

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Harvest home

Image of the day

Harvest home

News reports

FORGE funder visits Down & Dromore diocese



Bishop David McClay and Keith Gardiner, the diocesan Fundraising Officer for Church Growth, were delighted to welcome Andrew Bass, Grants Officer for Benefact Trust, to the See House earlier this week. As announced in July, the diocese has been awarded a very generous grant from the Benefact Trust to support, FORGE, its new Diocesan Ministry Apprentice Scheme for 18–25s.

This was Andrew's first visit in connection with FORGE, which will get underway with an induction at the beginning of

October for the first cohort of Ministry Apprentices. The programme will include monthly training days, insight visits to Christian ministries, support to undertake accredited training in children's or youth ministry and an end of year celebration event.

The Apprentices will be fully involved in the life and witness of their host church and serve mainly in children's and youth ministries. They will also contribute to diocese-wide ministry programmes e.g., Saturday Night Live and our Kilbroney Camps programme. These opportunities will enable Apprentices to explore a call to Christian ministry and grow in their faith. It is our hope and prayer that this new scheme will raise up a new generation of ministry leaders.

Following interviews last week, three young people – two from Northern Ireland and one from England – have been appointed to the scheme. Two will be hosted by parish churches and one by a church plant. The diocese will introduce the new Apprentices at the start of October.

Benefact Trust exists to make a positive difference to people's lives by funding, guiding and celebrating the work of churches and Christian charities; empowering the most vulnerable and giving people, communities and places a renewed opportunity to flourish. (benefacttrust.co.uk)

New era for Dublin city centre parish as new Vicar welcomed

The churches of St Ann and St Stephen mark the presence of Christ in the crucible of the city. So said

September 22, 2022

their new Rector, Canon Paul Arbuthnot, who was instituted as Rector of the Parish of St Ann with St Mark and St Stephen by Archbishop Michael Jackson on Friday evening (September 16).

Below - The Revd Sean Hanily, Archdeacon David Pierpoint, Dean Stephen Farrell, Canon Paul Arbuthnot, Archbishop Michael Jackson, Dean William Morton, Archdeacon Neal O'Raw and the Revd Robert Marshall outside St Ann's, Dawson Street.



The preacher was Dean of Ossary, the Very Revd Stephen Farrell, who assured parishioners that the worship and

musical tradition of the parish was in safe hands and would thrive under the care of the new Rector.

Joining parishioners in St Ann's, Dawson Street, at the start of this new chapter were members of Paul's family as well as friends and clerical colleagues

The preacher was Dean of Ossary, the Very Revd Stephen Farrell, who assured parishioners that the worship and musical tradition of the parish was in safe hands and would thrive under the care of the new Rector.

Joining parishioners in St Ann's, Dawson Street, at the start of this new chapter were members of Paul's family as well as friends and clerical colleagues

Parishioners from his former parish of Cobh and Glanmire travelled to be present and the new Rector greeted friends from Westminster Abbey who were watching online.

In his sermon, Dean Farrell said the readings for the day [1 Corinthians 15: 12–20 and Luke 8: 1–3] were wonderfully apt for an institution. The Gospel witnesses to the beginning of community around Jesus that would go on to become the Church and he observed that there were a number of things which the parish could learn from the way in which Jesus shaped that community.

The Dean said that in Luke's Gospel the faithful were called to be with Jesus. In the parish that meant reading his word, spending time in prayer and gathering with the community of the faithful in public worship. He stated that parishioners would be blessed as their new incumbent "knows his onions



Canon Paul Arbuthnot with Churchwardens

when it comes to worship” having received training in St Alban’s Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Glenageary.

Arthur Vincent welcomed Paul on behalf of the parish. St Ann’s is known as ‘the church in the heart of the city with the city at its heart’ but Arthur said it was hard to imagine St Ann’s when it was first built a little over 300 years ago when there was no Dawson Street, Stephen’s Green or Molesworth Street. The church was in Molesworth’s Fields. Some 40 years afterwards Leinster House was built. He said Paul was the 27th Vicar of St Ann’s and that parishioners were looking forward to Paul’s ministry.

Speaking on behalf of the parishioners of Cobh and Glanmire, David Bird, said Paul’s incumbency in Cork was

one like no other as Covid interrupted their lives. He said that Paul and the Rector of St Anne's Shandon combined forces to provide online ministry. He said that Paul had the ability to be present with parishioners and the wider community. He also alerted them to his love of football.

