

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – All Saints' Antrim – A Community of Remembrance

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All Saints' Antrim - A Community of Remembrance

More than 500 handmade poppies are being displayed on the railings outside the Parish Centre each weekend ahead of Remembrance Day, honouring all who have lost their lives in wars and conflicts.

The ladies of the parish came together to knit, crochet and sew poppies of all shapes and sizes, creating these wonderful displays that speak of love, gratitude and community spirit.

Thanks have been expressed to everyone who contributed their time and talent to this thoughtful act of remembrance.

News

Blackrock supporter same age as Christian Aid

Christian Aid has wished a very happy birthday to their

supporter Denis Poynton who turned 80 this week and whose milestone birthday falls in Christian Aid's 80th anniversary year. Together with his wife Cherry, Denis has been a devoted supporter of Christian Aid for many years.



The couple, who have two children and five grandchildren, are members of Blackrock Presbyterian Church in south Dublin where they hold an annual coffee morning to raise funds for our work (see picture below with their minister, Rev Andrew Gill). They are both elders in the Presbyterian Church and Denis even served on the Board of Christian Aid Ireland for eight years (2009-2017), as the representative of PCI.

So devoted are Denis and Cherry to their church that they will spend Denis' 80th birthday attending their presbytery



meeting in Maynooth, with a lunch beforehand to mark the special occasion.

Sending her birthday wishes from England will be Denis' first cousin, the wonderful Judi Dench. Denis even appeared alongside Judi in an episode of 'Who Do You Think You Are?' when his famous cousin travelled to Ireland to research her Irish ancestry. (Photo page 3).

Please join Christian Aid in wishing Denis a very happy 80th birthday and thank him for his support for the work of ending poverty in some of the world's poorest countries.

DRY Board Meeting



Members of the Derry and Raphoe Youth (DRY) board met at the Diocesan Centre, on Tuesday evening, to discuss matters arising and take stock of the year's youth outreach activities.

The chairman, Rev Canon Peter Ferguson, opened the meeting in prayer, using Psalm 121, 'A song of ascents', to inspire those present. "We looked up with thankfulness," Canon Ferguson said, "for all that God has done in 2025 and looked forward with hope for all God will do in 2026."

Our Diocesan Youth Officer, Clire Hinchliff, led this evening's meeting, with full support from DRY board.

It has been a busy 12 months for the team. More than 50 young people attended this year's Confirmation Days in

November 6, 2025

Limavady and Stranorlar, and more than 30 took part in the DRY Weekend at Gartan Outdoor Centre. Other highlights included the annual Family Fun Day, 'Families in Church' training nights and the ongoing Freedom gatherings.

Following the conclusion of business, Rev Nigel Cairns closed the meeting in prayer.

Royal Family's Remembrance engagements in 2025

It has been announced The King and Queen and members of the Royal Family will attend a number of engagements to mark Remembrance in 2025.

Here is the full list:

6th November

The Queen will visit the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey.

8th November

The King and Queen and members of the Royal Family will attend the annual Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

9th November

The King and Queen and members of the Royal Family will attend the annual Remembrance Day Service at The Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.

The Princess Royal, accompanied by Sir Tim Laurence, will attend a



Pegasus V goes to church

remembrance service and lay a wreath at the Anzac Memorial in Sydney, Australia.

11th November

The Princess of Wales will visit the National Memorial Arboretum for a Service of Remembrance at the Armed Forces Memorial to commemorate Armistice Day.

The Prince of Wales will feature in a video message for the Royal British Legion's Remembrance Assembly.

The Princess Royal, accompanied by Sir Tim Laurence, will lay a wreath to acknowledge Armistice Day at 7 Combat Signal Regiment Memorial.

To conclude commemorations and also mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, the King and Queen will host a reception for veterans who served in the Pacific the Second World War and their families at Windsor Castle.

Meet the church that's won Scotland's top church award for community impact

A Highland church has been recognised for its extraordinary impact on the Inverness community, winning Scotland's top prize in the National Churches Trust Awards.

Ness Bank Church was celebrated for turning faith into practical action, supporting those struggling with food insecurity, social isolation, and vulnerability.

At the heart of the church's outreach is Inverness Foodstuff, a project that provides meals, friendship, and support several days a week.

Judges praised the initiative as a vital lifeline for the city, highlighting the dedication of over 80 volunteers and a small team of staff who work tirelessly to create a welcoming, dignified space for all.

Rev Stuart Smith, minister at Ness Bank, said: “It rewards amazing work done by dozens of local volunteers, and the staff who support them. It shows the folk we serve that their needs are recognised and taken seriously”.

The accolade was presented at a ceremony in London by Rev Canon Ann Easter, former Chaplain to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, alongside leaders from the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Benefact Group.

