next 30 to 40 years is at issue". He is correct – and the leaders of these churches have no one to blame but themselves.

The Irish Times 10/01/2022

Poem for today

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

+ Please commend CNI to your friends

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