Archbishop Michael Jackson pointed to the bread shelf in St Ann's Church which he said showed that generosity was at the heart of the life of St Ann's which was a place of generosity of invitation, worship and opportunity to find God and be found by God daily. He said that the integration of the parish and the city was something that Paul could take for granted. He spoke of the relationship of St Ann's with St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast through the holding of the Black Santa Sit Out in the run up to Christmas each year.

Caretaker Fred Deane presented a pair of socks from the Dean of Belfast to be worn by the new Vicar during the Black Santa appeal. The Archbishop thanked all who sustained the life of the parish during the vacancy

Canon Paul Arbuthnot thanked everyone for coming to mark the new chapter in the life of the parish and everyone who worked to organise the institution. He looked forward to being alongside parishioners in their pilgrimage of faith. He said that the churches in the parish occupied a special place in the life of this city. "They mark the presence of Christ in the crucible of the commercial and civic life of Dublin. A presence that occupies this place in the most uncertain of times because it's here that tired pilgrim limbs can find rest. It is here that people with nowhere to turn instinctively seek solace. It is here that people frightened of war and rumours of war come to taste the peace that passes all understanding. This is the challenge that history, urban

September 22, 2022

geography and above all our Lord has issued this parish with... Almost daily we hear of soaring energy costs and threats by tin pot dictators to snuff out the lamps of our city centres. But there is one light which cannot be extinguished – the light of Christ,” he stated.

Antrim Parish chorister ordained Deacon



Claire Thompson, right, who was ordained to the Diaconate in All Saints', Antrim, on September 18 by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison. Also pictured is the Vicar of Antrim, Archdeacon Dr Stephen McBride

Claire Thompson was ordained to the Diaconate by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, on

September 18 in All Saints' Parish Church, Antrim, where she will serve in the Ordained Local Ministry.

Claire is a Chief Cardiac Clinical Physiologist specialising in Echocardiography at Antrim Area Hospital.

She is married to Mark and has two sons, Corey and Kai. Claire has a passion for singing, and has been a member of All Saints' Senior Choir for the last 21 years. She also sings in two ladies' choirs, Una Voce and Lagan Camarata, and two mixed choirs, Lagan Mixed Voice and Antrim Choral Society of which she is chairperson.

Claire is also involved in Shine Out, a community choir and orchestra of varying age and denominations which performs concerts of all types of Christian music for various charities.

Onward: Following Jesus

Onward: Following Jesus will be held on Saturday 29 October 2022 from 7.45pm – 9.30pm at Carnmoney Presbyterian Church

It is an event for young people aged 11+ and youth leaders

Plans continue for Onward next month as hosts Anna Robinson and Aaron Shaw met with speakers Stephen McGall and Hannah Cree and PCI's Graeme Thompson to progress plans and the programme:

Onward is for young people who want to follow Jesus, looking forward not back, with a positive, clear vision – living every day for God.



We can't wait for the opportunity to gather together again as we move ONWARD following Jesus.

Youth leaders, this is an ideal opportunity to bring your young people (youth fellowships, GB, BB etc) to reconnect with others. At this event, there will be worship, real life stories and a Bible message to inspire courage and purpose in “ordinary” Christian lives.

Worship will be led by young people from High Kirk Church. Book tickets, £5 per person, via the PCI website.

<https://www.presbyterianireland.org/Onward>

CNI

St Columb's Cathedral Recruiting Boy Choristers

As places fill up for our newly established Girls' Choir - don't forget we are always very keen to hear of potential Boy Chorister recruits!

Any boys interested, from any faith or none, aged 6 and above, are most welcome to join the Boys' Choir at the Cathedral.



To register interest or for further details,
email or text

Derek Collins organist@stcolumbs.net
Nicky Morton nickymorton@hotmail.co.uk
07858097290



In the media

Britain is yearning for traditional Christianity

Queen Elizabeth's funeral proved the public doesn't want a dumbed down version of the Church

Madeline Grant writes in the Daily Telegraph

Queen Elizabeth II was a great giver of gifts; literal and metaphorical. For the Pope, a basket of whisky and honey from the royal estates. For her family, a smooth transition of power. In her final years she carefully parcelled out appropriate responsibilities to her heirs, deftly laying the groundwork for “Queen Camilla” so that something unthinkable two decades ago felt entirely natural by the time it happened. Even her death at Balmoral proved a gift to the Union, by allowing the first public mourning rituals to begin in her beloved Scotland.

