



**Image of
the day -**

**Ulster
Tower,
Theipval**

News Reports

Church leaders at Commemoration Service for the 100th Anniversary of the Ulster Memorial Tower

On Friday morning, November 19, the Most Rev John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, delivered the address at the Commemoration Service for the 100th Anniversary of the Ulster Memorial Tower, held at Thiepval, on the Somme.

The service was organised by the Somme Association and included a call to worship by the Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, and a reading from John Chapter 15 by the Rt Rev Dr David Bruce, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Music was provided by the Bugles, Pipes and Drums and the Band of the Royal Irish Regiment and the Band of 2 Brigade, of the Irish Defence Forces.

The Ulster Tower was one of the first Memorials to be erected on the Western Front, commemorate the men of the 36th (Ulster) Division and all those from Ulster who served in the First World War.

More than 1,000,000 men were either killed or injured in the battle that ended on 18 November 1916. By the close of the

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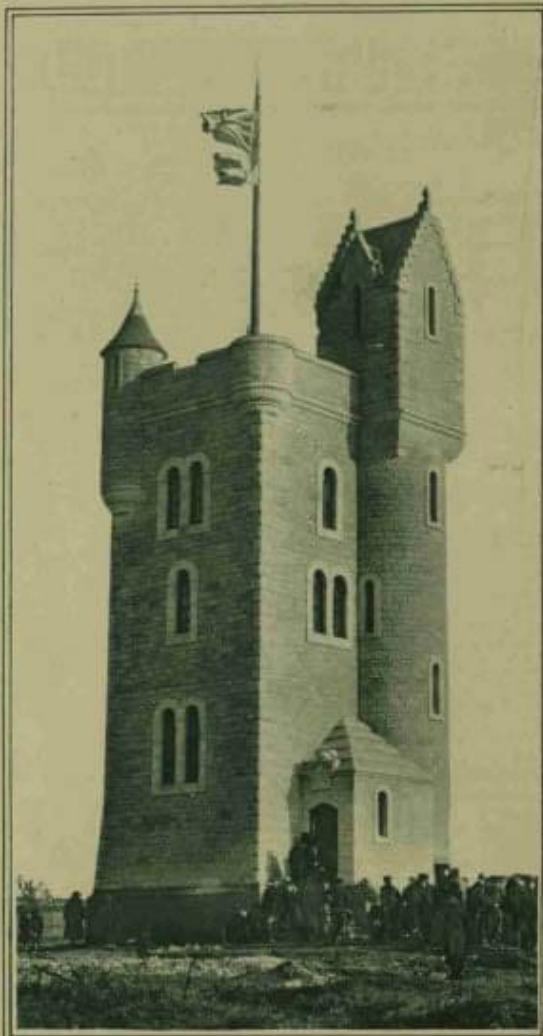
From left: the Rt Rev Dr David Bruce, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; the Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland; and the Rt Rev John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, at the Ulster Memorial Tower, Thiepval.

first day, the 36th (Ulster) Division had experienced over 5,000 casualties, more than 2,000 of whom had been killed. All those who died, including the names of 75 per cent of the Division's fatalities who have no known graves, are recorded on the Ulster Memorial Tower, where the commemorative service will take place.

The memorial was officially opened on 19th November 1921 and is a very close copy of Helen's Tower which stands in churchnewsireland@gmail.org

A LANDMARK OF ULSTER HEROISM: THE MEMORIAL TOWER AT THIÉPVAL.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GENERAL PRESS.



A REPLICA OF THE FAMOUS "HELEN'S TOWER" (OVERLOOKING BELFAST LOUGH), DESCRIBED BY TENNYSON: THE ULSTER MEMORIAL TOWER AT THIÉPVAL.



THE UNION JACK TO FLY IN FRANCE: THE DUCHESS OF ABERCORN UNFURLING THE FLAG ON TOP OF THE THIÉPVAL MEMORIAL TOWER.



ULSTER'S MOST FAMOUS SOLDIER: FIELD-MARSHAL SIR HENRY WILSON OPENING THE TOWER (IN PLACE OF LORD CARSON).



