

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Wells Chapter House**



## Image of the day

### Wells Chapter House



Wells Cathedral chapter house, Somerset

Upon entry, you immediately notice the light and open appearance of the chapter house. The central column of sixteen small Purbeck columns carries the vault, with thirty ribs (tierceron vaults) blowing out to the ceiling. The ribs are decorated with wooden buttons, vine vines, clove and some figures such as a 'green man' and a woman with long hair. In the Middle Ages, the space was darker due to stained glass windows and red-painted wooden elements of the stables.



Around the eight-sided space there are 49 seats (stalls) for canons or prebenden, plus a fifty at the open arch for Sint Andreas. Each stall has a canopy on blue lias columns, with brass plates indicating the name of the prebend. The head stops feature figures such as popes, kings, and comical faces. The canons were at the top, their subordinates were lower, and choir singers were standing.

Little of the original glass has survived; much was destroyed during the English Civil War. What remains is in the tracing, with angels and dead among others rising from their graves. In the non-figurative windows, motifs of vine vines and sometimes maple can be seen, matching the decorations of the vault. Since cleaning in 1989-1990, the ruby-red glass is clear and conspicuous in colour.



The chapter house is also an exhibition room. Wells Art Contemporary 2024 featured works by Anna Gillespie and Cheryl Lewis. Gillespie's sculptures, inspired by the saying 'Hear No Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil', refer to the struggle of talking about the climate crisis and the diversion of consumer culture. Her hollow and fragmented figures reflect this tense condition.

Cheryl Lewis presented the Corpus series, figurative drawings based on ink stains, showing complex patterns of nature. Each drawing is unique, but together in the chapter house they form a reminder of the interconnectedness of everything and the fragile balance that sustains life.

## News

### ECI Climate Justice Candle visits Westport churches

**Holy Trinity Church was delighted to host the Climate Justice Candle at their Harvest Thanksgiving Service this year which was held in their neighbouring Roman Catholic Church, St Mary's.**

Work is on going to repair damage Holy Trinity from Storm Eowyn. Rev Suzanne Cousins welcomed the guest preacher Alan Cousins and Fr John Kenny administrator of St Mary's.



## **Anglican bishops and Roman Catholic clergy join in ecumenical prayer walk in Liverpool's famous Hope Street**

**Church of England bishops, gathered in Liverpool for the College of Bishops meeting, attended choral evening prayer at Liverpool's Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral before joining the pilgrimage walk that links the Anglican and Catholic Cathedrals in the city.**

Those taking part included the Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell (pictured, right) and the former Archbishop of Liverpool Malcolm McMahon (pictured, centre) as well as the Interim Bishop of Liverpool, Ruth Worsley (pictured, left)

The walk included pauses for reflection, prayer and readings at landmarks in Hope Street, including the statues of the city's much loved former bishops, Bishop David Sheppard and his Roman Catholic counterpart, Archbishop Derek Warlock (pictured)

Bishop Ruth Worsley said the walk had been a moving experience, marking the close relationship between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in the city.

She added that it reflected the theme of hope explored by the College of Bishops during their meeting Liverpool this week.

"It was fantastic to take part in the walk, a pilgrimage for so many over the years in the city," she said..



“There are many in our world who are despairing, fearful and anxious, but hope in Christ is what we need to look to.

“Hope is something that goes beyond our current circumstances, it is a spiritual reality that recognises God’s love for us through Jesus Christ.”

Monsignor Tony O’Brien, Cathedral Dean at the Metropolitan Cathedral, said: “We were delighted to welcome the whole College of Church of England Bishops to the Metropolitan Cathedral for a service of Choral Evening Prayer and to join them on their ecumenical prayer walk along Hope Street to Liverpool Cathedral.

“It’s rare to see so many Anglican bishops together in one place, and even more unusual for their meeting to be held



here in Liverpool—so it was a true honour to be part of their celebrations.

“I was delighted to represent the Catholic faith alongside Archbishop Emeritus Malcolm McMahon in a walk that was filled with moments of joy, peace, and reflection, despite the rain!

“This year marks the Catholic Church’s Jubilee Year which has the theme Pilgrims of Hope, which made it all the more meaningful.

“Walking together down Hope Street was a powerful symbol of the hope and unity that continues to grow between our two cathedrals.”

## **Christ Together: Rathmichael Church’s Mission Partnership in Kenya**

**At the heart of the Christian faith lies a call to fellowship — not only with God through Christ but also with one another across nations, cultures, and traditions.**

The Apostle Paul reminds us that “we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (Romans 12:5). For Rathmichael Parish Church, nestled in the scenic foothills of South County Dublin, this truth has taken on a tangible form through its mission partnership with communities in Kenya.

