

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – An octogenarian leap of faith

Image of the day



An octogenarian leap of faith

These are the two octogenarian NI businessmen who took a leap of faith for their local church.

John Burns (80) and 81-year-old Gordon Cunningham have known each other since they were boy scouts and took on a skydive for Maghera Presbyterian Church , raising £75,000.

After his 15,000 ft jump, John said: "I loved every bit of it. Life is not measured in the amount of breaths you take, it's about the number of times your breath is taken away. This one certainly took my breath away."

Horse rider Gordon added: "The freefall was hard to beat. Jumping out of a plane? That's nothing. You try and take a horse and put him over a big ditch and he's saying he's not going!" *Courtesy The Belfast Telegraph*

News Image



“By road, it’s not safe” Quills enabled by Mission Aviation Fellowship

Highlighting the incredible work of Reverend Andrew and Mrs Joanne Quill in Mission Aviation Fellowship -

South Sudan, where trauma healing is bringing hope to communities deeply affected by conflict.

Thanks to MAF flights, Joanne has been able to continue her work, and has helped translate trauma healing lessons into Zande, making emotional support accessible in the heart language of the people.

“MAF enables us to get where the Lord wants us to be and do ministry,” says Andrew. “Without MAF, we wouldn’t be able to help people who have so little.”

County Tyrone church needs ‘drying out’ to make it fit for the future

For 30 years, St Patrick’s church in Castlederg was abandoned. But over the last 20 years, the team have been repairing the 19th century B2 Listed Gothic Revival church to make it fit for the future.

The bell has been rehung, the spire has been restored, the entrance has been made accessible to people with mobility issues and stonework has been repaired. But there is a huge hurdle for this church to overcome. It needs drying out.

This is critical stage to ensure the future of this local landmark.

Rainwater has been slowly seeping into the church through cracks. Damp is spreading inside. It has weakened the areas around the stunning stained glass windows. Vegetation has even grown in parts throughout the church.



The church needs to be cleaned and then repointed, using proper conservation materials and methods, which will ensure the church can properly dry out and stop trapping moisture in the walls.

These changes will make the church much more

sustainable; a watertight church is much easier to heat.

St Patrick will receive a £25,000 grant from the National Churches Trust to help with repairs and repointing.

“Over the past few years, we have grown increasingly concerned by the damage that has become evident in our church, particularly around the beautiful stained glass,” shares Fr Paul Fraser, Parish Priest at St Patrick’s Church.

October 20, 2025

“The stained glass in the church is artistically very significant and without this conservation work being carried out as a matter of some urgency, there is a very real risk that the windows would be damaged beyond repair.

“We worked hard to repair and restore the stonework in the spire and now, with the help of this award, we will be able to repair the damaged stonework in the rest of the Church.”



Anglican Consultative Council Standing Committee meets in Jordan

The Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council gathered from the 13th to the 15th of October in Amman, Jordan, for the annual in-person meeting.

The Standing Committee serves as the executive arm of the ACC, charged with advancing its work between its three-yearly plenary meetings.

The meeting was hosted by Canon Maggie Swinson (Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council) and the Most Revd Hosam Naoum (the Vice Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council, the Archbishop in Jerusalem and Primate of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East).

The meeting began with a pilgrimage to 'Al-Maghtas' or 'Bethany beyond the Jordan'. A place of spiritual and historic significance, it is believed to be the location where John the Baptist baptised Jesus. Whilst there, the group renewed baptismal vows and spent time in prayer.

Archbishop Naoum invites Anglicans to 'continue to pray for the Anglican Communion, for the Anglican Consultative Council and for all the people who are doing fantastic ministry for the mission of God in this world.'

Read more at: bit.ly/4q9U8o1

World Development and Relief focus at Southeast Leinster Circuit

Tim recently visited the Methodist Church's Southeast Leinster Circuit, meeting with (L-R) Alan Morris, Rev David Nixon, Rev Stephen Taylor, Rev Mark Forsyth, Rev Fadzi Jongoro and Corinne Kingston.



It was a great opportunity for WDR - World Development and Relief- to hear about what is going on in the MCI congregations represented, and get a better understanding of how WDR can serve our churches and supporters better.

Armagh Room dedicated at Malone

**At a Family
Eucharist in St
John's Malone on
St Luke's Day,**



October 20, 2025

The Rt Revd AET Harper presided at the blessing and dedication of a new altar frontal and the dedication of the Armagh Room.

