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Dundela Men's Group achieve a safety 'first'



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Recently St Mark's Dundela Men's Group became the first church group to visit the RADAR safety complex in Sydenham Business Park, Belfast. In a short time, the facility has become a firm favourite with local school children and groups promoting all forms of personal safety.

All of the facility is indoors and includes a train carriage, a bus, a police station, a court, house supermarket and other premises. Exhibits developed in association with the fire service included a smoke room, where visitors can see how quickly a room can fill with smoke and prevent escape.

A large emphasis was placed on internet safety with graphic examples of how easy it is for children to become victims of crime unless they adopt a more sensible approach to their use of Social Media. Large video screens simulating a vehicle attempting to stop amazed everyone at Just how long it took a driver to perceive and respond to a careless pedestrian.

The group were also encouraged to see what the world was like with 'beer goggles' on. No alcohol was consumed, but



the group were encouraged to wear depth perception distortion goggles. These made everyone look like 'minions' but it really brought home just how dangerous the public road can be as a pedestrian.

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Finally, the group were able to drive the vehicle sim costing over £120,000. Despite the curate being an advanced driver, it wasn't long before he was reliving his gaming experience on "grand theft auto" and becoming a menace to all the virtual characters. One of the group even managed to sacrifice a virtual sheep.

The manager of RADAR, Michaela Fox, proved to be a very amusing and informative host. RADAR is like a theme park for those who feel they have seen it all. The facility welcomes enquiries from groups of any age.

Further details can be found at the [RADAR website here](#).

Faith gave me strength – Ballymena journalist launches autobiography

Well-known Ballymena based journalist Joe Boyd will launch his autobiography 'Trading Places: From Hopelessness to Happiness,' on Saturday March 30.

Joe is one of the province's best-known church news correspondents, and currently works for The Church Page, a Christian news website.

His career began in 1997 when he joined the Ballymena Times, where he remained for 18 years before his move to The Church Page. The site publishes news and events from all Christian churches in Northern Ireland, regardless of

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denomination or size.

The 41-year-old has also worked as a freelance 'ghost-writer,' editor and press agent during a career which has seen him overcome the physical limitations imposed by Cerebral Palsy.



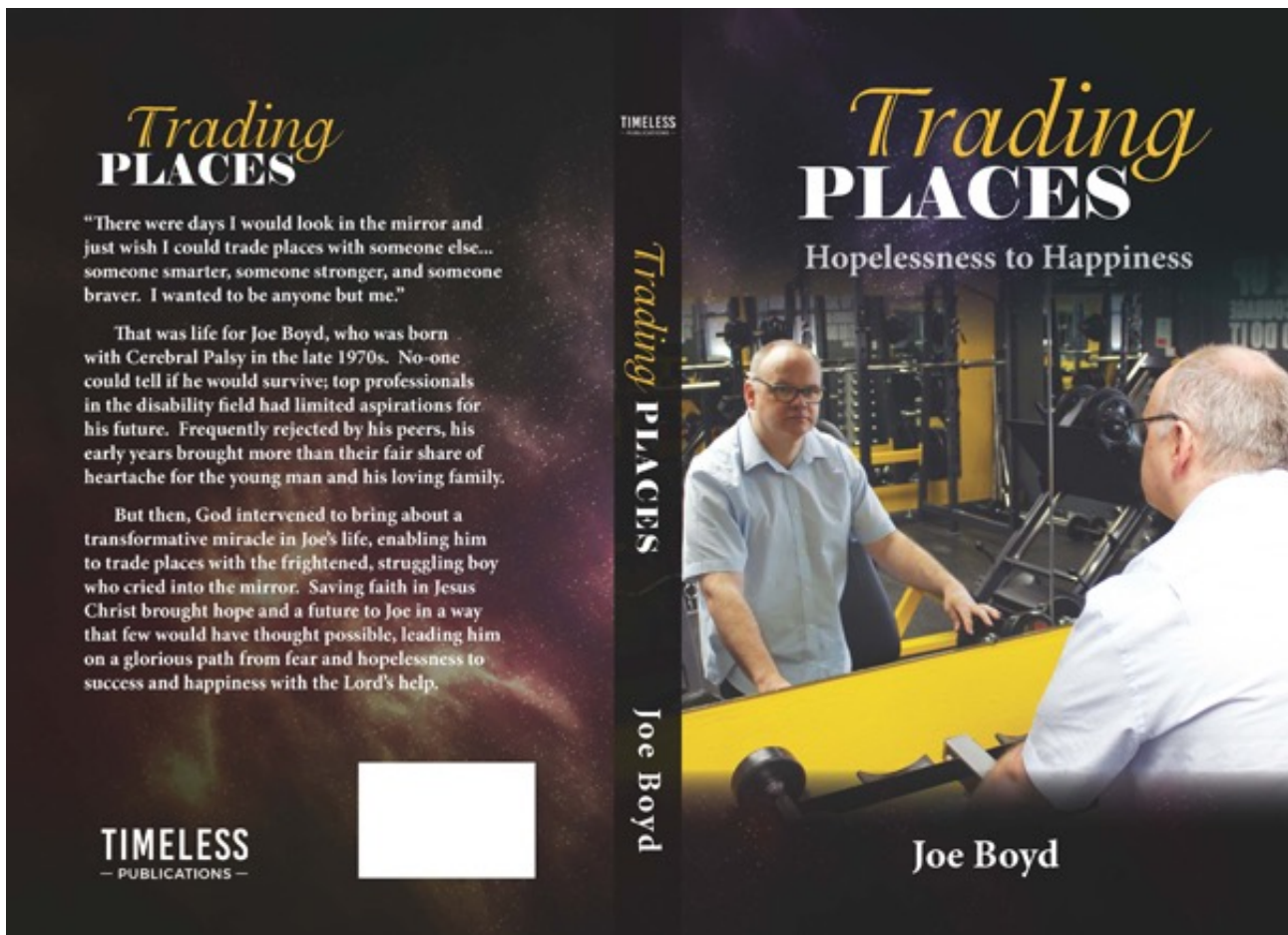
Born with a condition then known as Spastic Diplegia, early expectations for Joe's future were bleak. Many professionals of the day suggested that he was 'retarded.'

