

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Salisbury Cathedral

Image of the day

Salisbury Cathedral

The photo of Salisbury Cathedral was taken from the Cathedral School. The extent to which the chapter house is detached from the main cathedral is very clear here.

Visit and enjoy the serenity and splendour of this stunning Cathedral, gaze up at Britain's tallest spire, explore Britain's largest Cathedral Close and Cloisters, see the world's oldest mechanical clock and the best-preserved original 1215 Magna Carta – all in one beautiful place. Photo courtesy of Stephen Dunn

[<https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/>]

People and places

Drama marking 250th anniversary of Amazing Grace to be hosted at St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare

On Wednesday 22nd March at 7.30pm, St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare will host an exciting new drama called Forever Mine which marks the 250th anniversary of the world's most famous hymn, Amazing Grace.

March 4, 2023

On 1 January 1773, in a small church in Olney, England the congregation sang a new hymn written by their minister, Rev John Newton to illustrate his New Year's Day sermon. Two hundred and fifty years later, Amazing Grace is the world's best loved hymn and one of the most-recorded songs of all time



A Living Breath
PRODUCTION

Forever Mine
*The love story behind
the world's best-loved hymn*

Wednesday 22nd March
St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare
7:30PM Admissions: €10

Amazing
Grace 250
1773-2023

In Partnership with Kildare Centre of Mission
amazinggrace.ie/forever-mine

CHURCH ARMY
URG

MEATH & KILDARE
DIOCESES

QR code with 'b' logo

March 4, 2023

In this special anniversary year, this remarkable story forms the backdrop of an exciting new drama called Forever Mine. It is an original stage play and costume drama exploring the two great loves of John Newton's life – his love for God and his love for "Polly" (his nickname for his wife Mary).

Based on their love letters and on letters, diaries and historical writings, Forever Mine is a true story of separation and reunion, death and new life, loss and redemption. Although set in the 18th century, this moving narrative will resonate with modern audiences.

While focusing on Polly and Newton's love story, Forever Mine also looks honestly at John Newton's role in the slave trade even for six years after his conversion. It traces his slow journey to repentance and his later work supporting the campaign for abolition as mentor to William Wilberforce. Forever Mine elevates the lesser known voices of the abolition movement such as black writer Olaudah Equiano and the poet William Cowper.

The drama takes place in partnership with Kildare Centre of Mission, which is an initiative of Church Army UK and Ireland and the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare.

You are warmly invited to attend, what is sure to be an enriching Lenten experience.

Tickets are available at the door on the night and online at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/forever-mine-kildare-tickets-559580228527>.

A trailer for Forever Mine can be viewed here [<https://youtu.be/1LSN4iuqFI0>]



Strengthening C of I link with Diocese of Egypt

Top - Rev Mina, from the Diocese of Egypt, and Canon Raj, from Kilwarlin, joined CMSI for prayer this week. Hearing from Rev Mina about life in Egypt enabled those present to see into the global church from another angle today. Lower-Canon Bryan Follis is hosting him for this special partnership visit to Hillsborough Parish - may God speak