Ness Bank received a commemorative plaque and prize money, highlighting the national significance of its work.

Judges commended the church, saying it was recognised “for the life and love within the walls, a living example of how a church can serve its city in practical, transformative ways”.

Education

Down High prize giving by former pupil who became top rank military surgeon

Down High writes it was both an honour and a very proud moment for Down High to welcome former pupil, Surgeon Captain Professor Rory Rickard (Emeritus Professor of Military Surgery with the Royal College of Surgeons), as the Guest of Honour for their recent prizeday; the first in our new state-of-the-art facilities.



Having attended the Prep before moving his way up through school and later medical training, Professor Rickard went on



to hold a wide number of high-ranking leadership roles in military surgery that have allowed him to serve in operations all across the globe. In 2021 he was appointed as an Honourary Surgeon to Her Majesty the Queen and then to His Majesty King Charles III on his accession to the throne.

Professor Rickard handed out awards and trophies to almost 160 of our pupils whose impressive academic, sporting and musical achievements were being duly celebrated, before he shared some captivating, honest and wise reflections with the prizewinners.



Shelter Crafters: Protecting communities

On Monday 20th October, 16 Primary 6 pupils from Inchmarlo visited RBAI for a Minecraft Digital Technology Workshop with Microsoft Dreamspace and W5.



Paired with Year 8 students, they took on the “Shelter Crafters” challenge — designing a Minecraft shelter to protect families during natural disasters and creating a rescue device.

With support from our Student Digital Leaders, teams shared ideas, planned designs and began building, developing teamwork, creativity and digital skills along the way.

The competition runs until 23rd January, with more sessions to come.

Thank you to Mr Moreland for organising — we can’t wait to see the final designs!

Cathedral Calls



Friends Service held at Clogher Cathedral

The Annual Friends' Service of St. Macartan's Cathedral, Clogher, took place on Sunday afternoon conducted by the Dean of Clogher, the Very Revd Kenneth Hall with the Bishop of Clogher, the Right Revd Dr. Ian Ellis also taking part.

The preacher was the Very Revd Shane Forster, Dean of Armagh.

In his address, Dean Forster explained the role and significance of cathedrals and said there were 30 cathedrals across the Church of Ireland, each one with its own history.

He said cathedrals such as Clogher and Armagh built on hilltops shone a light and acted as focal points. He spoke of St. Patrick and his strongman, Macartan, whose name is associated with Clogher Cathedral.

In a wonderful spiritual and musical service, guests included the Tully Meadow Singers from the Clogher Valley.

The hymns were; “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!” “Dear Lord and Father of mankind,” “Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,” and “O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder.” The guest organist was Mr. Glenn Moore.

The lessons were read by Mrs Isabel Gilmore, Secretary of the Friends of Clogher Cathedral and Mr. Jack Johnston, Clogher Cathedral archivist.

Following the service, those attending were entertained to afternoon tea in the Royal British Legion Hall followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Clogher Cathedral. The Friends show their appreciation, care and affection for the Cathedral with the motto; “To gather around the Cathedral a body of supporters who are anxious to take some share in caring for it and preserving it for posterity.”

Clergy and ministry

2025 Annual Pioneer Ministry gathering

The 2025 Annual Pioneer Ministry Gathering will take place in Mullingar on November 22 with keynote speaker, the Rev Dr Michael Moynagh.

The Gathering is for everyone interested in pioneer ministry from across the Church of Ireland.

Michael is an Anglican minister based in Oxford and is known as a leading theologian and practitioner of the Pioneer movement. For over 25 years, he has been researching, advocating, advising, and coaching new forms of ministry and his numerous books include the classic textbook, Church for Every Context and Giving the Church.

It's very special to have a leader of this calibre to come and speak, where he will be contextualising what he knows, to our Irish context.

Attendees will connect with others interested in Pioneer Ministry from across the Church of Ireland during a time of training, sharing ideas, and exploring innovative ways to further develop pioneer ministry in your context. Tea, coffee and lunch provided. Please arrive from 10am for coffee and a prompt start at 10.30am.

Armagh and Connor Clergy Conference

The 2025 Connor Diocesan Clergy Conference is underway in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Co Cavan – this year in the company of clergy and staff from Armagh Diocese.

The Connor Conference is held every three years. The key speaker this year is Prof David Ford, who was the Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge until his retirement in 2015. Delegates will also hear from the Rev John Dunlop, a retired minister in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Clergy from both dioceses will attend sessions led by the speakers, and there are also some separate gatherings of each diocese.

The Conference began on Tuesday afternoon, November 4, when delegates were welcomed by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Rev John McDowell, who also introduced Prof Ford for his first of four sessions on the Gospel of John.

Following a break for coffee, Bishop George led a informal session for Connor clergy.

