

Church News Ireland

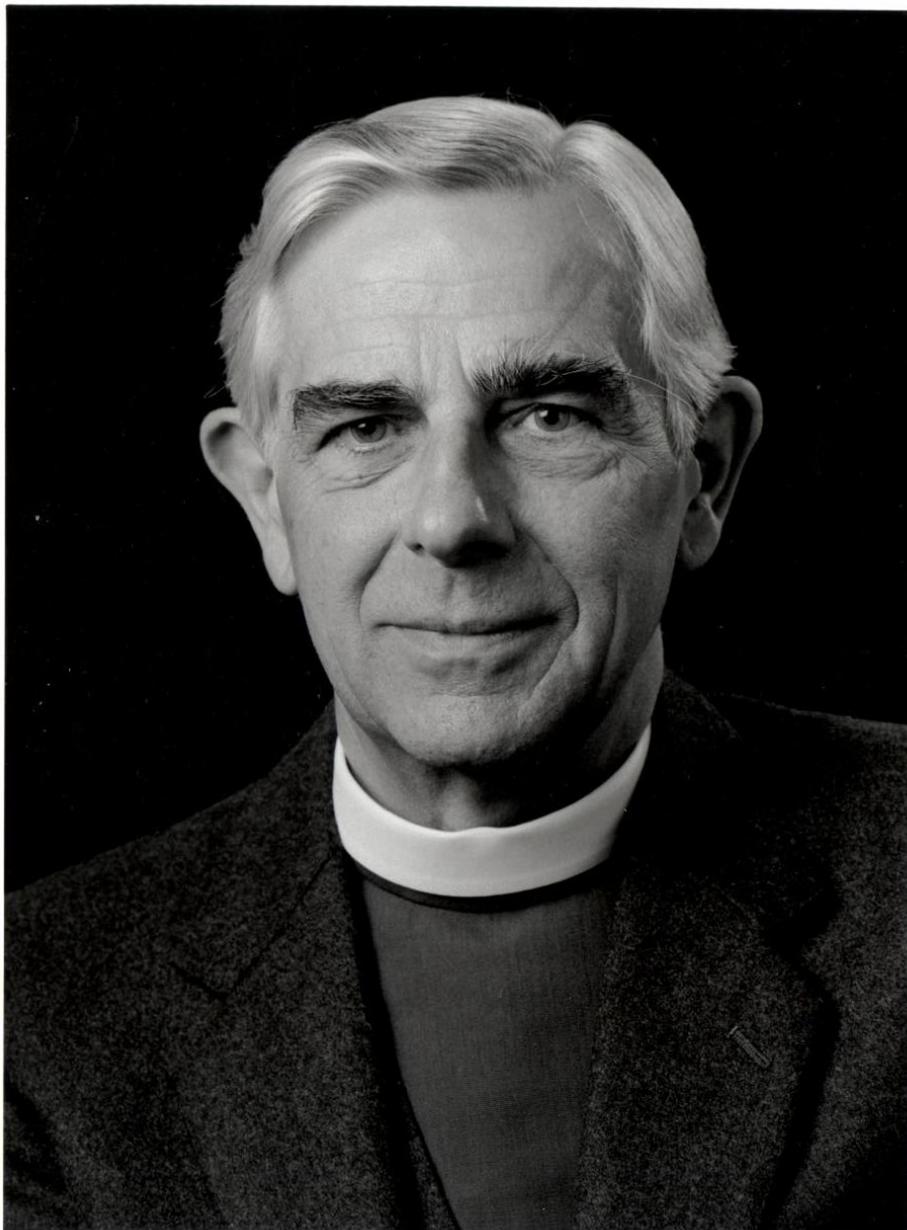


Image of the day – Lord for the years

Image of the day

Lord for the years - history in Belfast

*Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.*



**Yesterday
Songs of
Praise
included the
hymn “Lord,
for the years
your love
has kept and
guided” in a
presentation
of Queen
Elizabeth’s
favourite
hymns.**

**Photo -
Bishop
Timothy
Dudley-Smith**



When the Queen for the first and only time attended an inter-church civic service in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, this hymn was sung. The service was televised live by the BBC.

Within days a letter of congratulations to the choir was received by the Dean from the author of the hymn Timothy Dudley-Smith.

He also kindly requested a copy of the Order of Service because it was the first time to his knowledge that the hymn had been sung in the presence of Her Majesty.

Timothy Dudley-Smith served as Archdeacon of Norwich, 1973-81 and Bishop of Thetford, 1981-91. As a hymn writer he had over 400 hymn texts published. The tune for the hymn was composed by Michael Baughen who became Bishop of Chester.

