

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Belfast reflects

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Belfast reflects

The sanctuary cross at Belfast Cathedral reflects the sunshine from the stained glass windows

News



MCI Step Up fundraisers

It has been great to see the various Step Up fundraisers happening across MCI in these past few months, and there are still more to come.



Recently, a fabulous team hosted a coffee morning at Whiteabbey Methodist Church raising £1,375.

“Thank you to the volunteers for making, baking and organising, and to everyone who so generously donated to support Phakamisa, our partner in South Africa.”

Meeting with Mama Rejoice of Diocese of Maridi

Hilary McClay of Down and Dromore Diocese - We had a lovely morning with Mama Rejoice hosted by Revd Jan Stevenson and the ladies of St Donards Church, Bloomfield.



Mama shared again what life is like for women in Maridi and how the church is working to meet the needs of families,



widows, young pregnant women and pastor's wives.

We heard about the imminent demolition of the Family Centre from where much of this work happens (because of a new road) and the urgent need for its replacement. Mama took questions and everyone enjoyed morning coffee and a chat afterwards.

This was Mama's last engagement with the diocese and she takes home, not only our warm greetings, but a large suitcase full of children's choir robes donated by the choir and MU of St John's Parish Church Newcastle Co Down.

Thank you to St Donard's for hosting and to all the ladies who came along from a variety of parishes in Down Diocese including Belvoir Parish Church, KandCd at the Crossroads, St Mary's, Ballybeen, St. John's Church, Helen's Bay, St Dorothea's Church, Gilnahirk, St Molua's Church, and St Saviours and Holy Trinity, with Ballyphilip and Ardquin.

Service for Irish Lung Fibrosis Association

Canon Brian McKay - "Wonderful service for the Irish Lung Fibrosis Association on Saturday afternoon in Whitefriar Street Church.

"Beautiful music, a fine address from Canon Oxley and a very appreciative congregation made for a worthwhile Saturday afternoon. Delighted to have Canon Ian Coulter with us.