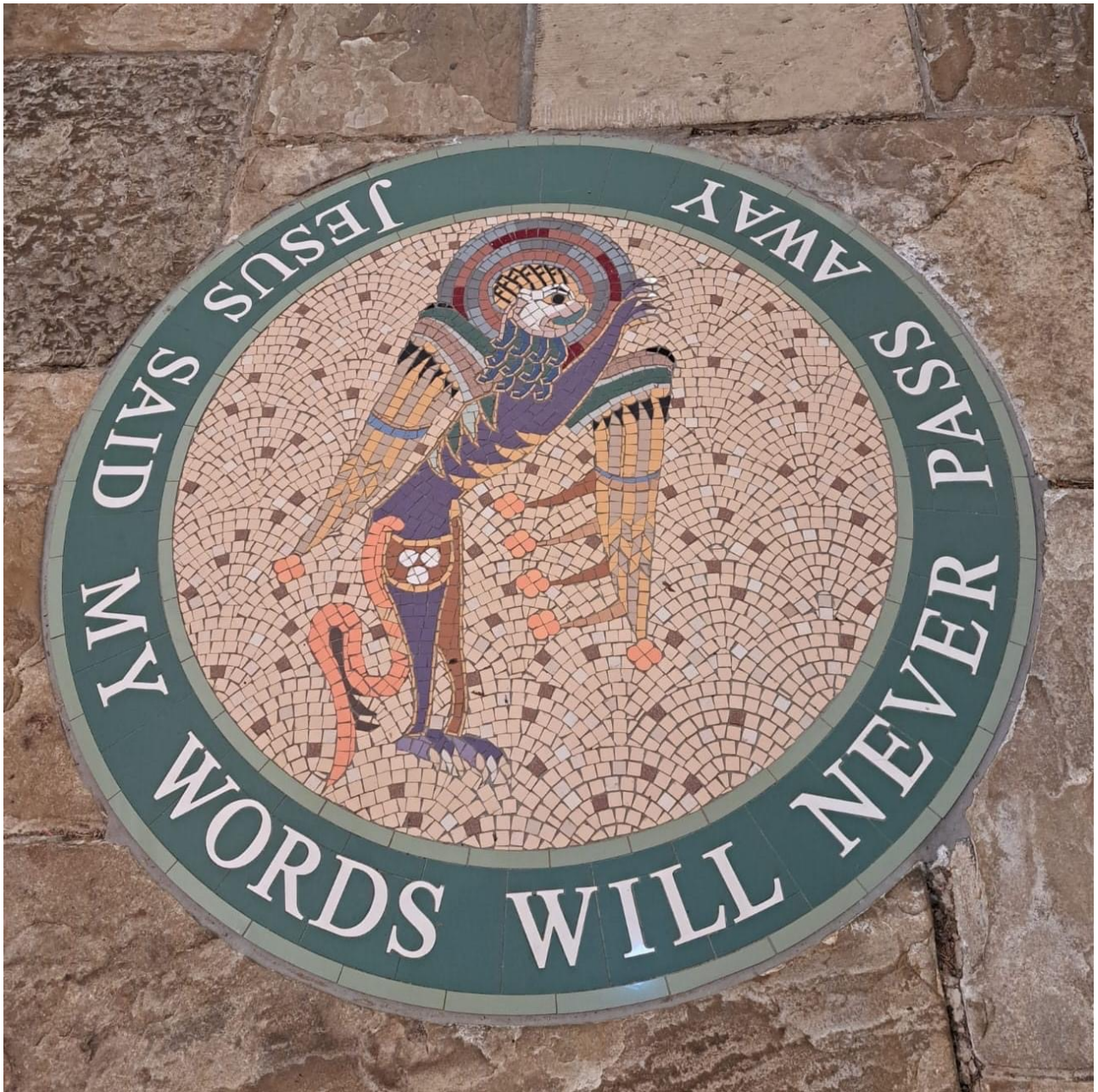
March 4, 2023

through Rev Mina and the link between Egypt and Hillsborough over the next month.



Bible engagement at Downpatrick Cathedral

Catherine and Mark of the Bible Society in Northern Ireland joined the team LAMP for a morning in Downpatrick Cathedral to encourage their ministry across a variety of



contexts. The Bible Society staff noted their thanks for the welcome and good conversation about Bible engagement.

Winter Madness is upon us

It's March! That means that the countdown is on to Winter Madness. The organisers say -

Make sure you rally up the troops at youth group/ church this week.....



Young adults - we are pumped to see you there.

Under 18s should come with an adult/part of a youth group.

Parents - If there is no youth group in your church, that shouldn't stop you from bringing a car load to Holy Trinity, Rathmines, Dublin..

PS, you don't have to be part of the C of I or going to Summer Madness to come. We want to bless as many as possible with this event. See you next Sat! Give us a heads up if you're coming.



Marking world book day in Dromara

Dromara and Garvaghy parishes marked world book day - folk got all dressed up and they were delighted to see the Rector George dressed up too!

The Rector told those taking part that the Bible is the greatest book we need to read because it contains life.

John 6: 63 - "The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life."

Big Leprosy Mission Tea Party in Knockbreda today

Rebecca and Stephen of the Leprosy Mission were out in Knockbreda to prepare for the tea party and were glad to see Elizabeth and Jim. Thank you to all who have already

March 4, 2023

booked in for The Big Leprosy Mission Tea Party today Saturday!

Saturday 4th March, 10.30am-12pm, Knockbreda Parish Church Hall, Belfast BT8 7AN

News reports

The Church and Public Education: A Missionary Encounter?

The 65th Church of Ireland Annual Theological Lecture at Queen's

Speaker: Professor Trevor Cooling (Canterbury Christ Church University)

Date & Time: Monday, 20th March 2023 – at 6.30pm

Venue: Stranmillis University College (Drama Theatre)

Religious education has become a hot topic within our schools – from the provision as part of the core curriculum to the provision of collective worship. Some would argue that the influence of RE in schools has undue influence on the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland. Yet other research has demonstrated concrete examples of teachers connecting faith with their teaching to create positive holistic outcomes. So how can we best understand the relationship between faith and the classroom?