In 'Trading Places,' you will have the chance to read about how a deep Christian faith gave Joe the strength and ability to overcome this bleak prognosis. His impressive publishing record standing in tandem with a loving marriage and interesting side-line as a qualified gym instructor!

Looking ahead to the publication of what he hopes will be an inspiring testimony to the love and grace of God, Joe said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be getting the chance to share my story and I thank Timeless Publications for giving me this amazing opportunity.

"I hope that many people will discover my loving and powerful Saviour, Jesus Christ, as they read my book. I would also love it if a kid with a disability or their parents was given new hope for their future as they turn the pages."

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To celebrate the publication of 'Trading Places,' there will be a launch event at Victory Praise Community Church, Pennybridge Industrial Estate, Ballymena, on March 30 from 10.30am-1.30pm. There will be an opportunity to meet and chat to Joe in person as well as buy copies of his book.

Thirty per cent of all proceeds will go to the Greensleeves Children's Trust, an organisation which shelters orphaned children in South Africa

Joe is also keen to share his testimony with Churches and other Christian groups who would like to hear from him. To contact Joe about a visit, email joeboyd@thechurchpage.com. No fee will be charged but as Joe is unable to drive, he requests that potential hosts provide transport to and from their chosen venue.

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‘Trading Places: From Hopelessness to Happiness’ by Joe Boyd is available to buy now from www.amazon.co.uk. After the launch it can also be purchased on www.timeless.co.uk.

Attack on church in Newry is a hate crime

An attack on a Presbyterian church in Newry is being treated as a hate crime, police have said. Damage was caused to a window at First Presbyterian Church (Non Subscribing) sometime overnight between March 27 and 28.

It was the second attack on the historic property in the John Mitchel Place area of the city in less than a year. Police investigating the incident of criminal damage say they are treating it as a hate crime.

According to the minister-in-charge at the church, Rev Norman Hutton, the same window was targeted by vandals less than a year ago and repair work to some of the stained glass panels had only recently been completed.

Describing the latest attack as “very disappointing”, Rev Hutton said: “The stained glass window, which was actually erected in memory of my wife’s grandmother Margaret Hanna, was damaged about a year ago – in late April or early May – and at that time it was deemed it wasn’t a hate crime, which we contested as why would anyone attack a place of worship?”

“This time the outer storm glazing has been smashed, but I can only hope there is no damage to the stained glass window itself as the repairs were only finished about two weeks ago.” He added: “We have always had good relations with our neighbours, but it seems someone doesn’t want us here now.”