**At the end of August, Rathmichael’s 2025 mission team returned safely from Kenya after a truly memorable and successful trip.**



***The Rathmichael team with the school board of management Khwiliba School.***

What unfolded during that week of service in the Diocese of Maseno North was not only remarkable in practical terms, but also a testimony to the strength of global fellowship in the Anglican Communion and our common life in Christ.

## **The Call to Mission**

Mission is not an optional activity for the Church; it is its very essence. Jesus'

Great Commission to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) remains as urgent today as it was two thousand years ago. Yet mission is never a one-way street. It is not simply about offering resources or teaching,



but about building relationships, learning from one another, and discovering Christ's presence in unexpected places.



### ***A Lively Church Service in Wandeché Hall.***

For Rathmichael, the call to mission in Kenya emerged from a deep desire to live out the Gospel beyond Ireland.

The recent visit to Kenya follows on from Rathmichael's visit in August 2023, when the team refurbished Wandeché School. This was the first part of a five-year partnership between Rathmichael and the Diocese of Maseno North, which came about from a meeting between Bishop Charles Kascan Asilutwa of Maseno North, and Archbishop Michael Jackson, at the 2022 Lambeth Conference. Archbishop Michael put Bishop Charles in touch with Geoffrey Perrin of

Rathmichael, who volunteered to co-ordinate a mission link, and plans quickly developed for this five-year programme of support for Maseno North Diocese and its schools. What began as a connection has blossomed into a lasting partnership marked by prayer, generosity, and shared witness.



***Revd Sean with the Revd Moses and Wandeché Rector Revd Immanuel.***

### **Kwiliba School: A Week of Transformation**

This year's team of 21, including six teenagers who were a credit to Rathmichael and to the Diocese, travelled at the invitation of Bishop Charles Kascan Asilutwa, Bishop of Maseno North. Their base for the week was the Diocesan Theological College, St Philip's. Under the expert guidance of mission co-ordinator Geoffrey Perrin, who had





***Children from Wandecche in their new school jerseys.***

planned the trip carefully to make the most of the ‘time on the ground’ in Kenya, the group carried out an extraordinary programme of work at Kwiliba School.

**Over just a few days, the team:**

- **Painted 12 classrooms** (eight rooms of 9×8 metres, four rooms of 7×8 metres) as well as the administration block.
- **Installed electricity in the main school building block** — providing lighting, plug sockets, and even security lights outside.

- **Rebuilt the school kitchen**, equipping it with three stoves, a food preparation area, and safe structures for cooking.
- **Constructed a new toilet block** to help meet the sanitary needs of 650 pupils.
- **Added gutters and rainwater** harvesting to the administration block, with a new 5,000–litre water tank to provide a sustainable water supply.

What was achieved in just one week was phenomenal, and the fruits of this labour will touch hundreds of lives for years to come. More than bricks and paint, these were investments in dignity, safety, and opportunity for the children of Kwiliba.

## **Fellowship and Worship**

Mission is never only about practical work. It is also about sharing faith, worshipping together, and building relationships in Christ. During their time in Maseno North, the Rathmichael team was accompanied by the Diocesan Education Secretary, Revd Moses Amwayi, who had also joined the trip in 2023. His friendship, wisdom, and hospitality proved invaluable, reminding the team that fellowship in Christ is at the core of all mission.

On their first Sunday in Kenya, the team visited Wandeché Parish, with which Rathmichael has established a five–year mission link. Worshipping together in Wandeché was a moving reminder that across distance and difference, the



Church is one family, joined by a common faith and nourished by the same Word and Sacraments.

## **Wandeche: Stories of Growth and Renewal**

The return visit to Wandeche revealed remarkable progress since Rathmichael's first trip in 2023. When the mission link began, the local school had fewer than 200 children; today, attendance has risen to 250, reaching capacity. The number of teachers has grown from 10 to 17, several of whom are supported directly by Rathmichael's funding.

The most transformative change has been in nutrition. With over 1 million Kenyan shillings provided in 2024/2025 alone, Rathmichael's support has ensured that children receive breakfast at the start of each school day. Teachers reported that attendance has skyrocketed and attention spans have improved dramatically. For many pupils, this simple meal has been the difference between disengagement and the ability to learn.

The long-term impact is profound: many more children are expected to meet the requirements for secondary school, and Rathmichael envisages supporting a third-level scholarship programme in the future.