Trevor Cooling is Professor Emeritus of Christian Education at Canterbury Christ Church University, and Chair of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC).



Over the course of a career that has taken him from working as a secondary school teacher to lecturing in theology, and serving as a diocesan adviser and as CEO of a Christian education charity, Professor Cooling's highly-regarded research and writing on the subject has established him as a leading voice in the field.

He is fascinated by the contribution that worldviews in general, and Christianity in particular, can make to human flourishing.

In this lecture, Professor Cooling will bring his considerable experience to bear as he unpacks a vision of the relationship between Churches and public education. How can drawing on the rich depths of Christian theology best contribute to educational outcomes? And what does the future of the relationship between faith and schools look like in best practice?

Attendees will also have a chance to put their questions directly to Professor Cooling in a Q&A session immediately following the lecture.

The Revd Danielle McCullagh, Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplain at Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis University College, remarked: "We are absolutely delighted to be able to organise this year's lecture together with our friends at Stranmillis College. It is an opportunity to continue celebrating the College's recent centenary, and also our strengthening ties in chaplaincy."

Dr Peter Hamill, Secretary of the Church of Ireland's Board of Education (Northern Ireland), added: "We are delighted to have Professor Cooling giving this year's annual lecture. Professor Cooling brings an insightful look at how religion, including the teaching of Religious Education, is viewed in schools in today's society. The Board is particularly thankful to Stranmillis College for hosting this event in its centenary year."

Free tickets are available from www.thehubbelfast.org or directly via Eventbrite (the full Eventbrite link is: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-church-and-public-education-a-missionary-encounter-tickets-546246236197>)

Busy week beckons for Moderator

Visits to local congregations and their ministers, schools, farms and the local fishing industry, the Police Service, and health and social care sectors are all on the agenda for the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's (PCI), Right Reverend Dr John Kirkpatrick, when he pays a weeklong pastoral visit to the church's Presbytery of Newry, which begins this Sunday (5 March).

The all-Ireland denomination has 19 regional presbyteries and during their year in office Moderator's undertake tours of four of them. Made up of ministers and elders drawn from local congregations and other ministries in a particular area, each presbytery is responsible for overseeing those congregations in its local area. Stretching from Annalong in the east, through the Kingdom of Mourne to Newry city, the Presbytery of Newry extends west to Markethill, and into South Armagh, taking in 23 congregations in total, two of them falling just south of the border in County Monaghan.

With no less than 24 engagements planned around the city of Newry, Markethill and the Kilkeel areas, Dr Kirkpatrick will have a busy week. While presbytery tours are primarily pastoral visits to encourage the local church, engagements also include visits to Kingsmills Primary School, Newry and Kilkeel High Schools, where he will meet with pupils and staff. Dr Kirkpatrick will also visit PCI's chaplain and staff at Daisy Hill Hospital and Newry Hospice, the centre of Southern Area Hospice Services.

Agriculture and the fishing industry are also on the agenda with planned visits to Fane Valley Co-Op Society in



Altnamachin and Markethill Livestock Sales. PCI's first Rural Chaplain, Rev Kenny Hanna, will co-ordinate these visits, as well as a visit to some local farming families to hear more about the current challenges farmers face. When the Moderator is in Kilkeel he will have meetings at the Harbour with local representatives from the fishing industry and the Fishermen's Mission. During the week the Moderator will also visit the Ely Centre in Markethill, which provides a victim and survivor service in support mainly of service veterans and their families. A visit to Ardmore police station will also take place.

Speaking about the forthcoming tour, Dr Kirkpatrick said, "Having visited the presbyteries of Dromore, Route and most recently Dublin and Munster, this is my fourth and final presbytery tour, and Joan and I are very much looking forward to it. The message that have shared on each of my

tours is not a new one and it is not a complicated one, but it is the story of how Grace works. It is also the story of how Grace inspires works.

“While each tour has been different, there has been one constant similarity throughout, and it is how Grace, which is so crucial and foundational to our faith and relationship with Jesus, has anchored those who serve the Lord and their communities quietly behind the scenes for the good of all. I have no doubt we will find exactly the same love and commitment across the Presbytery of Newry,” Dr Kirkpatrick said.