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First Presbyterian Church (Non Subscribing), Newry

Ulster Unionist councillor David Taylor condemned the attack on the church as “a despicable and evil act.”

“It is difficult to comprehend the mindset of someone who would desecrate any place of worship and there is understandable outrage within the local community that this incident has occurred,” he said.

“It is all the more significant given that this window was only repaired a matter of weeks ago following damage caused to it in a previous incident which occurred last year.

“This will no doubt cause great hurt to the congregation and it is extremely regrettable that they will have to incur further cost to repair the damage which has been caused to their church building.

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C of I Data Protection roadshows

In May last year, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect and placed responsibilities upon how organisations manage personal data. This new law also applies to the Church of Ireland and places requirements on dioceses, parishes and the central Church to ensure that they are compliant with GDPR in how they store and process personal data.

Rebekah Fozzard is the Church of Ireland's Data Protection Officer and has produced a number of guidance documents to assist parishes and dioceses with the implementation of GDPR. Rebekah is embarking on her second round of Data Protection Roadshows where she will facilitate a question and answer session as well as giving practical advice and guidance on data protection issues.

She will also make herself available for 'one to one' sessions for any parishes who have a particular issue or difficulty that they would like to discuss with her – on a first come, first served basis.

Details of the first four sessions are below:

Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh

Tuesday, 2nd April

Wednesday, 8th May

For more information and to register, please contact Sabrina McCabe at sabrina.clogher@gmail.com or ring the Diocesan Office: 028/048 6634 7879.

Claremorris, Co. Mayo

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The Dean of Saint Patrick's, Dr William Morton, along with the Dean's Vicar, Canon Charles Mullen, visited the Islamic Cultural Centre at Clonskeagh, Dublin, to present a book of condolences from Saint Patrick's Cathedral to the Imam, Sheik Hussein Halawa, following the attack on worshippers at a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand. Pictured are Canon Mullen, the Dean, the Imam and Dr Noon al-Kaddo.

Tuesday, 7th May

For more information and to register, please contact Heather Pope at secretary@tuam.anglican.org or ring the Diocesan Office: 086 833 6666.

Down & Dromore

Wednesday, 29th May

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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For more information and to register, please contact Roy Lawther at rlawther@downdromorediocese.org or ring the Diocesan Office: 028 9082 8830.

Further sessions are being planned for after General Synod, including in June, in the Dioceses of Derry & Raphoe, Connor, Armagh, and Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh. Details are available from Diocesan Secretaries.

University hosting Lambeth Conference raises concern over gay spouse ban

The University of Kent has labelled the ban on same sex partners attending the global meeting of Anglican bishops as "contrary to its values".

The Lambeth Conference will take place at the Canterbury campus next year but now faces uncertainty, with university bosses now seeking meetings with the event organisers including Justin Welby.

While bishops attending are expected to bring their wives and husbands, earlier this year organisers confirmed those in same sex relationships wouldn't be permitted to bring their partners.

The decision by the Anglican Communion, which was made to appease conservatives within the Communion, has received criticism from MPs, some bishops and students at the University of Kent.

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The US Episcopal Church said it was "concerned by the use of exclusion as a means of building communion".

The University's governing body met this week to discuss the ban after receiving a large number of concerns raised by staff, students, and members of the public, about hosting the conference.

It says it recognises the Church is permitted by law to use the ban but that it raised ethical concerns.

In a statement, the University Council said: "Members were clear that exclusion of same sex spouses, on grounds of orientation, would be contrary to the values of the University.

"Council determined that the University shall ensure that accommodation will be available on campus for those spouses affected by this decision who wish to be in Canterbury with their partners during the conference period.

"The University welcomes them and affirms its belief in, and commitment to, diversity and inclusivity."

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News briefs

+++Youth Workers + Clergy + Volunteers - C of I Youth would love you to consider attending the Irish Youth Ministry Gathering ! It is running in Belfast from 16-18th May with loads of great content, speakers, encouragement and youth work training. More details are here including a full programme, <https://iymg.org/>

Special discounts for Church of Ireland Parishes and Youth Workers are available through CIYD. Please contact Simon on simon@ciyd.org for access to Discounted tickets before 8th April 2019

+++Derry institution -



The new Rector of Leckpatrick and Dunnalong, Rev Canon Paul Whittaker, got more than he bargained for when – minutes after his Service of Institution, in St Patrick’s Church, in Ballymagorry – he learned that he had been appointed Rural Dean for Derry. The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe joked that it was probably one of the most rapid promotions in the history of the Church of Ireland.