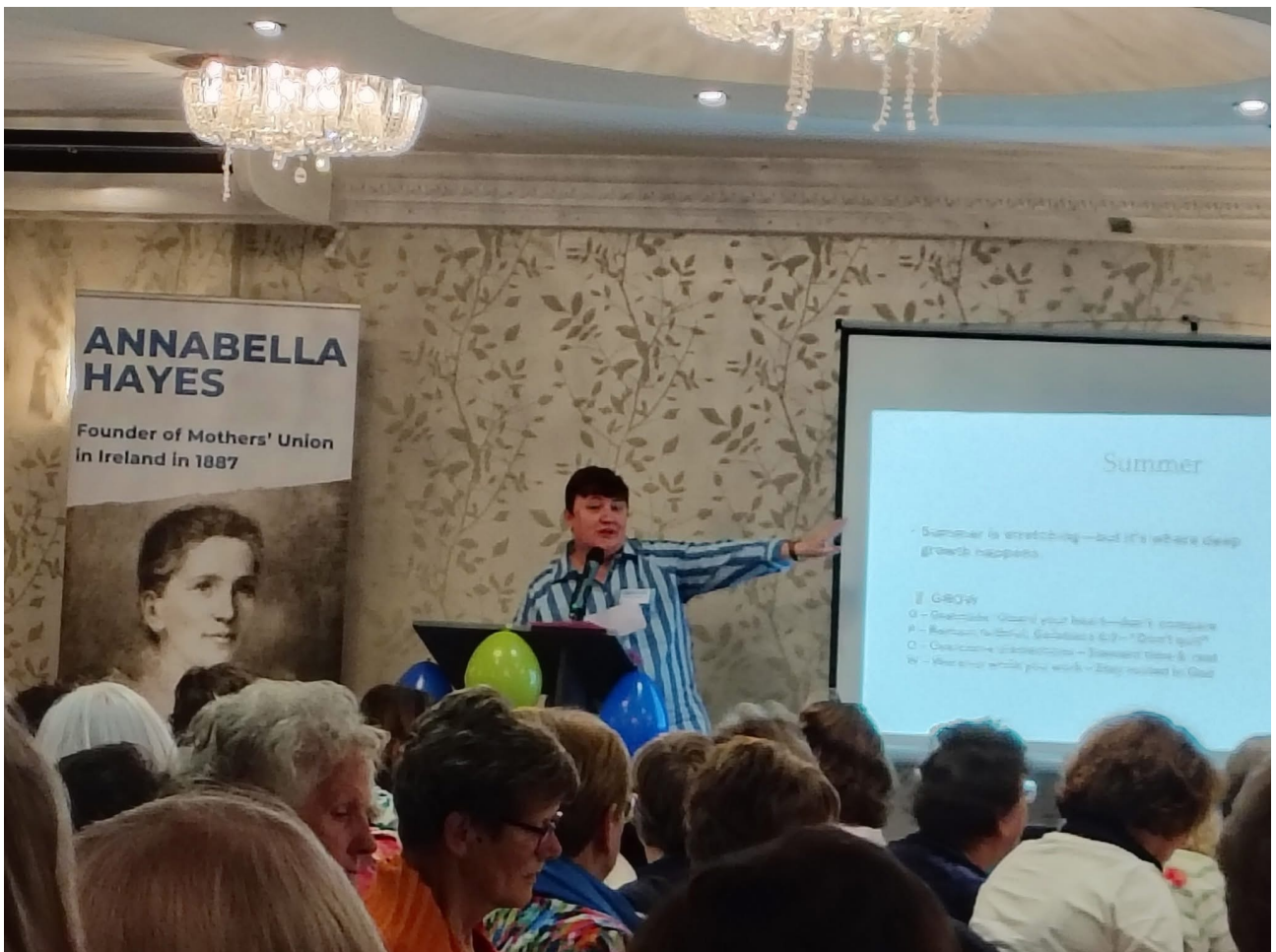


Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is: brethren to dwell together in unity (Ps 133). Laus Deo.”

Armagh Mothers Union wraps up 150 years

A correspondent writes - Our Women's Getaway is over for another year. After breakfast and introductions , Ish Lennox our Guest Speaker led two thought provoking sessions - Roots and Radiance and Gold and Grace, where she talked about the Seasons in Life.

Rev'd Maureen Desborough, Clogher Diocesan Chaplain led Midday prayers followed by time for personal reflection. After lunch we had a fun activity led by members of Clogher





Diocese Black, White and Read all over where we devised outfits from newspaper.

After the winner was announced thanks were expressed to all who contributed to the two days and flowers were presented to the coordinators Wendy and Liz. Thankyou everyone for two days with lots of food, fun and fellowship.

C of I archbishops express support for Jewish community in Ireland

Archbishops John McDowell and Michael Jackson have issued the following statement:

“We would wish to extend their condolences to the families of those who were killed in the attack on Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue. We know that the Jewish community on the island of Ireland has strong links historically with the Jewish community in Manchester and we wish to assure them of our prayers.

We would share the sentiments expressed by the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Sir Ephraim Mirvitz (who was previously Chief Rabbi of Ireland), that great care should be taken in how people express their views on sensitive issues, no matter how strongly felt.

The rise of anti-Semitism worldwide impacts all Jewish communities. We have no doubt that the Jewish community in Ireland is feeling frightened and vulnerable, and we trust

that their neighbours will offer them comfort and support at this time.”

Cathedral Calls

Christ Church Sound of Music Sing-a-long

Come and join the Christ Church Dublin's Past Choristers' Association on Monday 13th October at 7.30pm in the Henry Roe Room as they celebrate the 60th anniversary of the timeless classic, The Sound of Music with a special sing-a-long screening!

Entrance is free, but donations are most welcome!

Dressing up.....optional.....

Please note that the October newsletter advertised this event as taking place on the 19th October. It is taking place on Monday 13th at 7.30pm.

Festive fun at Belfast cathedral

One of Belfast's most loved Christmas shows is returning to St Anne's Cathedral this year.

Christmas at the Cathedral, presented by Peter Corry Productions, will take place on December 12 and 13. Joining Corry on stage will be Dana Masters, a vocalist with Van Morrison, and the Italian singer Kalon Rae, who has worked with Coldplay, George Michael and Take That.

Also taking part are the young performers of the BSPA Voices Choir and a host of musicians, including the Arco String Quartet.

Celebration

Audiences can expect a festive celebration blending the traditional with the modern.

Rae said he was excited to be performing in Belfast. He continued: "To be part of Christmas at the Cathedral is something I'm really looking forward to.

"It's a chance to share the stage with Peter, Dana and the wonderful BSPA Voices Choir in such a breathtaking venue. "I'll even be revisiting my time performing on stage with George Michael, so audiences can expect a special rendition of the festive classic Last Christmas."

Corry added: "Christmas at the Cathedral is always such a special occasion. It's about celebrating the season together in the most beautiful of settings.

"I'm thrilled this year to be joined by Dana and Kalon, two extraordinarily talented and dynamic performers who will be a great treat for our audiences.

"Whether you've been coming for years or it's your first time, this promises to be an unforgettable way to start your Christmas celebrations."

Tickets for the show are available at www.petercorryproductions.com

Clergy and ministry

Sarah Mullally's declared!