## **A Church Rebuilt, a Fellowship Renewed**

While in Wandeche, the Rathmichael team also heard a story of resilience. In October 2023, a storm destroyed the

parish church. Yet the community has since built the core structure of a new and larger church on a safer, more sheltered site.

During the week, **mission co-ordinator Geoffrey Perrin and the Rector of Rathmichael, Revd Sean Hanily**, were invited to plant Elgon Teak trees outside the new church. These trees, known for their strength and longevity, were planted as symbols of the durable and meaningful relationship between Rathmichael and Wandeche. Just as the trees will grow tall and strong, so too will the bonds of friendship and mission that unite the two communities.

## **The Fellowship of the Anglican Communion**

The Anglican Communion is one of the world's largest Christian families, with more than 85 million members in over 165 countries. Rathmichael's work in Kenya is a vivid illustration of what it means to belong to this fellowship: Irish and Kenyan Christians praying together, working side by side, and discovering Christ's presence in each other.

When hymns in English and Swahili rise together in worship, or when prayers in Dublin and Maseno North are lifted for one another across oceans, we glimpse the vision of Revelation: "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9).

In the Anglican tradition, mission is never about exporting one culture or model of church, but about mutual enrichment. From Kenya, Rathmichael learns the joy of vibrant worship and communal resilience. From Ireland,



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Kenyan friends receive encouragement, resources, and solidarity. Together, the Body of Christ is strengthened, and the Gospel is made visible.



**Geoffrey Perrin planting an elgon teak tree in Wandecche.**

## **Mutual Blessing**

The Rathmichael team returned home not only tired but deeply blessed. Many reflected on how their Kenyan hosts — despite challenges of poverty and hardship — radiated joy, generosity, and a deep trust in God. For the teenagers especially, this was an unforgettable experience that expanded their horizons and deepened their faith.

Meanwhile, the Rathmichael congregation continues to be inspired by the stories brought back: classrooms filled with

light, children nourished for learning, a new church rising from the rubble. These stories are not statistics, but testimonies of Christ at work in and through His people.

## Looking Ahead

Rathmichael's mission partnership in Kenya is still young, but its fruit is already abundant.

The hope for the future is to continue strengthening ties with the Diocese of Maseno North, supporting local leaders to sustain and expand projects. Plans for educational scholarships are already being envisioned, and digital communication may allow for shared Bible studies and prayer meetings across continents.

Above all, Rathmichael prays that this mission will remain rooted in Christ — not a project to be managed, but a relationship to be cherished.

## Our Common Fellowship in Christ

At the heart of it all lies our shared identity in Christ. Whether in Rathmichael or Wandecche, in Dublin or Maseno North, Christians gather around the same Scriptures, share in the same sacraments, and confess the same Lord.

This fellowship is not merely an idea but a lived reality: when teenagers from Dublin paint classrooms in rural Kenya, when Kenyan teachers lead prayers for their Irish friends, when Elgon Teak trees are planted as living signs of friendship, the unity of the Body of Christ is revealed.



## **A Shared Journey of Faith**

The story of Rathmichael Church's mission work in Kenya is, in truth, the story of the Gospel itself: God's love crossing boundaries, forming unlikely friendships, and creating a new family in Christ. It is a reminder that we are never alone in our discipleship, but part of a vast communion of believers around the world.

