



**Image of the day -  
Pentecost Sundae  
See People and places, page 14**

May 25, 2021

## Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church speaks of “shared journey” in speech to the General Assembly



Lord Jim Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, with Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

**In an address to the General Assembly, Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church has spoken warmly of the "shared journey" with the Church of Scotland and reaffirmed the strong ties between the denominations.**

Reflecting on the particular importance of the partnership throughout the pandemic, he said it had reinforced the value of working together.

May 25, 2021

"These past months which have been so painful have also been so remarkable in our shared journey: the concern of keeping the church alive in this new way of life, people discovering that they could join a Eucharist in Melrose, morning worship in St Cuthbert's Edinburgh and finish of with Mass at St Mary's RC," he said.

Bishop mark's words came directly before the Assembly voted in favour of passing the St Andrew Declaration, which is the product of work begun in 2019.

The new statement formally recognises a shared faith and will now be brought forward for the consideration of the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church in June, after which it is hoped it will be officially signed by both churches.

Speaking about the proposed formalised agreement, Bishop Mark said that it is "about providing a loving and prayerful worshipping community for the whole nation, from the glen head in Sutherland to the close end in Partick".

"I have heard more and more people telling me that their faith isn't denominational, rather it is about where they encounter God, where they feel loved, nurtured and respected for who they are," he added.

"The faith needs of the people of Scotland are not best served when we each spend time doing many of the same things in two separate places, almost next door to each other especially when in the next community, church life has already ceased."

May 25, 2021

At the same time, Bishop Mark emphasised that the unique characteristics of the two denominations would not be undermined through the St Andrew Declaration.

"This Declaration doesn't ignore the things that seem to make us different from each other", he said.

"Some of those differences will need to be worked through or accepted as differences we will always have.

"Remember, unity is not the same as uniformity."

"What I believe the Declaration is doing is trying to encapsulate the working together that we have already achieved while also informing the communities we serve that we aren't here to compete for your loyalty, we are here to share with you our vision of a Scotland still served by the church, with all its breadth, history and prayers for the future.

"I commend this document and look forward to the day we will be able sign it together."

In the speech, Bishop Mark also praised the new Scottish Church Leaders' Forum, saying that he was "delighted" in the relationships being built through the new group.

Since March 2020, the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum has now become one of the principal expressions of partnership between church groups in Scotland.



May 25, 2021

Every week since Sunday 22 March, the Forum has succeeded in issuing a joint call to prayer, which is now signed in the name of 15 different Christian denominations.

Responding to Bishop Mark's comments, Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland said: "Thank you very much for your address to the Assembly and being with us today.

"You've given us your very profound thoughts and indeed your commendation of the St Andrew Declaration.

Referring to the new Scottish Church Leaders' Forum, Lord Wallace then spoke of the importance of "continuing a very productive piece of work beyond the pandemic".

## **Kirk a step closer to blessing same-sex marriages**

**The Church of Scotland is a step closer to allowing ministers of Word and Sacrament and deacons to marry same-sex couples if they wish.**

Commissioners at the General Assembly yesterday afternoon (May 24) approved draft legislation, with safeguards in accordance with Section 9 (1A) of the Marriage Scotland Act, by 319 votes to 217.

It will now be passed to presbyteries under the Barrier Act for further consideration.



Rev Dr Grant Barclay, convener of the Legal Questions Committee, delivered their report.

They have until 31 December to express their views to the Principal Clerk and a report will be submitted to the General Assembly next year.

If a majority of presbyteries back the draft legislation and it is agreed by next year's General Assembly, it will become Church law in Scotland only.

Ministers and deacons will be able to apply for a license to become authorised celebrants for same sex marriage ceremonies.

No-one would be required to participate in the solemnisation of, or be involved in the arrangements for, a same sex marriage unless they explicitly wished to do so.