News reports

Queen Elizabeth a courageous peacemaker and reconciler

Message of Archbishop Eamon Martin ahead of attending the funeral of the late Queen Elizabeth II



“Queen Elizabeth was a courageous peacemaker and a reconciler of difference ... The work of peace, however, remains unfinished” – Archbishop Martin

As I travel today to London for the funeral of Her Majesty, the late Queen Elizabeth II, I bring with me the thoughts and prayers of very many people on the island of Ireland. Before the Service of Reflection in Saint Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, on Tuesday last, I had an opportunity, on behalf of the Catholic community in Ireland, to sympathise with King Charles III and to offer him prayerful good wishes as he takes up his new responsibilities.

Since the Queen’s death there has been an outpouring of affection and genuine respect from right across the island of Ireland. I hope and pray that in some small ways this has helped to strengthen relationships and mutual understanding between our communities. Queen Elizabeth herself would want this. She was a courageous peacemaker and a reconciler of difference.



In her Christmas message 2014, Queen Elizabeth said, ‘For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace ... is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, He stretched out His hands in love, acceptance, and healing. Christ’s example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people, of whatever faith or none.’

I will be praying at the funeral in Westminster Abbey that the efforts of Queen Elizabeth, and of so many others who took risks for our peace, will not be forgotten, or allowed to slip away. Many of these peacemakers have now gone to their rest. The work of peace, however, remains unfinished and urgent – and it is up to all of us to play our part.

May Christ the Prince of Peace remain with us. May Queen Elizabeth rest in the Peace of that same Christ.

King Charles promises to protect freedom of conscience and 'space' for faith

King Charles III has told faith leaders that his work of protecting diversity in Britain must include "protecting the space for faith itself".



As Britain's new monarch, King Charles inherits the titles of Supreme Governor of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith.

He spoke about his own religion and the importance of diversity of belief when he welcomed leaders from different faiths to a reception at Buckingham Palace on Friday.

Guests at the reception included the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, the Archbishop of York, the Most Rev Stephen Cottrell, the Dean of

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Westminster, the Very Rev David Hoyle, Jesus House senior pastor Agu Irukwu, and Rev Helen Cameron of the Free Churches Group.

Addressing the room, the King said that love was at the heart of his own Christian faith and that this compelled him to protect those who follow other spiritual paths or embrace secular beliefs.

The King also spoke of his desire to protect the "vital" principle of freedom of conscience.

"I have always thought of Britain as a 'community of communities'," he said.

"That has led me to understand that the Sovereign has an additional duty - less formally recognised but to be no less diligently discharged.



"It is the duty to protect the diversity of our country, including by protecting the space for faith itself and its practise through the religions, cultures, traditions and beliefs to which our hearts and minds direct us as individuals."

The King then said that he wanted to carry out his responsibilities as Sovereign "in a way which reflects the world in which we now live" and to continue the work of his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in working to preserve freedom of conscience for all beliefs.

"As a member of the Church of England, my Christian beliefs have love at their very heart," he continued.

"By my most profound convictions, therefore - as well as by my position as Sovereign - I hold myself bound to respect those who follow other spiritual paths, as well as those who seek to live their lives in accordance with secular ideals.

"The beliefs that flourish in, and contribute to, our richly diverse society differ. They, and our society, can only thrive through a clear collective commitment to those vital principles of freedom of conscience, generosity of spirit and care for others which are, to me, the essence of our nationhood.

"I am determined, as King, to preserve and promote those principles across all communities, and for all beliefs, with all my heart."

The King also spoke about the Christian aspect of the oath he will take at his coronation.

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"I am a committed Anglican Christian, and at my Coronation I will take an oath relating to the settlement of the Church of England. At my Accession, I have already solemnly given — as has every Sovereign over the last 300 years — an Oath which pledges to maintain and preserve the Protestant faith in Scotland," he said.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to preach at Washington cathedral service for Queen Elizabeth II

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will deliver the sermon at a Sept. 21 memorial service for Queen Elizabeth II at Washington National Cathedral, held in partnership with the U.S. British Embassy. The public is invited to join the 11 a.m. ET service online.

