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# Footprints

Journey through Lent  
with Christian Aid Ireland

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## Christian Aid Ireland launches 'footprints reflections' for Lent 2019

Christian Aid Ireland has launched its Lenten resources and this year, for the first time, they include a daily email reflection series called Footprints. Each day during Lent, participants receive an email, consisting of a prayer and a short reflection based on one of the Bible readings from the Revised Common Lectionary.

### **Footprints daily email reflection series**

The reflections will be written by an exciting line-up of Christian leaders, theologians, academics, thinkers and practitioners from Ireland, Brazil, Kenya, Sierra Leone and South Africa, including:

- Lady Christine Eames, former World President of the Mothers' Union
- June Butler MBE, All Ireland President of the Mothers' Union
- Rev Dr Laurence Graham, former Methodist President
- Rev William Hayes, Minister of Tullamore and Mountmellick Presbyterian
- Scott Evans, Church of Ireland Chaplain at University College Dublin
- Rev Dr Liz Hughes, Chair of the Board of Christian Aid Ireland
- Rev Canon Patrick Comerford, Lecturer at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute
- Rt Rev Pat Storey, Church of Ireland Bishop of Meath and Kildare

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There will also be contributions from Christian Aid's international staff and partners:

- Graham Philpott, director of Church Land Programme which is a partner of Christian Aid, supported by the Methodist Church in Ireland. They work alongside those who are excluded from land rights and justice in South Africa.
- The reflection for International Women's Day (8<sup>th</sup> March) will be written by Rev Elineide Ferreira de Oliveira who runs Casa de Noeli, a safe house for women fleeing gender-based violence in Ariquemes, Brazil. Casa de Noeli was one of the Christian Aid partners supported by the recent Presbyterian World Development Appeal.

David Thomas, Church and Community Manager at Christian Aid is coordinating the Footprints series:

“We are delighted that so many eminent individuals have agreed to write a reflection for us for each of the days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. Our hope is, as participants journey with us through Lent, that they will consider their metaphorical ‘footprint’ - the legacy they leave behind and the impact of their lifestyle on people and planet.”

Footprints is free to receive, and you can sign up to receive it at [caid.ie/lent](http://caid.ie/lent)

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## **‘Free to Shape Your Own Future’ – Church of Ireland Youth Forum focus on young people and the Church**



### **The Dublin & Glendalough contingent at the Church of Ireland Youth Forum.**

Young people from all 12 dioceses of the Church of Ireland gathered for the second Church of Ireland Youth Forum in the City North Hotel near Dublin on Saturday (January 19). Organised by the C of I Youth Department (CIYD), the forum was facilitated by Nic and Sally Sheppard of Church Army.

The young delegates engaged in enthusiastic debates on issues affecting young people and looked at ways of



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**Simon Henry (CIYD), Barbara Swann (CIYD), Bishop Pat Storey (Chairperson of CIYD), Archbishop Michael Jackson and Steve Grasham (CIYD) at the Church of Ireland Youth Forum with the new Prayer Resource for the CIYD Day of Prayer.**

encouraging and supporting youth participation in the Church, facilitating change and taking action. They also explored how they serve and are part of what God is already doing in the world and how they could recognise God at work.

CIYD's new prayer booklet for the Church of Ireland Day of Prayer for Young People and Youth Ministry, which takes place on March 3, was launched during. 'Praying for Young People and Youth Ministry' contains a selection of prayer ideas that can be used during a service or events organised to mark the CIYD day of Prayer. The booklet will be made available to every parish and to youth workers.

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The forum was the first event of the 2019 commemorations marking the 150th anniversary of Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. The Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Michael Jackson, said that Disestablishment presented an opportunity for the Church of Ireland to become a Church in its own right rather than a political church. Until 1869 the Church of Ireland was a church for everyone whether they belonged to it or not.

He said that the strapline of the time – ‘Free to shape our future’ – was still relevant in the Church of Ireland today. He urged the young people to remember that they were “free to shape your own future” and encouraged them to use their voices in their own communities.