May 25, 2021

In 2017, the General Assembly instructed the Legal Questions Committee to undertake a study of the matters which would require to be addressed in any proposed future legislation.

A sub-committee was formed on same sex marriage and members met regularly.

Following a debate at the 2018 General Assembly, the committee were instructed to prepare the proposed legislation which was presented this year.

The draft legislation was passed down to presbyteries for further consideration after commissioners backed a motion championed by Rev John Purvis, minister of Drumchapel St Andrews in Glasgow.

It was seconded by ministers including Rev Dr Donald MacEwan, the convener of the Kirk's Theological Forum.

### **'Promoting greater unity'**

Mr Purves said the General Assembly had previously voted to allow congregations to call a minister in a same-sex marriage if they wished to.

“We have already embraced the mixed economy,” he added.

“What that decision achieved was not a compromise; quite the opposite.

May 25, 2021

“It created a provision whereby no-one had to compromise. There were fears expressed at the time that this might be divisive.

“On the contrary, what the last six years have proven is that far from dividing the Church of Scotland, this provision has promoted greater unity within the Church and values the beliefs of all.

“However, this Overture is in keeping with where we already stand as a Church and is not a threat to anyone’s strongly held beliefs or practice.

“It is also in line with the Assembly Trustees’ initiative on equality, diversity and inclusion. Inclusion is not bringing people into what already exists, it is making a new space, a better space for everyone.

“Today I am asking you to make a new space, a better space for everyone.”

Mr Purves said the Church has grown and devolved over the years and he saw no merit in “delaying” the matter any further.

### **‘Affirming the traditional view’**

However, Eric Smith, an elder at Brightons Parish Church in Falkirk, proposed a counter-motion, calling for the draft Overture to be sent to the Theological Forum for consideration and instructed them to bring a report to a future General Assembly.



May 25, 2021

“Over recent years the Church has gone through a painful process rooted to same sex marriage,” he said.

“It has consistently affirmed the traditional view of marriage between one man and one woman at the same time trying to amend and dilute this principal by offering the constrained difference approach.

“It appears that this is not based on a positive biblical theology for same sex marriage but on an incremental chipping away at the biblical doctrine we as a Church continue to affirm in name.”

Mr Smith said Mr Purves’s motion was akin to putting the cart before the horse on the basis that Church law was changed without first demonstrating a positive biblical theology for same-sex marriages.

Commissioners rejected the counter-motion by 320 votes to 211.

Yesterday’s debate comes following the 2017 General Assembly, when the Legal Questions Committee was instructed to undertake a study of the matters which would require to be addressed in any proposed future legislation.

## **Irish fundraising drive launched for Al Ahli Hospital, Gaza**

**The recent situation in the Holy Land has put huge pressure on hospitals, including Al Ahli Hospital in**



**Gaza city which is run by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (Photo above).**

Dublin & Glendalough diocese, a partner of the diocese of Jerusalem, has previously supported Al Ahli Hospital by raising funds to refurbish its on-call facilities for staff and for solar panels.

Dublin & Glendalough are seeking support again and asking for donations to the hospital over the next three weeks.

Last week the newly installed Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, the Most Revd Hosam Naoum, appealed for support for the hospital. He said: “The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is continuing its Christian mission of bringing

May 25, 2021

healing to the wounded, relief to those who have lost their homes and livelihoods and comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones. Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza has been on the frontlines of these relief efforts, becoming a beacon of hope to those trying to remain alive under such dire circumstances.” Archbishop Naoum said the hospital is in desperate need of funds for fuel for its generators and to purchase emergency medicine and supplies.

Dublin and Glendalough Council for Mission is coordinating the fundraising drive for Al Ahli Hospital from May 24 to June 11. During that time donations can be made securely by card via the Christ Church Cathedral website at: <https://christchurchcathedral.ie/al-ahli/>

Over the next three weeks the Dean’s Vicar at the Cathedral, the Revd Abigail Sines; Lay Reader at Christ Church Bray, David Reynolds; Lydia Monds, Education Officer at Bishops’ Appeal; and Chaplain of the King’s Hospital School, Canon Peter Campion, have pledged to walk 100 kilometres – the distance from Gaza city to Jerusalem – in solidarity with all people in the Land of the Holy One who are suffering as a result of the latest eruption of violence.