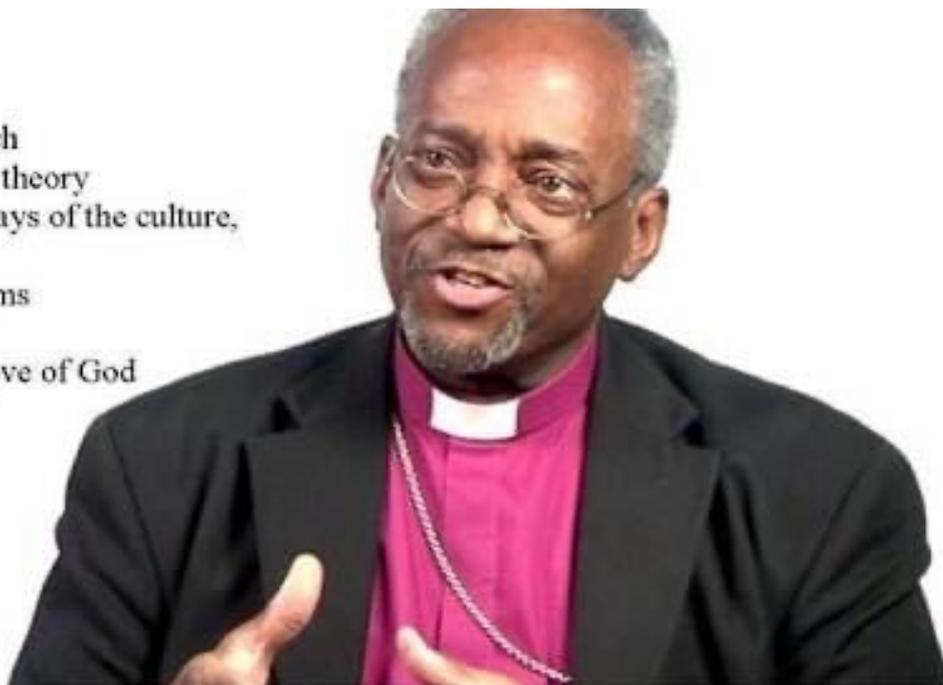
The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, will preside over the service; and the Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, cathedral dean, will share remarks, along with Karen Pierce, the British ambassador to the U.S.

Curry, who preached at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in 2018, shared prayers for the queen and her family upon her Sept. 8 death, noting, "Her resilience, her dignity, and her model of quiet faith and piety have been—and will continue to be—an example for so many."

The Episcopal Church, which includes the Washington National Cathedral, is a constituent member of the global

“Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or capitulation to the ways of the culture, but on our belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all.”

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry
January 2016



Anglican Communion, along with the Church of England. The queen visited the cathedral multiple times during her reign, including in 1957 for the dedication of the War Memorial Chapel with President Dwight D. Eisenhower and in 1976 for the completion of the nave with President Gerald Ford.

“Her Majesty devoted 70 years of service to God and to her people,” Hollerith said. “We will remember her unwavering sense of duty, devotion, and fidelity she embodied, and the many visits she made to the cathedral over her lifetime.”

Remarks are expected from Her Excellency Dame Karen Pierce, the British Ambassador to the United States, and the Very Rev. Randolph Marshall Hollerith, Dean of Washington National Cathedral.

A wide range of US dignitaries and senior officials will be invited to attend the service.



Cathedral thanksgiving service in Ghana

The Anglican Church, Ghana in collaboration with the British High Commission held a thanksgiving service to celebrate the life of Queen Elizabeth II at the Cathedral Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Accra.

The solemn service, which had Bishops of the Anglican Church in Ghana, Reverend Ministers, Chiefs, Diplomats, Ministers of State, Members of Parliament among others, in attendance, was hosted by the Anglican Church of Ghana in collaboration with the British High Commission (UK in Ghana) in Accra.

Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President, in a speech has described the late Queen Elizabeth II as an embodiment of



virtue, courage and affection – a trait she exuded throughout her life of public service.

The Vice President was accompanied by the Chief of Staff, Madam Akosua Frema Osei-Opare and Madam Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and other State officials including The Most Rev'd Dr Justice Offei Akrofi, Member of Council of State and Former Archbishop, Church of the Province of West Africa.

Most Rev'd Dr. Cyril Kobina Ben-Smith, Primate, Church of the Province of West Africa, in a homily, said above all else, the one thing that motivated and inspired Queen Elizabeth was her Christian faith as expressed by Christ.

Madam Harriet Thompson, British High Commissioner to Ghana, in an address said, many despite never having met

the Queen in person or members of the royal family, have a sense of personal connection often going beyond respect to true affection for her.

British Empire legacy – African Cof I clergyman calls on anti-colonial critics of the Queen to think again

An African clergyman working in Northern Ireland has spoken of his warm affection for the late Queen, and suggested that those now criticising the royals for their colonial links should think again. Adam Kula writes in The News Letter.

Rev George Okikuolu, from Ibadan in south-west Nigeria, will be hosting two services of thanksgiving for her life in the days ahead – one today, one on Sunday.

Speaking to the News Letter, the 46-year-old (who was made rector of Dromara and Garvaghy in June) was asked about the criticism levelled against the monarchy for its association with the British Empire.