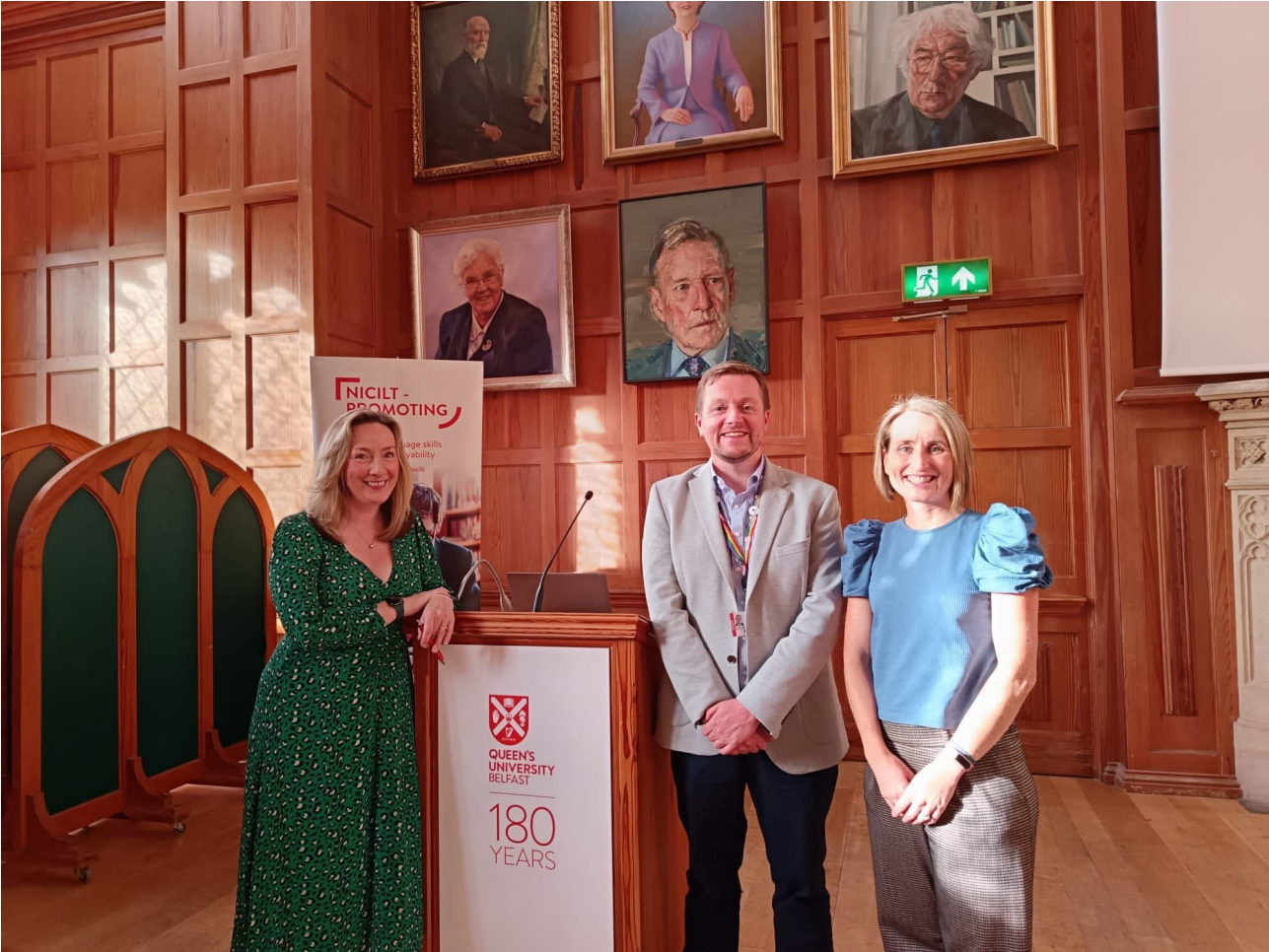
In an age often marked by division and isolation, this partnership offers a hopeful vision of what it means to be the Church. It shows that when we step out in faith, when we listen to one another, and when we serve together, Christ is revealed in our midst.

As we continue this journey, may the words of Jesus guide us: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). And may the fellowship between Rathmichael and Kenya stand as a testament to that love — a beacon of hope, a witness to unity, and a celebration of our common fellowship in Christ.

## **Education**

### **Making the case for German from Ballymena**

**Mrs McCann of Ballymena Academy had the honour of speaking at a "Making The Case for German" Event at Methodist College Belfast.**







This was attended by German teachers, principals and representatives from the German Embassy in London, the Goethe Institute, the Department of Education, Queen's University Belfast, Stranmilis College and CCEA.

After this, she attended the launch of the Association for Language Learning NI Network, organised by NICILT at the QUB Centre for Language Education Research.

## **Armagh R S Air Cadet at National Air and Space Camp**

**Cpl Alex Grove was selected as the sole NI CCF (RAF) cadet to attend the prestigious National Air and Space Camp at RAF Syerston in August.**

Alex was able to complete courses in leadership and propulsion along with progressing his flying training. Visits



included the National Space Centre and Raytheon Technologies.

## **Irish Times editor returns to Dalriada Prize Day**

**We were absolutely delighted to welcome past pupil Freya McClements, Northern Editor, The Irish Times, to our annual Prize Day today, as Guest Speaker.**





Freya is pictured with the Chair of Governors Professor John Gillespie, Head Boy Dan McLean, Head Girl Laura Dysart, Deputy Head Boy James Green, Deputy Head Girl Ellen McFetridge, Principal Mrs Aitcheson and the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Gorey Central first whole school assembly**

**Gorey Central School had its first whole school assembly of the 2025/2026 academic year in Christ Church.**

A great start filled with energy, unity and excitement for the learning and growing this year.