**'Twas the night
before the
announcement, and
all through the land,
Not a cleric was
certain what fate
was at hand.**

**The mitres were
tilted, the incense burned low,
In hopes that the Synod knew which way to go.**

The curates were nestled all snug in their stalls,
While visions of purple danced round in St. Paul's.
And Dean in his cope, and Mrs Dean in her cap,
Had just settled down for a long Anglican nap.

When out on the green there arose such a clatter,
The vergers all gasped, "What on earth is the matter?"
Away to the press room they flew like a flash,
Spilling their tea in a most un-English splash.



The cameras were clicking, the headlines all blared,
“The choice has been made—Sarah Mullally’s declared!”
A bishop, a nurse, with a penchant for flair,
The Archbishop of Canterbury—yes, she’s there.

Now some cried, “Ecstatic! At last, something new!”
While others turned pale, muttering, “What will we do?”
Some clutched at their prayer books, bewildered and glum,
While others sang “Alleluia! Progress has come!”

The vicars debated with sherry in hand,
The ordinands blogged what they could not withstand,
And Twitter exploded with glee and dismay—
A thoroughly Anglican kind of display.

Yet Sarah just smiled, with a bishop’s calm cheer,
“Fear not, for the Spirit has brought us all here.
Through laughter and grumbling, we’ll muddle somehow—
The Church is still Christ’s, whatever the row.”

So bishops may grumble, and laity weep,
But Canterbury’s crozier she’s now sworn to keep.
And I heard her exclaim, as she took up her role,
“God bless this dear Church... though it does test my soul!”

Shaun O’Brian

New Rector welcomed in Arklow

Torrential rain could not dampen the spirits of the people of Arklow, Inch and Kilbride as they flocked to St



Saviour's Church in Arklow (Thursday October 2) to warmly welcome their new Rector.

The Revd Alistair Doyle was instituted as incumbent of the South East Glendalough parishes by Archbishop Michael Jackson.

Alistair's wife Cecilia and their son Toby, along with other family members were joined by a large congregation which included many parishioners from Galway where Alistair served as Curate for four years. There were also parishioners from Alistair's home parish of St Matthias' in Killiney–Ballybrack, and Zion.

Adding to the warmth of the welcome was a great many people from the wider community in Arklow including the Moderator of Arklow Group of Parishes, Fr Pádraig O'Cochláin, Rev Fadzanyai Jongoro and the Revd Michael

Anderson of Arklow Presbyterian Church. There were representatives of a wide range of local volunteer organisations and public representatives.

The sermon was preached by the Very Revd Lynda Peilow, Provost of Tuam, with whom Alistair served his curacy. She spoke about the difference between ‘fitting in’ and ‘belonging’.

“We live in a time where belonging feels fragile,” she said pointing out that everything in current culture tells us we must fit in. “But fitting in is not the same as belonging. Belonging means showing up and being accepted as you are, for who you are, even if you are alone,” she commented.

“The new Rector comes with many gifts, Ms Peilow said, including love, kindness, humanity, energy, presence and his love for God. These gifts are not confined to the church building, she said observing that Alistair had known the name of every homeless person on Shop Street in Galway. He will also be a beacon in the wider community as connection and hospitality are in his nature. In Galway he was known as the Holy Roller because of his love of scooters, skate boards and mopeds which have resulted in the occasional injury. He is brave and courageous and unafraid of vulnerability, she added.

Moderator meets RAF chaplains

Presbyterian Moderator meets RAF chaplains and praises their ‘invaluable pastoral role in both peacetime

and in times of war', Billky Kennedy writes in The News Letter.

Presbyterian Moderator the Rev Dr Trevor Gribben has been to England to meet with Presbyterian chaplains serving in the Royal Air Force.

On the visit, he praised the armed clerics for their 'invaluable pastoral role in "both peacetime and in times of war"'. The moderator was accompanied by the convener of the Irish Presbyterian church's armed forces' panel, Rev Dr Rob Craig, in the two-day visit which included meeting senior personnel at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire and RAF High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire.

Their visit came just a week after RAF fighters were deployed over Poland in response to Russian incursions of Polish airspace. The two senior Presbyterians also visited



Their visit came just a week after RAF fighters were deployed over Poland in response to Russian incursions of Polish airspace. The two senior Presbyterians also visited

the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, which is also based in Oxfordshire.

“One of the privileges of being moderator for a year is getting to visit places you would never have visited, and meeting people you wouldn’t normally get to meet. This is especially true of colleagues who have been obedient to the call of God on their lives and serve Him in very different areas of ministry, which includes our Forces chaplains,” said Dr Gribben.