Would you or your parish like to join them in expressing solidarity and raising awareness and funds by committing to walking 100 kilometres individually or as a team? If you would, please email [abigail@christchurch.ie](mailto:abigail@christchurch.ie)

Donations can be made directly to the fund or by sponsoring a walker. Both options are available on the Christ Church Cathedral website. All funds raised will be transferred to the [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

May 25, 2021

Diocese of Jerusalem following the conclusion of the appeal on June 11.

The Revd Abigail Sines, who is organising the fundraising drive, comments: “In recent years the United Dioceses have built connections of friendship and solidarity through the Jerusalem Link, with previous contributions made to the Al Ahli Hospital as well as the building of friendships through exchange visits. As we face not only the impacts of the coronavirus but sadly the ongoing tensions in the region, we would like to continue in this relationship of solidarity, even though our plans for further exchanges have had to be placed on pause for another year. We look forward to 2022 when we hope a group of Dublin and Glendalough clergy will be able to make a return visit as part of our joint retreat with colleagues in Jerusalem, and for the three lay readers who have been awarded bursaries to have the opportunity to take up their selected courses at St George’s College.”

While Anglicans represent only a tiny minority of the population of Gaza, Al Ahli Hospital serves all people of Gaza city without discrimination on religious, gender, social or political grounds.

You can read Archbishop Naoum’s statement in full here -  
[[ <https://christchurchcathedral.ie/al-ahli/> ]]

## **Episcopal Church George Floyd Memorial Liturgy – tonight Tuesday**

**Today, Tuesday May 25 marks the one-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd, which ignited a**





**worldwide racial reckoning. You are invited to join Episcopalians in an online liturgy of prayerful commemoration at 8:00 pm EST.**

Bishops from six dioceses will lead the liturgy, including a reflection by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, a Prayer of Lament from George Floyd Square in Minneapolis, an “Act of Remembrance”

from Ferguson, Missouri, and prayers from Washington, DC.

You are invited to participate virtually with prayers and postings on social media in conjunction with the service.

In addition to joining the service online, you are invited to a 3-part engagement for racial healing.

1. Record a 10-second video of yourself lighting a candle and post that video to your social media during or after the May 25 service.



May 25, 2021

2. In the same post, share a link to the service, which you can watch on any of the participating dioceses' Facebook pages.

3. In the same post, describe ONE thing you commit to do for racial healing and justice in the memory of George Floyd and all victims of racial injustice.

**The service will appear on the Facebook pages of:**

- [The Diocese of Colorado](#)
- [The Diocese of Michigan](#)
- [The Episcopal Church in Minnesota](#)
- [The Diocese of Missouri](#)
- [The Diocese of Washington](#)
- [Beloved Community: Racial Justice & Reconciliation in the Episcopal Church](#)

## People and places

### Cool confirmation in Leckpatrick

**Pokes for Pentecost - Pentecost Sundaes - Bishop Andrew Forster, preached at two separate Services of Confirmation in St Patrick's Church in Leckpatrick, on Sunday. 17 young people were confirmed.**

The Rector of Leckpatrick and Dunaanalong, the Rev Canon Paul Whittaker, arranged for an ice cream van to visit the church grounds after the services, and all present – young and old – were treated to free 99s.



In his sermon, Bishop Forster referred to the trials of the past year, during which the Coronavirus pandemic had wrought havoc around the

world, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives and disrupting life everywhere, including in parishes the length and breadth of Ireland. “The very fact that we are able to have this Confirmation Service,” the Bishop said, “shows us that things are getting better. For just over a year in the diocese there were no Confirmations at all, so the very fact that we’re able to do this is a good sign.”