Education



Ballymena Academy Politics explore Trimble biography

Year 14 Ballymena Academy Politics students attended former pupil Stephen Walker's book launch of his biography on David Trimble at the Braid.

The Q&A was hosted by Declan Lawn and revealed many interesting facets about Trimble as a politician and a man, along with the approach to biographical writing. It was a highly enjoyable discussion about one of the chief architects of the Good Friday Agreement.

Nature can bring out the best in us - Girl Guiding Ulster

“We couldn't agree more with this stat from our latest Girls' Attitudes Survey!

Whether it's a weekend camp, a woodland walk, or just exploring around your unit meeting place with friends, nature can bring out the best in us.

What's your favourite outdoor Guiding memory? Drop a comment below - we'd love to hear how nature makes you smile - even if that smile comes once you've recovered from a muddy camp!

St Malachi's former Head Boy and Glenavon FC player

St Malachi's College, Belfast, celebrated the achievements of their KS3 Pupils at their annual Junior Prize giving.

“We welcomed back former Head Boy and Glenavon FC player Mr Paddy Burns as guest speaker for the event.

“Paddy inspired a packed College Hall with his words of encouragement to the KS3 pupils, asking the boys to dream big, be kind, cherish every moment they spend at the College and to never be afraid to give their best and achieve their own Gloria ab intus!”





BREAKING THE CHAINS

CONFERENCE 2025

Empowering survivors and equipping the church to
break the silence of domestic abuse.



Friday 21st November
2025



City Church Bangor
100 Main Street
Bangor
BT20 4AG



10AM - 3PM



Join the conversation - Get your tickets today!
Available now from: www.citychurchbangor.org/shop
£10.00 (includes light refreshments & lunch)

Clergy and ministry

Down & Dromore Diocese appointment

George Newell, a commissioned Church Army Evangelist and the Leadership and Mission Development Coordinator

October 20, 2025

for New Wine Ireland has been appointed Minister in Charge of Drumbeg Parish.

Events

For restoration of St Lugadius' Church

Clonleigh Church of Ireland have announced that their annual fundraising event in aid of the restoration of St Lugadius' Church will be held on Saturday 8th November.

"Enjoy a night of country gospel music with Leslie Matthews, The Mood Swings & William Sayers. All proceeds will go to the restoration fund."

Tickets are on sale now at the link below, or, to avoid fees, they can be booked over the phone at 0749141733.

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/clonleigh-church-of-ireland-tickets-1273644056659?aff=oddtcreator>



Perspectives

Major split announced in Anglican Communion

GAFCON, the movement of conservative, biblically orthodox Anglicans has announced that it will no longer recognise the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It has also told provinces to remove any reference to being in communion with the See of Canterbury and the Church of England.

In what has been viewed as a major split in the Anglican Communion and a snub to the Church of England, the GAFCON primates have issued a statement which said the Anglican Communion will be “reordered” and provinces of the Global Anglican Communion won’t take part in meetings called by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

They have also rejected the other so-called Instruments of Communion. These include the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), and the Primates Meeting. The primates said those “instruments” have “failed to uphold the doctrine and discipline of the Anglican Communion”.

The statement, written by the GAFCON chairman, Most Rev Dr Laurent Mbanda, Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Rwanda, highlighted that GAFCON primates could not continue to have communion with those who “advocate the revisionist agenda, which has abandoned the inerrant word of God as the final authority”.

Anglicans who hold traditional biblical views have long rallied against the Church of England's stance on issues such as sexuality and gender.

The statement published on Thursday came almost two weeks after Rt Rev Dame Sarah Mullally was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury-designate, becoming the first ever female to hold the role.

Earlier this year, the Church in Wales also elected Most Rev Cherry Vann, who is in a same-sex relationship, as Archbishop of Wales.

The GAFCON statement made it clear that the bishops have been “prayerfully advancing towards a future for faithful Anglicans, where the Bible is restored to the heart of the Communion”. They said it will be “translated, read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense, respectful of the church's historic and consensual reading”.

Archbishop Laurent said the new structure will now comprise a fellowship of autonomous provinces and be known as the Global Anglican Communion.