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The Moderator visited Ballina and spent time over lunch with the congregation. The Moderator and his wife Barbara are pictured with Yvonne, “whose strawberry cheesecake we had appreciated the night before. It is a wonderful privilege to come alongside people and listen to their faith stories” the Moderator commented.

Guests had travelled from as far away as Comber for Friday evening’s institution. Among the congregation were members of Canon Whittaker’s previous parishes, Errigal and Desertoghill (Garvagh), fellow clergy and parish readers from elsewhere in the Dioceses of Derry and Raphoe, members of neighbouring Church of Ireland parishes in Tyrone, and representatives of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches.

Dignitaries included the Deputy Mayor of Derry City and Strabane Council, Alderman Derek Hussey; County Tyrone

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Deputy Lieutenant, Sydney Gamble; and the Diocesan President of Mothers' Union, Jacqui Armstrong.

The service was a homecoming of sorts for the Preacher, Rev David McBeth, who said that some of the most significant events of his life had taken place in the Parishes of Leckpatrick and Dunnalong. "It was in these parishes that I got married to my wife April, 33 years ago," Rev McBeth said. "It was in these parishes that I first made a confession of faith in Jesus as Lord and saviour. It was here that my children got baptised and confirmed. It was here that I preached my first sermon as a college student. And it is here tonight that I will preach my first ever sermon at an Institution Service.

Rev McBeth, who is Rector of All Saints Clooney, said he had become close friends with the Whittakers after they returned from Australia 13 years ago. Since then, he said, the couple had worked tirelessly to build up God's kingdom in Garvagh. "Paul and Carol introduced new styles of worship. They developed the Spark programme to encourage young people in their journey of faith and they established cross-community projects which brought people from different traditions together. Their ministry was effective, meaningful and fruitful."

March 29 in Christian history

March 29, 1139: In the bull "Omne Datum Optimum," Pope Innocent II grants the Templars "every best gift" and makes them an independent unit within the church. Created to protect pilgrims from bandits in the Holy Land, the Templars rose in influence and wealth and eventually earned the jealousy of other Christians.

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News Links

[LGBT rights: Methodist College launches review of uniform rules](#)

BBC News

A Northern **Ireland** grammar school is to review its uniform policy partly to ensure transgender pupils and those from **religious** groups feel comfortable.

[Ireland to lose dioceses in radical overhaul of Church structure](#)

The Tablet

Ireland to lose dioceses in radical overhaul of Church structure ... the structures of school-based **religious** education and enormous goodwill, was not ...

[New exhibition puts focus on Presbyterian Church's rich history and contribution to society](#)

Belfast Newsletter

Guests at the opening of the Presbyterian Church in **Ireland's** new visitor ... to **Ireland**, the church's beliefs and organisation, **religious** and political ...

[Campaign to get rid of NI blasphemy laws](#)

BBC News

By Declan Harvey BBC **News** ... "It is appalling that we still have blasphemy laws in Northern **Ireland**," said Iain Deboys, chairman of Northern **Ireland** ...

[First beatified Trinity graduate honoured](#)

The Irish Catholic

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John Sullivan, who was beatified in 2017 in Dublin, grew up in the **Church of Ireland**, and was a graduate and gold medallist in Classics.

[New £2m fund launched for churches and faith groups](#)

Newry Times

... has been launched by the Ulster Community Investment Trust (UCIT) to assist **church** groups and faith-based organisations across Northern **Ireland**.

[Kildare women part of cancer survivors and supporters choir on Ireland's Got Talent](#)

Leinster Leader

Four Kildare women are part of a 46-person **choir** competing on the live shows of **Ireland's** Got Talent. The Sea Of Change **choir** is made up of women ...

[Vote of the people must be respected, says Archbishop of Canterbury](#)

Premier

The Most Rev Justin Welby said on social **media** on Wednesday it was "easy to ... The **Church of England** is aiming to get people who disagree over ...

[Campaigners to protest at Westminster Abbey nuclear weapons thanksgiving service](#)

Independent Catholic News

Peace campaigners have expressed their shock at the **news** that ... Pray also that the **Church of England** Synod motion would unite Anglicans in ...

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