Rev Okikuolu said that the events of bygone centuries “should not be used as a judgement or a yardstick for the present monarch’s rule”.

He added: “What I’d say to that point of view is people need to be realistic. We’re all human, and the sad history of the past is something people need to move on from, for me.”

He also said that there had been positive aspects to the Empire, saying for instance that Britain was among the first nations to abolish slavery, in the early 1800s (and in 1852 the Royal Navy bombarded Lagos to depose a local ruler – partly on the grounds that the ruler would not abolish slavery).

“We should be more positive than negative,” Rev Okikuolu said.

“In so many ways English people have also been beneficial to us. They’ve helped us in so many ways. I’ve heard people in the past say how they wish we were back under the English rule, because at the minute the level of injustice in Nigeria is unbearable.

“In the last few years we’ve been trying everything possible since we’re out of the colonial rule to make sure we do well. But how well have we done? That’s a question we need to ask ourselves.

“My dad said to me that in Nigeria before independence when he was working he enjoyed a better life. When you finished your schooling there’s always a job ready for you. But now... there is no job.

“From the stories I heard from my dad and other people who were born at that time, they actually believed they lived a better life under the British compared to what the state-of-living is presently after the British have left.”

‘MY SOVEREIGN LADY’:

As for the monarchy, he said: “My view of the royal family is a very positive view. They’ve done all they need to do to make the world a better place. They’re nice people, lovely people. The Queen in particular has shown a very good interest in Africa

“Did you know Queen Elizabeth was proclaimed Queen when she was in Africa? She was in Kenya!

“To me she was my sovereign lady, who was first named Queen when she was on African soil. That shows a loyalty to the African people.

“As an African, I feel very proud, and it’s a privilege I’ll be celebrating the Queen and royal family at this time of her passing.”

COMMONWEALTH MEANS ‘SHARED VALUES’:

He said being part of the Commonwealth today is a display of “shared values”.

“I believe there’s a very good relationship there and I personally am very happy to be someone from the Commonwealth,” he said.

As to those who question the tangible merits of the Commonwealth, he said “if there is no benefit, no country would want to be a member!” (there are presently 56 member states).

He noted that the UK military had offered help in the Nigerian government’s battle against the Islamist Boko

Haram militia as evidence of the modern-day bond between the nations.

Singer Katherine Jenkins praises memorial music

Katherine Jenkins has said the music chosen for the Queen's memorial events has been "wonderful" in helping to set the tone and "bring out our emotions".

Choirs and marching bands have performed at services of thanksgiving and ceremonial occasions over the last week, including the procession carrying the Queen's coffin from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall for her lying in state.

The 42-year-old classical singer, who performed for the Queen many times, told BBC's Breakfast: "The music, I think, has been so important.

"It's just been so wonderful in creating the correct atmosphere and to bring out our emotions."

She added that she thinks the singing in Westminster Hall has been "really beautiful".

"Obviously, these things are planned well in advance but I compliment it greatly. I think they sound beautiful and I'm looking forward to seeing what music will be chosen on Monday."

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Jenkins was selected to record a new version of God Save The King for BBC Radio 4 last Friday following the death of the Queen.

She recorded the national anthem in a small church in a remote area of Sussex and had a moment of silence and prayer before “singing from the heart”.

The lyrics include the lines: “God save our gracious King, long live our noble King, God save the King.”

The singer said she was “really emotional” while performing it but that it was a “massive honour” to record the new version.

She added that she was conscious of wanting to interpret the words in a new way and ensuring she remembered the change of lyrics, but her ultimate focus was on what the song signified.

“In that moment, I was trying to remember what an amazing life has gone before with Her Majesty and thinking of the future,” she said.

Jenkins has sung at a number of royal occasions, including the Queen’s 90th birthday at Windsor Castle in 2016. She also took part in the celebrations over the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee weekend, including performing at a special outdoor concert at Sandringham alongside the Military Wives Choirs, and appeared in the Songs Of Praise: Platinum Jubilee Special.

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Poem for today

Postscript

by Seamus Heaney

And some time make the time to drive out west
Into County Clare, along the Flaggy Shore,
In September or October, when the wind
And the light are working off each other
So that the ocean on one side is wild
With foam and glitter, and inland among stones
The surface of a slate-grey lake is lit
By the earthed lightning of a flock of swans,
Their feathers roughed and ruffling, white on white,
Their fully grown headstrong-looking heads
Tucked or cresting or busy underwater.
Useless to think you'll park and capture it
More thoroughly. You are neither here nor there,
A hurry through which known and strange things pass
As big soft buffetings come at the car sideways
And catch the heart off guard and blow it open.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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