The tour will open with the morning worship this Sunday at Annalong Presbyterian, where Dr Kirkpatrick will preach, and end with the evening service at Kilkeel Presbyterian the following Sunday. Rev David McCullagh, minister of Annalong and Moderator of Newry Presbytery, is also looking forward to Dr Kirkpatrick’s visit. “While here the Moderator will have the opportunity to see ministry and life in both rural and urban settings, meeting farmers, fishermen, and those involved in other industries in the area. He will also meet healthcare workers, local teachers and students, and those serving in the PSNI. On both Sundays Dr Kirkpatrick will conduct worship in local churches and, between the two Sundays, address two midweek meetings.

“We hope that there will be times of encouragement for both the Moderator and members of our congregations. He will be busy travelling the length and breadth of our Presbytery and as he will minister to us, we will uphold him in prayer,” he said.

March 4, 2023

As the Clerk of Presbytery, Rev Stuart Finlay, who was minister of Annalong Presbyterian Church for 35 years, explained, “With 19 presbyteries Moderators don’t have time to visit each very often, in fact the last time we welcomed a Moderator on a tour of our Presbytery was six years ago. So, when a visit is planned, there is always some excitement and anticipation. It is always our prayer that such a visit will be helpful to the Moderator as he seeks greater understanding of church life in different parts of the island, and also a blessing to us as we receive God’s Word from him. We very much hope that he and his wife Joan enjoy their visit with us,” he said.

During his weeklong tour Dr Kirkpatrick will also preach in Creggan Presbyterian Church near Cullyhanna, Downshire Road Presbyterian in Newry, Ryans Presbyterian near Rathfriland and Kilkeel Presbyterian Church. The Moderator will also meet ministers from across the Presbytery for fellowship, Bible study, and prayer at three separate venues, while the wider Presbyterian family from across the district have been invited to worship together at two Presbytery Rallies. Taking place on Tuesday evening at Downshire Road Presbyterian and on Thursday evening at Mourne Presbyterian in Kilkeel, Dr Kirkpatrick will talk about his visits to Hungary and Ukraine, which he undertook last October.

Church News Ireland

In the media

Presbyterian Church in Ireland says author of letter criticising next leader's views on women clerics was not actually a Presbyterian

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland says it appears that the main author of a letter criticising its next leader's views on women clerics is not actually a member of the denomination, Philip Bradfield writes in the News Letter.

The open letter was organised by former Presbyterian elder Steven Smyrl, who was removed from his role at Christ Church Sandymount in Dublin in 2019 because he was in a same-sex marriage, the BBC reported.

In February Rev Sam Mawhinney, who is based in Dublin, said even though it was contrary to church policy, he was against the ordination of women. The 150 signatories expressed concern that his comments had encouraged other clergy to "voice hostility to women in leadership roles". "Misogynistic remarks" their letter suggests, are "not at all rare within certain quarters" of the church. Other signatories to the letter include former Northern Ireland justice minister David Ford and infectious disease expert Prof Sam McConkey.

Among the signatories was retired professor of French, Ruth Whelan, who once studied to become a Presbyterian minister but later gave up on that ambition. Part of her

March 4, 2023

reason for dropping her ambition, she told the BBC, was a lack of support when trying to secure preaching experience.

The signatories want the church to publicly "demonstrate its commitment to upholding the value and worth of women as equals in both the church and in wider society"."The signatories to this letter demand that church authorities act immediately and without prevarication in order to repair the damage to the reputation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland".

A spokesperson for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) said: "Wednesday's Open Letter came to the Moderator in quite a strange way, in that it was released to media outlets at what appears to be almost at the same time. This perhaps implies that the purpose of the letter was primarily for the benefit of the media and not simply a request for the Church to look into a particular issue.

"The letter came to PCI via an e-mail which was signed 'Concerned Presbyterians'. It appears, however, from media reporting of this story to date, that the main author of the letter is in fact not a member of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Clearly a number of others who have signed it are not members of PCI either. Nonetheless, as is normal practice when correspondence is received, time will be taken to give it due and appropriate consideration."

Dr Mawhinney will take up his position as moderator in June, for the normal 12 months.