UNVEILED BY GENERAL WEYGAND: THE MARBLE TABLET, WITH THE KING'S TRIBUTE TO ULSTERMEN, IN THE CHAPEL WITHIN THE TOWER (70 FT. HIGH).

The heroism of Ulster troops in the war is commemorated by the most imposing single monument yet erected on the Western Front, the white memorial tower (70 ft. high) at Thiépvall, opened on November 19 (in the absence of Lord Carson, through illness), by Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff and Colonel of the Royal Ulster Rifles. In the inner sanctuary, General Weygand, who represented Marshal Foch, unveiled the marble tablet bearing the King's tribute to Ulstermen. After the unveiling, a dedicatory service



REPRESENTING HIS CHIEF, MARSHAL FOCH: GENERAL WEYGAND TALKING TO LADY LONDONDERRY AT THE OPENING CEREMONY.

was conducted outside by the Most Rev. Dr. d'Arcy, Primate of All Ireland and the Rev. Dr. Lewis, Moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly. As the dedication service concluded, the Duchess of Abercorn hoisted the Union Jack and the French Tricolour on top of the tower. The Prefect of the Seine announced that the surrounding ground would be left forever intact as it was when fighting ceased. The memorial is a replica of Helen's Tower, built on the hills of Co. Down by the first Lord Dufferin in memory of his mother, as recorded by Tennyson.

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the grounds of the Clandeboye Estate, near Bangor, County Down, Northern Ireland. Many of the men of the Ulster Division trained in the estate before moving to England and then France early in 1916.

Speaking ahead of the service, Dr Bruce said, “There are some events in history, that by their sheer scale and horror, alongside the collective courage of those who took part, are forever seared on the shared memory of a people. The Battle of the Somme is one such occasion that continues to

evoke pride in many families up and down the land.”

Dr Bruce continued, “One hundred years ago, as memorials began to be raised to those who had given their lives in the Great War in towns and villages across the newly created Northern Ireland, my predecessor as Moderator, Dr William Lowe, attended the dedication of the Ulster Tower. Then, as now, remembrance is at the heart of the Christian faith, remembering Christ’s sacrifice for us on the cross, the



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greatest sacrifice of all.

“In the passage I will read, Jesus tells His disciples, ‘My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.’ We acknowledge a different kind of selflessness displayed on the battlefield, but remember the husbands and fathers, sons and brothers, who did not return and who are still remembered by their families a century on, and by those of us on this silent battlefield today,” he said.

During the service two hymns were sung, ‘O God our help in ages past’ and ‘God! As with silently hearts we bring to mind’.

For text of Archbishop McDowell’s address see Perspective later in this issue of CNI

Liverpool Cathedral has 'robust processes' in place for asylum seekers showing interest in Christianity

Liverpool Cathedral has defended its work with asylum seekers after coming under fire because of its connection with the Poppy Day bomber.

Cathedral officials said they were "horrified" at the actions of Emad al-Swealmeen, 32, who blew himself up outside the Liverpool Women's Hospital on Sunday.

"The Dean and Chapter of Liverpool Cathedral have expressed their shock at the news that the bomber on

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Sunday, was connected to our community," they said in a statement.

It has since emerged that al-Swealman arrived in the UK in 2014 and made an unsuccessful application for asylum. He later showed an interest in Christianity and was eventually confirmed in Liverpool Cathedral in 2017.

"Clearly, we cannot speculate on the motivations of this individual. However, we are clear that the actions of an individual do not reflect a whole community and we remain united with all in the city and country who work for peace as we continue to pray for Liverpool at this time," Liverpool Cathedral said in a statement.

The bomber's conversion to Christianity has given rise to suggestions in the media that asylum seekers are pretending to become Christian in order to "game the asylum system".

The cathedral said the decision to support an application was not made lightly and that its ministry with asylum seekers would continue.

"The ministry to asylum seekers is one of the ways we can welcome people following the teachings of Jesus in clothing and feeding those in need. Welcoming people into a worshipping community is one way we engage," it said.

"Liverpool Cathedral has developed robust processes for discerning whether someone is might be expressing a genuine commitment to faith.

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"These include requirements for regular attendance alongside taking part in a recognised Christian basics course.