“This became the slogan of Disestablishment: ... free to shape your own future ... Considering the political storm out of which it came, it is exciting and hopeful; it gives an independent voice for change and development to a church as a church, as an oasis of hope and fresh belonging for all who choose to belong as opposed to all who are assumed to belong,” the Archbishop said.

“It can continue to be taken by every generation of young people in the Church of Ireland as a strong encouragement to engage with the capacities, abilities, enthusiasms – your willingness to be included, your hope of not being patronized by tokenism, the gifts that you already have. You want to bring those capacities into the church of today for the church of today and tomorrow. This slogan encourages you to engage without delay. It encourages you to believe in God and to believe in yourselves. It encourages you to take the initiative in opening up an omni-generational conversation about structure and policy as well as values

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and commitments. It remains an open-hearted encouragement to The Church of Ireland to take this freedom and to shape tomorrow in every generation,” he added.

During the session, members of Connor Diocese Youth Forum shared their experience of putting together a youth resource for their diocese. ‘Journey’ is written by and for young people and is proving very popular.

## **Larne Tuesday Group: 25 years of ‘building bridges, not walls’**

A cross-community Christian group has celebrated 25 years of “building bridges, not walls” throughout the Larne district.

The Tuesday Group was set up after the IRA ceasefire in 1994 and over the last quarter of a century has worked to bring people of all faiths and backgrounds together to help create a more inclusive and peaceful society.

A celebration lunch to mark the landmark anniversary - and the group’s final meeting - proved the ideal opportunity to bring together some of those who helped with its formation.

Sister Margaret Rose described the past 25 years as “a lovely journey” which took “various turns” but was one which the group always managed to take together.

She recalled how the situation in Northern Ireland was “dire” in the 1970s, and how within the fellowship of the Sisters of

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**At the last meeting of the Larne Tuesday Group, celebrating 25 years are Rev Dr Ivan Hull Chairman, Very Rev Stephen Forde, Dean of St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast and Publicity Officer for the group, Patrica McKinley-Hutchinson.**

the Cross and Passion there were discussions about what they may be able to do to contribute positively to help meet the needs of the day.

“We had a brainstorm to try to break down the division on our own doorstep,” she said.

From those initial seeds, the Tuesday Group grew and flourished, drawing interest from those with other church connections.

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Robert Alexander explained how, having been brought up in the predominately Protestant area of Clough, he had few opportunities to meet anyone from a different faith.

He told how the IRA had blown up his shop in Larne in 1977 and how his brother-in-law had his leg blown off in an IRA bombing and how these personal experiences caused him to wonder why people would turn to such violence.

He spoke of the “tremendous challenges” in bringing people from different traditions together in those early years even though they “should be a family in Christ Jesus”.

Former Larne Methodist minister, Rev Andrew Kingston, a past chairperson of the group, recalled being a little reluctant when first invited along. “I was quite comfortable in my own Methodist silo,” he admitted.

However, when he ventured along to the Tuesday Group, he found a warm gathering of people from various backgrounds who had come together with “a real sense of community”.

Rev Kingston recalled a number of dedicated individuals - including the then pastor of Larne Elim Church, Gordon Graham, the Sisters from Drumalis and Robert Alexander - who were an example to many others.

Referring to the fact that the Tuesday Group is now in suspension, Rev Kingston said: “This might be the end of one chapter but I’ve no doubt there will be those who want to meet together in a new form.”



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Very Rev Stephen Forde, Dean of St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast gave an inspired talk about how he viewed the ecumenical role of the group over his 19 years as rector in Larne.

He quoted Jesus' wish that "all be one" and said that we all should work together in a kaleidoscope of faith to glorify God, as the Tuesday Group had been striving to do for its 25 years.

## **Bishop of Cork at county meeting marking the First Dail**

On Monday, 21st January 2019, the centenary of the meeting of the First Dáil in the Mansion House in Dublin, Cork County Council held a special commemorative meeting at the County Hall, Cork. Dr Paul Colton, Church of Ireland Bishop of Cork, was in attendance as a guest.