## **BRAs 240th anniversary law lecture**

**We had the honour of welcoming the Honourable Mr Justice David Scofield to deliver our Anniversary Law Lecture.**



We were also delighted to be joined by pupil representatives from St Malachy's College, Hazelwood Integrated College, Dominican College and Strathearn School.

In his lecture, Sir David reflected on distinguished BRA alumni who have shaped the legal profession and served society at the highest levels — from Sir Hugh Cairns, Lord Chancellor under Benjamin Disraeli, to Sir Donald Murray and Sir Paul Girvan, both Lords Justices of Appeal. He also shared the story of a more notorious former pupil, Peter Scott, remembered for appearing regularly on the other side of the dock as a prolific cat burglar.

Sir David shared his own journey from classroom to courtroom, offered insights on current trends in the legal profession, and encouraged young people to consider law as a career that is rewarding, intellectually stimulating, and impactful.



We are deeply grateful to Mr Justice Scofield for taking the time to deliver this inspiring lecture and to engage with pupils both before and after the talk.

## Cathedral Calls

### Household Cavalry lay up current Elizabethan Standards in Salisbury Cathedral



**At a special service on Tuesday 16 September, the two Regiments of The Household Cavalry laid up their current Elizabethan Standards in Salisbury Cathedral.**



HRH The Princess Royal, as Colonel Blues and Royals, was in attendance, along with Lt General Sir Edward Smyth-Osbourne, Colonel Life Guards. During the service, the standards – or flags – were handed over to The Dean of Salisbury, The Very Revd Nicholas Papadopoulos, for safe keeping.

The Household Cavalry is a union of the two most senior regiments in the British Army, The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals. It is divided into the Household Cavalry Regiment, based at Bulford, and the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment.

The service included The Household Cavalry Band and Salisbury Cathedral Choir, with the Cathedral's Director of Music, David Halls. The organ was played by the Cathedral's Assistant Director of Music, John Challenger.





Also present were The Rt Revd Stephen Lake, Bishop of Salisbury, Revd Tiann Morgner, Chaplain to the Household Cavalry and Revd Tom Sander, Chaplain to the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment,

Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Ralf Griffin, Regimental Adjutant, HQ Household Cavalry, said:

“The Household Cavalry, comprising The Life Guards and Blues and Royals, are immensely proud to be Laying-Up the final set of Sovereign’s Standards presented by Queen Elizabeth in 2014. The Regiments have driven their vehicles over Salisbury Plain since training for D-Day in 1944 to currently trialling the new AJAX vehicle fleet for the Army. Since 2019 The Household Cavalry Regiment has been stationed at Bulford and there can be no greater



demonstration of our commitment to Salisbury and Wiltshire than asking the Cathedral to safeguard these sacred symbols of our history.”

The Very Revd Nicholas Papadopoulos, Dean of Salisbury, said:

“Salisbury Cathedral receives these standards with pride. Symbols of their Regiments, of those who have served under them, and of those who have given their lives for them, they will have places of honour here. We are proud to support His Majesty’s Armed Forces and assure the servicemen and servicewomen of today – and all veterans – of our continual prayer for their safety and well-being, and for the peace of the whole world.”

## Clergy and ministry

### Interested in Pioneer Ministry in the Church of Ireland?

#### **Then why not join us at the 2025 Annual Pioneer Ministry Gathering?**

We're really looking forward to gathering together again and to hearing from our keynote speaker, Revd Dr. Michael Moynagh.

Michael is an Anglican minister based in Oxford and is known as a leading theologian and practitioner of the Pioneer movement. For over 25 years he has been

researching, advocating, advising, and coaching new forms of ministry and his numerous books include the classic textbook, Church for Every Context and Giving the Church. It's very special to have a leader of this calibre to come and speak, where he will be contextualising what he knows, to our Irish context.

Join us for a day of inspiration, practical application and collaboration with other leaders from across the Church of Ireland, as we learn together on how we can reach those with little or no connection to church in the places where God has called us. At the Bloomfield House Hotel, you will connect with others interested in Pioneer Ministry from across the Church of Ireland during a time of training, sharing ideas, and exploring innovative ways to further develop pioneer ministry in your context. Tea, coffee and lunch provided.

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/pioneer-ministry-gathering-2025-tickets-1473827921989?aff=oddtcreator>

## **Prayer for Deacons**

**We ask all to pray for Gabriel Neal and Jacek Tuszkiewicz who will be ordained Deacons in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh on Saturday 4th October.**

May God bless them and may the Lord continue to guide them, as they prepare for Priesthood.



September 19, 2025

# Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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