"We would expect someone to be closely connected with the community for at least two years before we would consider supporting an application."

Diocese of Virginia commits to \$10,000,000 in reparations

The centerpiece of the 227th Convention is Resolution R-10a, which commits the Diocese to create a \$10,000,000 fund for reparations to benefit Black, Indigenous, and peoples of color communities.

The resolution cites that "the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia have a long history of support for and complicity with chattel slavery, violence against Indigenous peoples and land, segregation and other racist systems." It further acknowledges that the Diocese "is home to numerous church buildings constructed by enslaved people, and many parishes within the Diocese of Virginia are grappling with their history of support for slavery and white supremacy, and their ongoing complicity in racial injustice."

R-10a directs the Bishop to create a Reparations Task Force "to identify and propose means by which repair may begin for those areas of our structures, patterns, and common life by which Black, Indigenous, People of Colorstill carry the burden of injustices, exclusions, and biases born out of white supremacy and the legacy of slavery."

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The objective of these reparation grants and loans is to provide direct benefits to BIPOC communities, people, and institutions, with preference for any which may have been specifically harmed by past unjust actions by the Diocese of Virginia, its institutions, or churches.

Arlene Foster ‘annoyed’ by advice to leave religion out of politics

The former First Minister Arlene Foster has expressed her annoyance about the common refrain that religion should be taken out of politics. Garrett Harman reports in the Belfast Telegraph

Mrs Foster, an Anglican, said having a strong Christian faith should have a positive impact on politics.

She explained: “Christianity doesn’t call you to be neutral. It calls you to be salt and light about what you believe in.

“It does annoy me when people say you have to take religion out of politics and leave it at the door... like it only happens at the weekend. It is part of who you are.

“Your Christianity and your faith is something that is with you all the time. You can’t just leave it at home on Sunday night and go out without it on Monday.”

In one of her first public appearances since she quit politics, Mrs Foster took part in the Autumn Series at the Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick, the world’s only permanent exhibition to Saint Patrick.

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She was in conversation in front of a live audience with former UTV presenter Gerry Kelly and opened up about her faith, political career and the trauma of the Troubles.

Mrs Foster said she does not hold grudges against those who had hurt her, including former colleague Edwin Poots, who ousted her from the DUP leadership in May before being forced out of office himself just weeks later.

Reflecting on the decision by Sinn Fein to collapse the executive with the resignation of then Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness in 2017, she said “we got into a spiral and we couldn’t stop it”.

Mrs Foster added: “It got to a point then where the assembly collapsed and of course I regret that it was down for three years.”

She said she liked the late DUP leader Ian Paisley very much. “He used to joke with me and say, ‘How are the Anglicans doing Arlene’?”

Asked by Mr Kelly if she thought Dr Paisley had mellowed over the years, she said: “I never knew Dr Paisely personally until 2003/4 and I think he probably was in a different space than he had been in the sixties, seventies and eighties.”

She declined to speculate on what might have changed him. “I don’t know. I can’t answer that. I only know he was very supportive of me as a female and an Anglican and as an outsider.

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“He asked me to be in the administration in 2007 which I have always been very thankful for.”

The audience included The Dean of Down, the very Reverend Henry Hull and her long-time friend, and former Education Minister Peter Weir MLA, who is recovering from surgery.

Mrs Foster said her Christian faith helped her to seek common ground with people she did not agree with, adding that her reason for going into government with Sinn Fein was to make sure that her children and others did not endure what she went through as a child.

This included the attempted murder in 1979 on her father, John, an RUC reservist, living on the Fermanagh border - and a bomb attack on her school bus driver, in which her friend was left severely injured.

Recalling the gun attack on her father, when she was around eight years old, she said he came crawling back from the barn, after gunshots were fired, with blood dripping from his forehead.

“It was a very strange time,” she said. “My mother was sitting at the kitchen table and I don’t know what she was doing but I will never forget her face....she just froze.”

Ms Foster said it was not politically correct to say it but she felt she benefited from being educated at an all-girl school, where she grew in confidence.

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The former political leader said she was enjoying her new role in journalism as a presenter on GB News.