As part of the Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan Commemorations and Reconciliation Project (supported by the Church of Ireland Priorities Fund) Bishop Colton has been working in partnership with other bodies and agencies in Cork City and County who are also engaging with the Decade of Centenaries. In the case of Cork County Council he has been working with the County Heritage Office, Conor Nelligan, and Nicola Radley, Senior Executive Officer at the Corporate Services Directorate at Cork County Council.

Monday's meeting, like that of the First Dáil, was conducted principally in Irish, but included also an excerpt in French

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**At the special meeting were (l-r) Cllr Mary Linehan Foley, Bishop Paul Colton, and Cllr Susan McCarthy.**

from the ‘Message to the Free Nations of the World.’ The meeting commemorated the nine Corkmen who were elected to the First Dáil: Liam De Róiste; James J Walsh, David Kent, Terence MacSwiney, Patrick O’Keeffe, Thomas Hunter, Michael Collins, Diarmuid Lynch and Seán Hayes. Principal addresses to the meeting, in Irish, were made by the Mayor of Cork County, Cllr Patrick Gerard Murphy, and the CEO of Cork County, Mr Tim Lucey. In itself, the meeting made history as it was the first recorded bilingual meeting of the County Council.

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A keynote address was given by Dr Neil Buttimer from the Department of Modern Irish at University College, Cork. Bishop Colton was warmly welcomed to the special sitting of the County Council by the Mayor and Councillors, as well as the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Cork County Commemorations Committee.

## **Offerings doubled by contactless collections: Church of England digital giving scheme to go nationwide**

The successful trial of contactless offerings in the Church of England has led to an extension of the scheme across England and Wales, according to the company behind it.

London-based payment technology company SumUp has introduced the contactless collection box, aimed at making donations and transactions faster and easier for congregations, in a small number of churches. It says they have experienced a doubling of donations since its introduction.

The technology can be used to take contactless payments, Apple Pay and Google Pay, and is capable of supporting 500 transactions without recharging. A fixed table-top version of the solution is also available, enabling people to donate before or after the service.

Rev Margaret Cave, vicar of Christ Church East Greenwich, said: 'We have enjoyed trialling the new digital Collection Box at Christ Church where it has gone down very well with the congregation. We have seen the age profile of Christ

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Church get lower over the last few years as we have welcomed more families, children and young people as well as young adults through different projects such as our church football team, our youth and children's work and our Connect Mums group.

'Most young people don't carry cash so it's important for us as a church to be ahead of the curve embracing modern technology and working with new ways for people to make donations.'

SumUp co-founder Marc-Alexander Christ said: 'In 2019 we are going to see an even greater uptake in contactless payments as we transition towards a truly cashless society. This means that elements of everyday life will need to adapt, and the digital collection plate is an amazing example of tradition meeting technology.'



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'As congregations around the UK carry less and less cash, the donation process needs to be as easy as possible in order to harness people's generosity. That's why we believe this partnership will be an immaculate connection.'

The scheme will be made available to the Church of England's 16,000 churches and 42 cathedrals through its Parish Buying Service.

## **International funding buys an ambulance to secure future of St Luke's Hospital in Nablus**

An international fundraising campaign in England and the United States has enabled St Luke's Hospital in Nablus to buy an ambulance – and with it, secure its future. The hospital was started by the Anglican mission agency CMS more than 100 years ago, and it is now run as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. But tighter accreditation rules from the Palestinian Ministry of Health meant that its accreditation as a hospital was at risk unless it was able to replace its struggling 15-year-old ambulance.