Events

Join 'Representing Anglicanism' in-person or online

Join in-person or online, on Wednesday 12 November for the seminar 'Representing Anglicanism'.

This will be given by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See and ACR Director, The Rt Revd Anthony Ball, together with The Rt Revd Anthony Poggio (Secretary General of the Anglican Communion),

Canon Dr Christopher Wells (The Anglican Communion Office's Director for Unity, Faith and Order) and The Rt Revd Robert Innes (Bishop of the Church of England's Diocese in Europe & Co-Chair of the Inter-Anglican Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission). Please write to info@anglicancentre.it if you're interested in participating.

Perspective

Remembrance

The Very Rev. Kenneth R J Hall, Dean of Clogher writes-

As we come into Remembrance season, we reflect on the significance of the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day earlier this year, we reflect on the significance of the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day earlier this year.

These occasions remind us of the sacrifices made by countless individuals during the turmoil of war. However, they also compel us to remember the ongoing struggles faced by many, particularly those affected by the Troubles in Northern Ireland. While we have witnessed significant changes in our own society, we must acknowledge that the shadows of conflict still linger, revealing the fragility of peace.

Remembrance Day offers us a moment to pause, honour, and reflect on all lives lost—not just in the major wars, but also in the smaller, yet equally impactful, conflicts of our

time. Each name on a memorial, every story shared, represents not just a loss but a profound impact on families and communities. As we consider these sacrifices, we are reminded of our shared humanity and the call to seek understanding and reconciliation.

In the context of our ever-changing world, where conflicts still rage in various areas, it is imperative that we actively promote peace. Scripture reminds us of this divine calling: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). This verse challenges us to embody the peace that Jesus offers. We need to be agents of reconciliation in our homes, communities, and beyond.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, invites us to trust in Him amidst the storms of life. He assures us that, through faith, we can experience a peace that surpasses all understanding. In Philippians 4:6-7, St Paul writes, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” This promise is not merely about the absence of conflict but encompasses a profound sense of well-being and security in God’s presence.

As we reflect on the past, we must also consider our role in fostering a future marked by peace. We, as a church and as individuals, need to contribute to healing and reconciliation. Controlling our words and actions may be a good starting point. ‘May the words of our lips and thoughts of our hearts be always acceptable in God’s sight.’ Psalm 19:14.

As we come together this Remembrance season, may we honour the memories of those who have gone before us, while also committing ourselves to the pursuit of peace. Let us be inspired by the sacrifices made and the love shown, and may we carry this spirit into our daily lives and our actions.

In the media

BBC knowingly helped spread Hamas lies and hate

Now we have the evidence. The BBC knowingly helped spread Hamas lies and hate - Daily Telegraph
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/11/03/bbc-prescott-report-hamas-lies-arabic-culture-anti-semitism/>

Coleraine's forgotten pupils

BBC - Pupils "appear to have been forgotten" in the process to merge three post-primary schools on Northern Ireland's north coast.
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvgkj8z218go>

Concern at minimum age for marriage in NI

BBC - At least 116 children, including 91 teenage girls, have been married in Northern Ireland since work began more than three years ago on new laws to raise the minimum age.

Speaking to the soul

Homesick

A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked. Psalm 84:10

We probably all know the feeling when someone doesn't want us around. It's I wonder if you've ever experienced homesickness. I certainly have. I loved the years I spent in India and my Indian friends couldn't have been kinder or welcoming, but there was still a deep longing to see my family and friends and to experience cold weather! At the time, the phone connection between India and the UK was very poor, and in two years I only managed to make one incredibly expensive call to my parents. The line was very crackly and it was very difficult to hear anything, but there were tears rolling down my cheeks as I heard their distant voices. I think the only information we shared that could be clearly heard was them telling me it was raining in Essex, and me informing them that it was hot in India!

The psalmist was thoroughly homesick when he wrote this particular psalm. The home that he longed to be in was the temple. We don't know why he was unable to get there, but he couldn't have described his anguish more powerfully. He wrote: "I long, yes, I faint with longing to enter the courts of the LORD. With my whole being, body and soul, I will shout

joyfully to the living God” (Psalm 84:2). Clearly, the temple itself was incredibly precious to the psalmist, but his longing was to be close to God. He spoke of the joy of those whose strength comes from the Lord and then movingly described the way that even “when they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs” (Psalm 84:6). Even the worst experiences of life can be miraculously transformed when we place our lives into God’s hands.

No wonder the psalmist concluded that it would be better to have the lowest job of all in the presence of God than to have all power and wealth and live at a distance from God. The psalmist’s words are a good reminder for us all of the incredible blessing and privilege of spending time with God.

QUESTION

How important is it to you to spend time with God?

PRAYER

Lord God, I praise you for the blessing of living in your presence. Amen

Church News Ireland

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Church News Ireland

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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