The authors of the letter have been invited to respond.
Courtesy The News Letter 02/03/2023

Suzanne Breen on attempted murder of John Caldwell

SF branded the attempted murder of John Caldwell "diabolical" and "an act of thuggery". But, if we're to have an honest conversation, the party needs to explain exactly when blasting a police officer in the stomach changed from being morally right to wrong". Belfast Telegraph - Feb 26

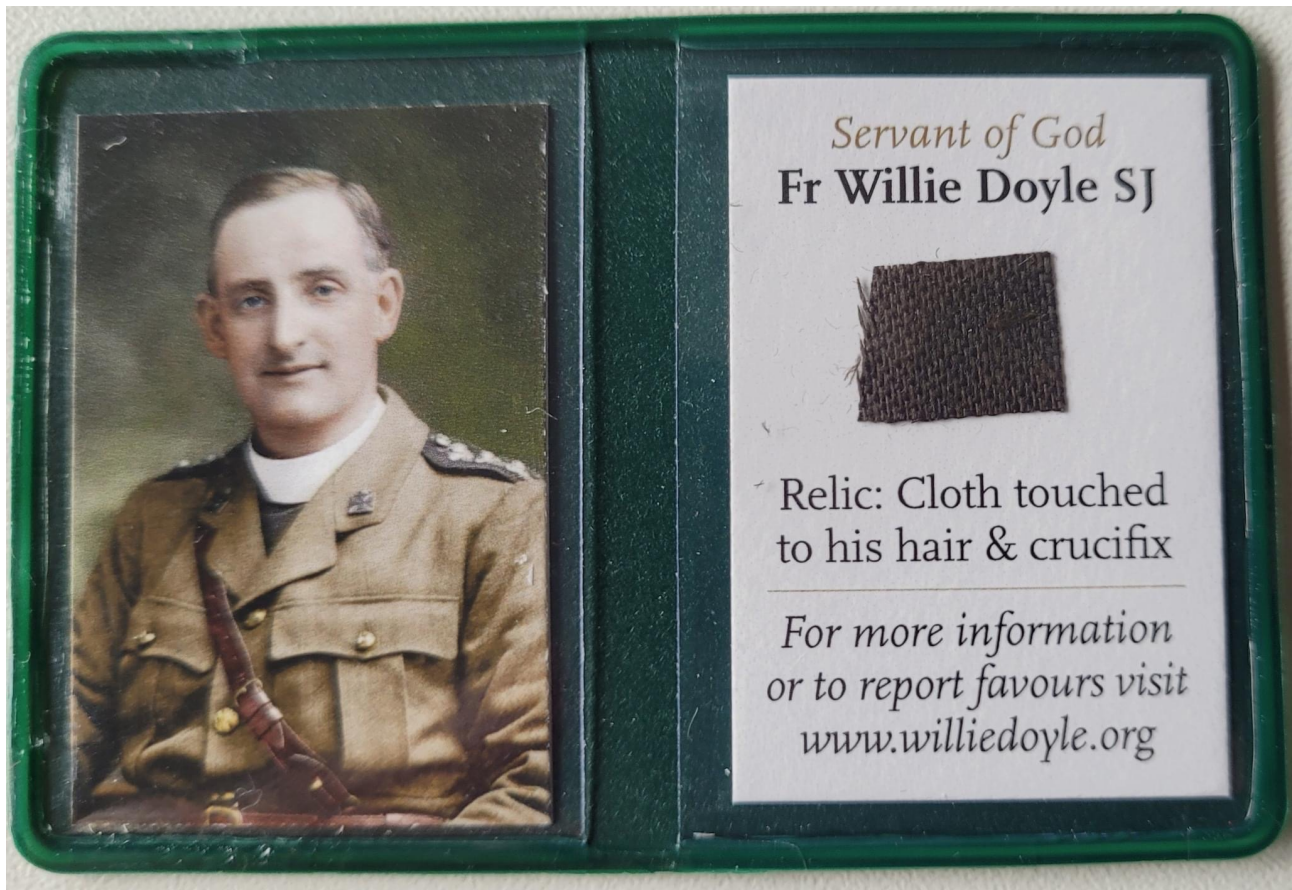
Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Dr Malcolm Guite's keynote talk at first Ulster University C.S. Lewis Symposium

C.S. Lewis Group at Ulster University - This is Dr Malcolm Guite's keynote talk from Now We Have Faces: The First Annual C.S. Lewis Symposium at Ulster University (3 Nov 2022). His talk is entitled 'A Little Incarnation: C.S. Lewis and the poetry of embodiment'.

Here, Malcolm traces the links between Lewis's theology of incarnation and his imaginative vision as a writer. (The views and perspectives expressed in this talk are those of Dr Guite and remain his intellectual property.)

[<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjaoVaQAdjdVFIFenlZVg-g>]



Tenebrae in rehearsal - Holst's Nunc Dimittis

Their latest video release is Holst's Nunc Dimittis. Composed and premiered in 1915 and then left unperformed until the 1970s, the Nunc Dimittis is in 8 parts. Watch the whole video of Tenebrae in rehearsal <https://loom.ly/qdV3W3U>

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

March 4, 2023

houstonmckelvey@mac.com