Courtesy the Belfast Telegraph November 19, 2021

People and places



St Simon's, Belfast to re-open

A special service will take place in St Simon's Parish Church, Donegall Road, Belfast, on Sunday November 21 to celebrate the reopening of the church following internal re-ordering and renovation.

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The service will get underway at 11am, and the Bishop of Connor will be in attendance. Parishioners past and present are invited to attend. Covid-19 precautions will be in place.

Mothers' Union are disciples of Jesus Christ - Archbishop of Canterbury



“So moving to be with the Mothers' Union for a service of thanksgiving for Trustees at Lambeth Palace today. The work they do is often unseen but always essential. They don't just help people around the world: they are disciples of Jesus Christ, witnesses to His boundless love for us.”



New C of I central director of ordinands

The House of Bishops has announced the appointment of the Very Revd Lynda Peilow as Central Director of Ordinands. Lynda takes over this role following the resignation of Canon David Gillespie, who served in the role for seven years. Dean

Peilow will continue to serve in parish ministry in Galway.

Archbishop John McDowell remarked: 'I am delighted that Lynda has agreed to take on this vital role in the Church of Ireland. Lynda is a great communicator, administratively strong, and will bring a pastoral concern to this role. We know that our ordinands will be valued and resourced with this appointment.'

New Junior Lay Vicars Choral for St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork

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Since the beginning of November the choristers of St Fin Barre's Cathedral Choir have been back in action, having waited for the guidelines to allow this for several months. In addition to this, a new group of Junior Lay Vicars Choral has been formed.



[The new Junior Lay Vicars Choral together with their Director of Music Peter Stobart \(right\) and their Assistant Director of Music Robbie Carroll \(left\) Peter Stobart, Director of Music at the Cathedral, writes:](#)

As usual the choristers are singing as groups of boys and girls but in pods and distanced from the adult Lay Vicars Choral. Happily there are some new recruits, and those who were new at the beginning of 2020 have now got the opportunity to sing properly and develop their voices under relatively normal circumstances.

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A large number of boys underwent changes to their voices over the lockdown period and they have now emerged as either tenors or basses. They are singing under the title of Junior Lay Vicars Choral and are enjoying getting to grips with the new challenge of singing in these new voice parts.

While this is extremely positive, a large hole has been left in the numbers of younger boys and so recruitment in that area has been vital. The new girls and boys have been enjoying learning how to process properly, how to hold their folders and juggle all of the various pieces of paper contained within them, as well as tackling the singing itself.

December concerts at Saint Patrick's Cathedral

This December there are so many opportunities to enjoy a concert at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. From the cathedral's own 'Handel by Candle' to performances from London Concertante, the The Guinness Choir, Culwick Choral Society, and the Irish Baroque Orchestra, there is something for everyone. Learn more and book: <https://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/events/>

Please note: proof of immunity will be required at all Cathedral events in the month of December.



Perspective

Mass remembrance means individual remembering - Archbishop McDowell's address at Theipval

If I could first thank the organisers of this service, the Somme Association, for affording me the privilege of giving the address at this historic and poignant occasion.

The Great War was unique in the history of warfare for a number of reasons. It was the first war that involved mass mobilisation of the civilian population. As a result it was the first war to suffer mass casualties. But perhaps most relevant to what we are doing here today, it was the first war that was followed by mass public remembrance.

Up until 1919 public memorials to a war or a great victory usually took the form of an equestrian statue of a famous general. You can see such statues in many cities across Europe still. But the scale of casualties, in what the General Service Medal calls 'The Great War for Civilisation 1914-1919', was so vast that there was an instinct that such memorials would simply no longer do.

At first there was a plaster and lath cenotaph (a cenotaph is an empty tomb) was erected in Whitehall, in 1919. It seems the government's intention was that it would be removed following, what was in effect, the first Armistice Day ceremony. But it soon became clear that the nation expected that the memory of the fallen should not be so soon forgotten in the public sphere, just as it would not be forgotten in the homes of the millions of war dead. So the



great imperial architect, Edward Lutyens, was commissioned to design the elegant and simple memorial which still stands in Whitehall.