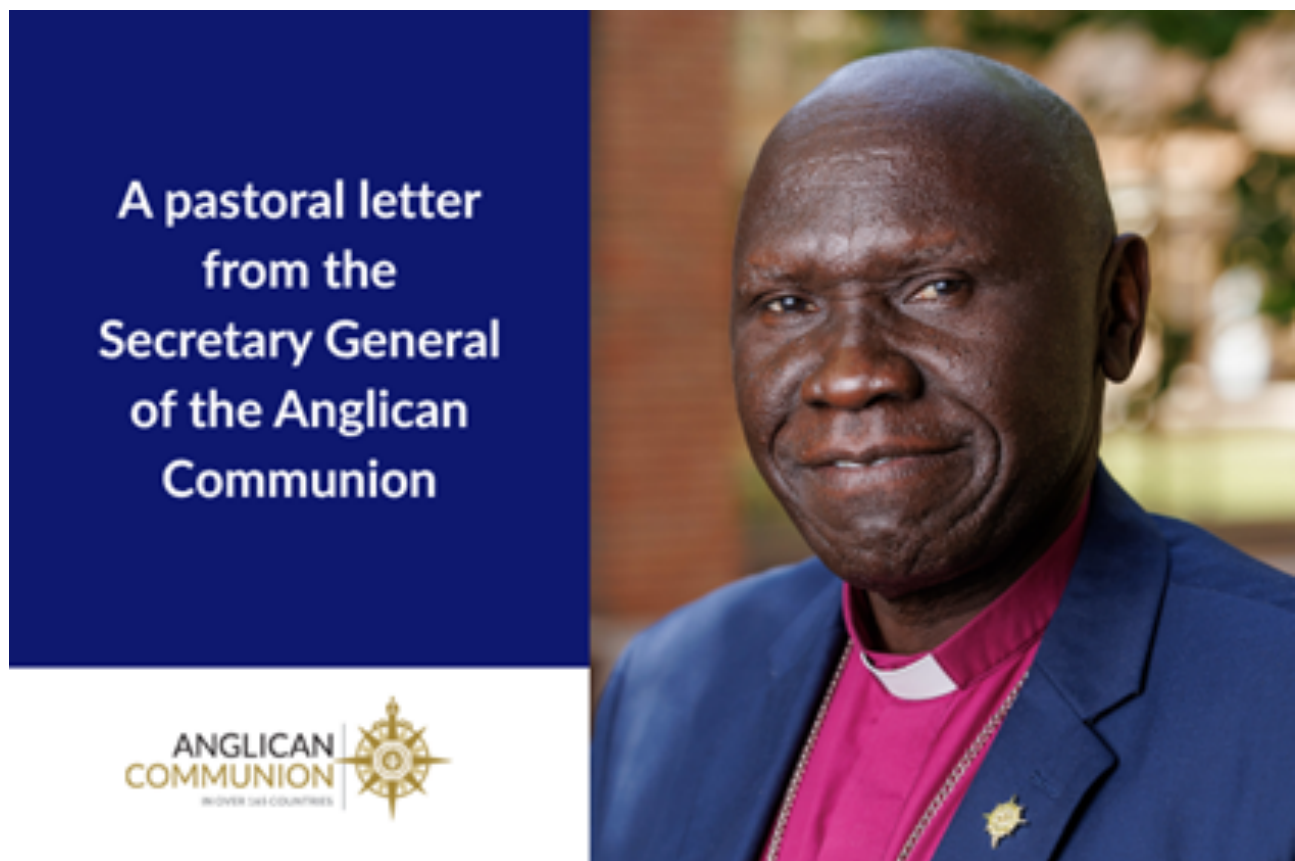
Members must assent to the Jerusalem Declaration of 2008, which reaffirms the authority of the holy scriptures and rejects the authority of churches and leaders who deny orthodox faith.

Concluding the statement, Archbishop Laurent said: “...the reset of our beloved Communion is now uniquely in the hands of GAFCON, and we are ready to take the lead.”

October 20, 2025

He added: “As has been the case from the very beginning, we have not left the Anglican Communion; we are the Anglican Communion”.

The Global Anglican Communion will celebrate its formation at the upcoming G26 Bishops Conference in Abuja, Nigeria in March 2026.



Secretary General of the Anglican Communion shares a pastoral letter

Last week on October 17 the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, the Rt Revd Anthony Poggo shared a Pastoral Letter in response to a statement by GAFCON on October 16, 2025.