## **Glenavy Parish offers refuge after homes evacuated**

**Glenavy Parish Church in Connor diocese has been praised for ‘being the Church’ and serving the community after it opened its parish hall for local people who had been evacuated from their homes last Saturday.**

Several residents were asked to leave their homes when a ‘viable pipe bomb’ was discovered outside a property in Main Street in the town around 6pm

Police and Army bomb experts examined the object before it was taken away for further forensic testing, with residents were allowed to return to their homes around 10.45pm.

The vicar of Glenavy, the Rev Linda Cronin, contacted local councillors when she heard about the emergency evacuations, and offered to open St Aidan's parish hall for anyone needing refuge.

Alliance Party councillor David Honeyford said: "It was brilliant to see the local Church be the Church in the community, offering your facilities to those families temporarily moved out of their homes on Saturday night.

"Without having to be asked, Rev Linda Cronin and St Aidan's Church of Ireland came forward and opened their facilities to the wider community at their time of need, serving the local community with warm hearts and it was truly appreciated. Thank you!"

Councillor Honeyford added: "Whoever left this pipe bomb in Glenavy clearly cared nothing about the local community. A number of people, including children, walked past this viable explosive device, which could have gone off with devastating consequences."

Det Con Chris Simpson of the PSNI said that it was fortunate no-one had been injured in what he described as a 'reckless attack,' and appealed for anyone who noticed any suspicious activity in the area to contact police.





## **First female canon of St Eunan's Cathedral, Raphoe**

The Rev Judi McGaffin has made history after being appointed the first female canon in the centuries-old history of St Eunan's Cathedral, in Raphoe. Rev Canon McGaffin said she was dumbstruck when she learned that she had been chosen to succeed Rev Canon Dr Bill Long who retired in March.

Canon McGaffin is the second woman appointed as a canon by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster. Last June, in Londonderry, Rev Canon Katie McAteer became the first female canon in St Columb's Cathedral's 400-year history.

"I feel honoured and humbled," Canon McGaffin said, "to have been appointed to the Cathedral Chapter of St Eunan and, in truth, it's taking some getting used to. When Bishop  
[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

May 25, 2021

Andrew first told me, on the telephone, that he was appointing me Canon, I think he thought something had happened to me: I was dumbstruck, literally – I couldn't speak.

“Now that the news is sinking in, I can see the significance of it, from an historical point of view. It is rather awesome to have become the first female Canon in the long and illustrious history of St Eunan's Cathedral. I appreciate what an honour that is for me, personally. Most importantly of all, though, I accept that this is part of God's plan for my ministry and for the Chapter, and that realisation is both exciting and daunting.

“Whatever I do in ministry, though, it's in God's strength and to His glory. In every phase of my ministry – first in Dunfanaghy, then in Donemana, and now in Fahan and Buncrana – I have been challenged and fulfilled. I hope that will continue to be the case. I pray that in this next phase I will justify Bishop Andrew's confidence in me and, most importantly, serve in a manner which helps build God's kingdom in the Diocese of Raphoe and beyond.

“I hope my wonderful parishioners in Fahan and Buncrana aren't too disappointed when they learn that this new appointment does not require relocation to Raphoe. They're stuck with me 'for the foreseeable', and that suits me splendidly.”

A date has yet to be fixed for Canon McGaffin's Service of Installation.



May 25, 2021

## **The most newly ordained Deacon**

**The reverend Mike O'Meara is the most newly ordained Deacon into the Church of Ireland's Ordained Local Ministry (OLM).**

The Ordination took place in St Mary's Tipperary Town on the 23rd May 2021. Bishop Michael Burrows and Dean Gerald Field led the worship.