The Church of England received a particularly precious parting legacy, revealing the same careful planning. In her final two decades, the late Queen spoke increasingly openly about her faith, her Christmas messages growing more and more explicitly Christian. She prepared meticulously, one suspects, not just because she was 96 (or, well, the Queen) but also because through her profound faith she had made peace with her own mortality.

Now her death has unlocked a latent appetite for religious ritual, even transcendence – often among avowed atheists

and agnostics. Many who rarely set foot in a church have found themselves popping in for a service or to sign the book of condolence. How remarkable that in our age of unbelief, this traditional funeral – an unambiguous statement of Anglican faith – drew one of the biggest audiences in TV history. Cynical secularists usually dominate social media, but this week they’ve sounded vaguely ridiculous. Many viewers reported being more moved by the simpler Windsor committal than the pomp and pageantry of the Abbey service and procession. They were mesmerised by the religious elements, not in spite of them.

It is easy to dismiss such ceremony, like Philip Larkin, as “that vast, moth-eaten musical brocade / Created to pretend we never die”. But at climactic moments, from baptisms and weddings to funerals and memorials, most of us, whatever our beliefs, crave familiar rituals. There is a visceral need to link our individual experience with the sense of being part of wider humanity and – however dimly understood – of something beyond ourselves.

One obvious way for the Church to repay the Queen’s parting gift is to persuade people that what they felt over the past few days – about duty and eternity, mortality and grace – is on offer every week. Of course grand spectacles like these don’t come around often. But breathtaking buildings, the language of the King James Bible and The Book of Common Prayer, the psalms and choral anthems, the ageless beauty of Byrd, Tallis, Parry – all can be found across Britain for free. The late Queen’s life and death hold valuable lessons for the Church; be confident and engaging, don’t shy away from “weirdness” or mystery. Authenticity is powerful, whether the unapologetic conviction of her faith, or

the weight and heft of traditional language. Many church-goers are first drawn to the transcendent beauty, then end up finding a more profound message there too.

Here the Church has not always helped its cause by substituting much of the ancient liturgy with updates that are often clunky, convinced that modern congregations cannot grasp the beauty of the well-worn words. The famous passage from Corinthians, “What we see now is like a dim image in a mirror; then we shall see face-to-face”, can’t rival the original, pithily poetic, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.” Likewise, “In my father’s house are many rooms” has none of the majesty of the old phrase “many mansions”. How many worshippers when hearing such inelegant translations mentally replace them with the resounding original King James version? The Church needs to come out fighting for tradition, not concealing it beneath an underwhelming veneer of “inclusiveness” or modernity for its own sake.

Perhaps most valuably, religion provides the tools to view death as the Queen did – a natural part of life. Secular Britain has lost this muscle-memory. Mortality increasingly happens at a distance, in hospitals and care homes, and we often struggle to say the word “death” at all – preferring euphemisms like “passing away”. In Stephen Beresford’s brilliant play *The Southbury Child*, the vicar of a parish in Devon provokes outrage over the funeral service of a little girl who has died of leukaemia. The child’s mother wants the church decked out with Disney balloons; the vicar insists this is inappropriate and refuses to budge. His stand, inexplicable to many, brings the vicar and his family immense grief, but at the end of the play, when he finally

reads out the majestic “I am the resurrection and the life”, you finally begin to see his point. Christian funerals look death square in the eye; balloons and bright colours don’t cut it.

During the first national lockdown, as people became vividly aware of mortality, the Church missed a major opportunity to assert its worth. In capitulating and closing the churches, even to private worship, it said to the world: “What we do is non-essential, no more important than any leisure activity.” Clearly many, Her late Majesty included, knew it was far more than that. Queen Elizabeth’s life and legacy gives the Church a new chance to reset its relationship with the nation. They must not squander it.

Poem for today

Besides the Autumn Poets Sing by Emily Dickinson

Besides the Autumn poets sing,
A few prosaic days
A little this side of the snow
And that side of the Haze -

A few incisive mornings -
A few Ascetic eves -
Gone - Mr Bryant's "Golden Rod" -
And Mr Thomson's "sheaves."

September 22, 2022

Still, is the bustle in the brook -
Sealed are the spicy valves -
Mesmeric fingers softly touch
The eyes of many Elves -

Perhaps a squirrel may remain -
My sentiments to share -
Grant me, Oh Lord, a sunny mind -
Thy windy will to bear!

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