“As a denomination, we have a long pastoral association with the UK’s three armed services and are one of the recognised ‘Sending Churches’, having ‘sent’, or provided chaplains, or padres, to the military for more than 100 years.

“Today, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland PCI has 11 full-time and part-time forces chaplains, most of whom have supported their comrades on active service overseas.”

During his visit, the moderator spent time with PCI’s three Royal Air Force chaplains – Rev Dr (Wing Commander) Philip Wilson; Rev (Squadron Leader) Jonathan Newell and Rev (Squadron Leader) Michael McCormick, who have a joint service record of some 23 years.

The English visit was also an opportunity to find out more about the work of the RAF and the pastoral care and welfare support available to service personnel. During the visit, Dr Gribben also met with Rev (Group Captain) Al Nicoll, deputy chaplain-in-chief of the Royal Air Force.

To become a padre, ministers go through the same selection and rigorous training as other serving personnel. Deploying overseas when necessary, they often leave their families behind for long periods of time. Chaplains also wear service uniform, but unlike their colleagues do not carry weapons.

Dr Gribben, speaking about UK forces chaplaincy, said: “As our chaplains support personnel and families in all three services, one of my predecessors described Forces Chaplaincy as ‘a unique kind of ministry’ and it is.

“Meeting our padres, hearing their experiences, and learning more about their pastoral role was important, and I valued our time together, which included a time of prayer. In their special calling, like their comrades in the other services, they play an invaluable pastoral role in both peacetime and in times of war.

“As they support service personnel of faith and no faith in these uncertain times, they are deserving of our prayers.”

Following the visit, Rev Michael McCormick said that “being sent by the Irish Presbyterian Church to be a chaplain to the forces is a wonderful privilege. In our various roles, we find ourselves in all sorts of unique and interesting places, as we serve alongside other service personnel in this particular ministry. We very much welcomed the visit by Dr Gribben, and having the support and encouragement of a visit by the moderator enables us to stay connected to our denomination, which at times can be challenging, given the roles that we have and the places that we may be sent to.”

Having joined the moderator in England, former moderator Rev Dr Bob Craig said that visiting PCI's chaplains was always of mutual benefit. "Since forces' chaplains spend most of the ministry outside of Ireland they can be easily overlooked by the wider denomination.

For this reason, a visit from the moderator is always appreciated, as it is a recognition of their service."

Dr Craig added: "Equally, through such visits every moderator, and it was certainly true for me, enters into a world beyond their normal experience and, through these visits, they gain a valuable insight into the missional opportunities and pastoral duties which are part and parcel of Forces Chaplaincy, something that PCI is proud of and very much committed to."

During the visit, Moderator Gribben and Dr Craig also visited Beckett House, the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre, which is part of the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, where they met senior personnel. The Academy delivers defence and security education to the UK's armed forces, government, and industry, along with personnel from overseas.

Events

Celebrate the 75th anniversary of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Join the CS Lewis Institute and mark 10 Years of the C.S. Lewis Institute Belfast and celebrate the 75th anniversary of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

The Institute writes - We invite you to step into a special evening at the beautiful and historic Ulster Museum, to explore the wonder and biblical themes embodied within the land and legacy of Narnia. We are absolutely thrilled to be welcoming the very gifted and world-renowned C.S. Lewis expert Dr Jerry Root, Emeritus Professor of Wheaton College, USA, to share his occasioned reflections with us.

Our evening will begin with a lecture, followed by a fork buffet meal & fellowship, and will finish with a screening of The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe movie. There will also be an opportunity to purchase commemorative memorabilia and books at the beginning of the evening before the lecture.

Date & Time: Saturday 1st November 2025, 5.30pm-11pm

Venue: The Ulster Museum, Belfast

Cost: Tickets priced from £75

Tickets can be booked via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/special-75th-anniversary-celebration-the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe-tickets-1737835606079?aff=oddtcreator>

You can also contact n.jewhurst@cslewisinstitute.org for more information.

We would love to see you there!

Lunchtime recitals in Monkstown Parish Church

On the following Wednesdays in October there will be a lunchtime recital in Monkstown Parish Church, Monkstown, Co. Dublin at 1.10pm.

18th October - David O'Shea (Organ)

15th October - Rev. Hilary Dungan and Liezl-Maret Jacobs (Piano)

22nd October - The Amos Trio (Oboe, Flute and Clarinet)

29th October - Shira Brady (Contralto), Daire O'Shea (Piano). William Desmond (Violin) and Edel O'Donnell (Cello)

There will be a basket for donations at the door and the proceeds will be divided between the performers and church funds. All welcome.

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

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

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