And memorials began to appear in other places. Near to where I grew up, a housing estate was built specifically for demobbed soldiers. The streets were given names like Bapaume, Albert, and of course Somme Drive. And in the middle of that little estate off the Cregagh Road in Belfast, stands a stone memorial cross. The cross of Jesus Christ; the place where God went deeper into human suffering than even war and disease could go; and rose on the third day with a kingdom in his hand.

And of course this memorial here in Thiepval, the first to be built on the Western Front, witnessed to the bravery of

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soldiers from the nine counties of the historic Province of Ulster, who gave their lives in that hellish war, and is specifically associated in the minds of so many with the 36th Ulster Division, and their bravery in the long drawn out ordeal which history knows as the Battle of the Somme.

Of course, mass remembrance means individual remembering, whether in great monuments such as we have at The Menin Gate covered in the names of the fallen, or on those little tablets which hang on the walls of so many churches and public buildings throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland. When millions perish, it is easy to dwell on the scale of the loss (which is truly mind numbing) and to forget that each was an individual life; a human being who God loves with an everlasting love.

Individual lives. There were three brothers who lived in the town of Banbridge. They worked in the linen industry where the pay was poor and the working conditions were worse. So, one day in 1912 they walked from Banbridge to Lisburn and enlisted as regular soldiers in the Royal Irish Rifles. Even the peacetime army was more interesting than life in a quiet rural Irish town.

They learned to take pride in their regiment, with its distinctive speedy march. As country boys they were already excellent marksmen, and had that raw, bony strength found in so many who help out with farm work. The brothers played hockey and football, first for the regiment, then for the Corps, then for the Army.

And at the outbreak of war in the summer of 1914 they sailed with the British Expeditionary Force to France. All

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their lives they were proud to have been Old Contemptibles. All three were wounded at the retreat from Mons, but not so seriously that they couldn't go on to fight here on the Somme and at the Third Battle of Passchendaele in Ypres.

Just before he left hospital in Ireland to rejoin his regiment in 1916 one of the brothers, Jimmy, was given a gift of a Book of Common Prayer by his girlfriend. Written on the inside were the words, "Hoping God may spare you and bring you home again". And here is the little New Testament which that young woman gave to my grandfather, a private soldier of the Royal Irish Rifles

The Great War was the end of faith for many. Those who had grown up in an easy peace and a superior culture. Those who were confident in the onward march of civilisation, because they had never had their self-confidence tested; who did not know the wickedness that men were capable of. In the century before the war the Churches had domesticated God and harnessed him to their purposes. He had become their asset and their patron, rather than their Judge and their Redeemer.

And suddenly in the great cataclysm of total war and in the horrors of the battlefield, the high seemed low, and nations halted in their stride; and the brief candle was out; and what was man that he is to be accounted of?

The Great War was so tragic because of the genial optimism of so many of the young men who entered it with high hopes of saving Christian civilisation. It is a wonder that anyone who witnessed it survived in good mental, never mind physical, health. And each of them, whether they fell in

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battle or simply survived, deserves to be remembered, because they had to face into a holocaust which the world had never before experienced.

“Hoping God may spare you, and bring you home again”.
So, today we hallow the memory of each one of them; not only for the courage of their actions, but for the greatness of their souls.

And now unto Him, the only true God, immortal invisible, be ascribed all might, majesty, dominion and power, as is most justly due. Amen.

Poem for today

Behind the Closed Eye by Francis Ledwidge

I walk the old frequented ways
That wind around the tangled braes,
I live again the sunny days
Ere I the city knew.

And scenes of old again are born,
The woodbine lassoing the thorn,
And drooping Ruth-like in the corn
The poppies weep the dew.

Above me in their hundred schools
The magpies bend their young to rules,
And like an apron full of jewels
The dewy cobweb swings.

And frisking in the stream below
The troutlets make the circles flow,
And the hungry crane doth watch them grow
As a smoker does his rings.

Above me smokes the little town,
With its whitewashed walls and roofs of brown
And its octagon spire toned smoothly down
As the holy minds within.

And wondrous impudently sweet,
Half of him passion, half conceit,
The blackbird calls adown the street
Like the piper of Hamelin.

I hear him, and I feel the lure
Drawing me back to the homely moor,
I'll go and close the mountain's door
On the city's strife and din.

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