The hospital's existing ambulance was purchased in 2003. Over the years it has transported thousands of patients from Nablus and the surrounding towns – making 2,100 emergency trips in 2017 alone. But frequent breakdowns and the unreliable nature of the ambulance resulted in an additional 2,000 calls being diverted to other medical providers





Last year (2018), the Palestinian Ministry of Health announced tighter standards in its annual hospital accreditation review. This led to concerns about St Luke's ambulance, as it did not meet the hospital's requirement to provide a well-equipped, safe, and operational ambulance. Without a new ambulance, St Luke's would lose its accreditation and would have to close.

In England, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Anglican Communion Fund began a crowd-funding campaign; and in the United States, the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem also started fund raising. Together, the two groups raised sufficient funds to provide a new ambulance.

St Luke's is now able to continue its life-saving work to the Palestinian community between Jerusalem and Nazareth.

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Fund-raising efforts in the US were led by Sari Ateek, Rector of St John's Norwood in Chevy Chase, Maryland. A Palestinian Christian and son of an Episcopal priest, Ateek grew up in Jerusalem and moved to the US at the age of 19 to attend college. After leading a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2014, his congregation began supporting the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and now pay part of a nurse's salary at St Luke's Hospital.

"The exciting thing wasn't so much how much money", [Ateek told the Episcopal News Service](#) after the success of his ecumenical fund-raising efforts. "It was more the enthusiasm of the response from people around this," he said.

## **Mothers' Union mourns death of West Indies Provincial Vice President Joan James**

The Provincial Vice President of the Mothers' Union in the West Indies and Diocesan President of Guyana, Joan James, has died from injuries sustained in a road traffic accident. Described as a "tireless leader" of the Mothers' Union, Mrs James was a front seat passenger in an MU minibus travelling to Georgetown in Guyana on 2 January when it collided with a car travelling in the opposite direction. She, along with the driver of the minibus and another passenger, were taken to Georgetown Public Hospital, where Mrs James died on Thursday afternoon.

"Joan was loved by all and will be remembered as an outstanding leader, an encourager and motivator who could

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**Mrs Joan James died on Thursday after a road traffic accident at the beginning of January.**

mobilise communities to take action in any area of Mothers' Union work", the Worldwide President of the Mothers' Union, Sheran Harper, said. "She worked quietly and humbly, but was very effective in her work, always ready to give others the praise and glory. We will miss her dearly. May her soul rest peacefully in the arms of Jesus. Farewell dear sister and friend. Until we meet again!"

Mothers' Union Chief Executive, Bev Jullien, added: "Joan was a tower of strength within Mothers' Union internationally as well as within Guyana, tireless in her service to her community. She was much loved and will be greatly missed by all who knew and worked with her. May she rest in peace and rise in glory."

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Joan became a member of Mothers' Union 34 years ago and was elected Mothers' Union Regional Officer for the West Coast Berbice Region. She was recognised as an outstanding leader with the ability to mobilise and inspire branches and communities to take action whether it be in the area of literacy and numeracy, advocacy, campaigning, growing the membership, empowering women and young people or resuscitating branches. She was an encourager and motivator and well respected by all in her region, the MU said in a statement.

In 2006 she was elected to the Diocese of Guyana's MU Executive Committee. "She was extremely supportive during my six years as Diocesan President", Mrs Harper said. "Nothing was ever too much for her. If we had an activity that needed to take place just call Joan and it was sure to happen and be successful too. If funds needed to be raised for a programme or project Joan was at the helm of it in her region."

She was elected Vice President for Guyana 2012, becoming Diocesan President three years later. In 2017 she was elected Provincial Vice President of West Indies. She was a member of the Diocesan Council, a Lay Reader and Cultural Ambassador. She represented Mothers' Union in Anglican Communion meetings in Kenya.

## **January 23 in Christian history**

**January 23, 1786:** John Carroll, who would become America's first Roman Catholic bishop, founds the Catholic academy that is now Georgetown University.



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**January 23, 1893:** Episcopal minister Phillips Brooks, bishop of Massachusetts, staunch abolitionist, substitute evangelist for D.L. Moody, and author of "O Little Town of Bethlehem," dies. He was considered the most "considerable American preacher of his generation."

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