His pastoral letter is printed below:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I write with a brief word of encouragement in response to the statement issued yesterday by the chairman of GAFCON's Primates' Council. Since this statement was released, I have received many messages from across the world, both from Anglicans and ecumenical partners, assuring us of prayers and also showing concern for our beloved Anglican Communion family.

Every Anglican, and indeed every Christian, should seriously seek to discern a future of faithfulness according to God's own calling and enabling of our confession and obedience. In the Gospel of John, Jesus calls his disciples to unity in the truth and identifies himself as the means and the end of both. Divisions among Anglicans, and many other divisions in the Body of Christ, are sadly well known, as we see in the Scriptures (1 Cor 11:17). These divisions require urgent attention and repair, by means of every instrument available to us.

The one Church is ever reforming, which means that no institution, meeting, network or association of Christians is static. Our life of faithfulness is based in prayer, daily self-renunciation, repentance, and conversion, so that we may receive the mind of Christ and his Spirit, in accordance with holy Scripture. By this pattern of dependence on God and mutual submission to one another, God raises up a faithful, humble, obedient people for his praise, a people capable of

taking counsel, making decisions, and sharing the Good News with the world.

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO) has invited all member churches of the Communion to consider and respond to The Nairobi-Cairo Proposals. I share the hope of the commission that all Anglicans, and the whole Church of God, may still seek and find agreement in the Faith. I also agree that we must summon up patience and love when members of the Body need to walk at a distance from one another in order better to seek and serve the truth and unity of our shared vocation (1 Cor 11:19). Theological uniformity cannot be demanded or expected without the hard work of discernment over time. Doctrinal, geographical or regional groupings of churches (for example GSFA, CCEA, GAFCON, and others) can help us reform and renew our life together.

At every level of the Church (local, regional, and global), we cannot ‘neglect to meet together’, as it says in Hebrews 10:25, whenever possible. All Anglican churches are ordered by canon law, constitutions and synodical structures that provide a collaborative system of governance by bishops, other clergy, and lay persons. In this way, the ‘houses’ of Anglican synods determine matters of doctrine, discipline, and order, and make decisions for the good of the whole. All Anglican churches are likewise invited to shape the Instruments of Communion, which rightly evolve over time, as those gathered seek to discern what the Spirit is saying to the churches. I urge them to send their representatives to the 19th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council next year in Belfast, so everyone can participate in the decision-making. Those who are present

are the ones who shape the outcomes and resolutions of meetings.

May the Lord enable us to continue walking together, to the highest degree possible, in the footsteps of our Lord and Saviour.

Yours in Christ,

The Rt Revd Anthony Poggo Secretary General of the Anglican Communion

Pastoral statement from the Primate and Metropolitans of the Anglican Church of Canada concerning the Anglican Communion

By Archbishop Shane Parker on October 18, 2025

In recent days, primates of the Global Anglican Future Conference announced their decisions to leave the Anglican Communion. In response to this, we, the Primate and the Metropolitans of the Anglican Church of Canada, reaffirm the Solemn Declaration of 1893 found in the (Canadian) Book of Common Prayer:

We declare this Church to be, and desire that it shall continue, in full communion with the Church of England throughout the world, as an integral portion of the One Body of Christ composed of Churches which, united under the One Divine Head and in the fellowship of the One Holy



The Anglican Church of Canada

Catholic and Apostolic Church, hold the One Faith revealed in Holy Writ, and defined in the Creeds. (BCP 1959/1962, viii)

We reaffirm the four Instruments of Communion: the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates' Meeting, and the primatial See of Canterbury with its people, clergy, and its Archbishop.

We reaffirm the historic Anglican appeal to Scripture, Reason, and Tradition.

The practical and theological question before us is this: Can communion with the Risen Christ contain conflict, so that conflict and disagreement lose their power to divide? We believe the answer to this question is a resounding “YES” because this has been borne out many times in Anglican experience and intuition from the Reformation to the present time.

The Anglican Church of Canada looks forward to participating in the next gathering of the Primates' Meeting,

the next meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, and the next Lambeth Conference. We rejoice in the appointment of Bishop Sarah Mullally as the next Archbishop of Canterbury and will warmly welcome her to Canada after she is installed in 2026.