**Meet Freda Doyle,  
Welcome Desk  
Supervisor at St  
Patrick's Cathedral,  
Dublin**

**"We have one lady that comes from England every year, she used to live in the area as a child and she comes back every year just to pop in, say hello, and see how we all are.**

"We had a gentleman here that used to be in charge of our bells and clocks, no longer with us, but he was here every single day. He was a gentleman that never married and the Cathedral was his life. We find that throughout the years in the Cathedral people will come in, just for a friendly chat. Locals come in much more than they used to, and we get a lot more Irish visitors than we ever did, especially during this time. We really value hearing their stories about their

May 25, 2021

experiences growing up with the Cathedral on their doorstep."



## Pointers for prayer

Holy God,  
you spoke the world into being.  
Pour your Spirit to the ends of the earth,  
that your children may return from exile  
as citizens of your commonwealth,  
and our divisions may be healed  
by your word of love and righteousness. Amen.

Empowering God,  
you gave the church  
the abiding presence of your Holy Spirit.  
Look upon your church today and hear our petitions.  
*... Petitions...*  
Grant that, gathered and directed by your Spirit,

May 25, 2021

we may confess Christ as Lord and combine our diverse gifts with a singular passion to continue his mission in this world

until we join in your eternal praise. Amen.

Creator Spirit and Giver of life,  
make the dry, bleached bones of our lives  
live and breathe and grow again  
as you did of old.

Pour out your Spirit upon the whole creation.

Come in rushing wind and flashing fire  
to turn the sin and sorrow within us  
into faith, power, and delight. Amen.

Holy Spirit,  
you poured yourself out on the people of the early church,  
pour yourself out on us now.

Holy Spirit you set their tongues on fire with languages so  
as to speak to one another in ways that could be  
understood.

Set our tongues on fire to speak in different languages and  
ways so others may hear the good news about Jesus.

Jesus, you said you had to go away so that the Holy Spirit,  
the advocate, the counsellor would come and it was so.

Come once again Holy Spirit as the advocate that we all  
need, as the counsellor we all need, and as the helper we  
all need.

Come Holy Spirit, fan your flames of love and  
empowerment, set us on fire for you once again. Bring life to  
each of our dry bones.

Amen

## Speaking to the Soul

**Wealth from get-rich-quick schemes quickly disappears; wealth from hard work grows over time.**

Proverbs 13:11 NLT

Oscar Wilde wrote, "The best way to appreciate your job is to imagine yourself without one." That seems to summarise a lot of people's thinking about work. Work is seen as something bad which needs to be avoided if at all possible, and if it can't be avoided immediately then one should aim to retire as early as possible. This thinking is in complete contrast with Proverbs where work is seen as something inherently good. It is worklessness and laziness which are to be avoided at all costs.

It is interesting that the writer of Proverbs refers to get-rich-quick schemes. This all sounds very modern, but the fact is that throughout the whole of history people have wanted to find short cuts to wealth. There's nothing new about laziness! God wants us to work hard because it not only provides for our needs and those around us, but also enables us to bless other people with the gifts that God has given us. We have all been given the ability to enhance the lives of people around us, and God looks to us to work hard at doing so. The apostle Paul wrote, "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up."

Over the years I have been particularly blessed by the way I have seen retired people working hard for God. At a time

May 25, 2021

when they had no pressure upon them to earn money, they wanted to make sure that they were still being productive for God. I have been inspired by their example. Working hard is good at any time of life, but it needs to be added working too hard is never what God intends. Overwork causes tension and pressure that is never God's desire. Whatever our age we need to find a balance between the work that God calls us to do and times of leisure and refreshment which allow us to continue to serve him with confidence and enthusiasm. I'm sure Oscar Wilde was wrong! The best way to appreciate your job is in fact to do it with all your heart and to thank God for it.

## QUESTION

How well are you balancing your work and leisure?

## PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for the blessing of work. I pray your blessing on those who struggle to find work, or who find their work difficult. Amen