With steadfast faith and joyful hope,

The Most Reverend Shane Parker, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

The Most Reverend David Edwards, Metropolitan of Canada

The Most Reverend Anne Germond, Metropolitan of Ontario

The Most Reverend Gregory Kerr-Wilson, Metropolitan of Northern Lights

The Most Reverend John Stephens, Metropolitan of British Columbia and Yukon

Response from The Bishop of Down and Dromore

The Right Reverend David McClay, said:

‘There was nothing substantially new in the communiqué that GAFCON has not said on many occasions in recent years. GAFCON is not leaving the Anglican Communion, GAFCON is the Anglican Communion and those aligned in any way to GAFCON have not departed from historic Anglicanism as others have in recent decades.’

‘This is a time for all to prayerfully reflect on our calling to biblical truth. This for me is something that I believe I promised when ordained a deacon, when ordained a priest

and when ordained a bishop and is, therefore, something deeply precious, often challenging, always humbling and both a privilege and a priority.'

'Unity is precious and is something that Anglicans including the Church of Ireland have always treasured. The call is upon all of us to live under the authority of God's Word and the Lordship of Jesus Christ.'

Response from The Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh

The Right Reverend Ferran Glenfield, commented:

'As to GAFCON, there is a realignment happening in the Anglican Communion.'

The centre of gravity is moving south from Canterbury. The emergence of GAFCON and the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches indicates the direction of travel for the majority churches in the Communion. It is not clear how this will evolve. It is a case of wait and see.

As of now, I have no plans to attend the G26 conference in Nigeria.'

Comment on social media

Patrick Commerford

If two bishops have rushed to issue a statement without waiting for a full and balanced statement from the House of Bishops, this is very regrettable, and without reading it, it seems they are in danger of turning their back on the

Preamble and Declaration, which they have sworn to uphold, including the constitutional commitment to maintaining communion with the Church of England.

Ferdinand von Prondsynzki

The statement today from the Bishop of Down and Dromore is deeply disingenuous. GAFCON is certainly not now the Anglican Communion, and the Church of Ireland is in communion with the See of Canterbury. It seems to me that the Bishop must resign from his Diocese immediately and from ministry in the Church of Ireland, which is the only legitimate Anglican presence in Ireland.

I might add that I would not exclude from the C of I “ordinary” members who like GAFCON. A bishop is different. The Bishop is the focus of sacramental unity in the Diocese. You cannot be a bishop of a Diocese if you declare yourself to be not in communion with the polity of the Church, but rather in communion with a schismatic group. It is vital that this is immediately re-affirmed by the House of Bishops. It is absolutely impossible to have an Anglican province in which some dioceses are in communion with Canterbury and others are not, as declared by their bishops.

Andy Boal

To be polite, the “Global South” has had its bluff called because the Church of England used its independence to choose its own leader, and from the publicly expressed opinions of some of those leaders, it’s also pure sexism.

I am reminded of Bishop Marian Budde, who was attacked by “conservatives” for daring to call Trump to repentance from the pulpit. When supposed “conservative evangelicals”

refuse to speak God's truth for political reasons, God will call somebody else to do it.

Marty Zaradich

I actually don't regret division. I'm not here for unity for unity's sake— the people who consider themselves a part of this ragtag bunch mean serious harm and danger to women, LGBTQ+ people, and more marginalised people in the Church. If they can't behave appropriately? Ya gotta go.
Marty Zaradich

In the media

GAFCON Creates Global Anglican Communion

Mark Michael writes in The Living Church -

Member churches of the new body must forswear participation in the Instruments of Communion and the chair of its council would assume Canterbury's historic role

Boldly announcing that “the future has arrived,” GAFCON, the Global South-based conservative renewal movement also known as the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, declared the creation of a “Global Anglican Communion” in an October 16 communiqué by its chairman, Archbishop Laurent Mbanda of Rwanda.

Archbishop Mbanda outlined a set of eight resolutions agreed to by its primates the same day “to reorder the Anglican Communion.” These include establishing the Bible

as the “only one foundation of communion,” rejecting and refusing to participate in meetings of the four Instruments of Communion “which have failed to uphold the doctrine and discipline of the Anglican Communion,” and breaking communion “with those who advocate the revisionist agenda.”

The Global Anglican Communion, Mbanda said, is “restoring [the Anglican Communion’s] original structure as a fellowship of autonomous provinces bound together by the Formularies of the Reformation.”

More at -

<https://livingchurch.org/latest-articles/>

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

October 20, 2025

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

Please recommend to your friends