

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Portrait of a poet**

## Image of the day

### Portrait of a poet

#### Colin Davidson writing on 29 Aug 2015

I completed the portrait of Seamus Heaney in May 2013. He and his wife Marie had planned to come to an unveiling of sorts at Queen's University Belfast in September of that year. But in June, and on a whim, I put the painting in the back of my car and drove it down to his house in Dublin (where the sittings had taken place) to let him see it. I'm thankful for that whim, from wherever it was prompted, because Seamus passed away that August. His funeral was held the day after the planned date of the unveiling and he would never have seen the finished painting. And this treasured photograph would never have been taken....

## People and places

### 10 years of youth SPARK in Derry parish

**Errigal Parish in Garvagh has successfully held its tenth SPARK youth outreach week, during which young people of secondary school age and from various different backgrounds came together to serve their local community.**

The acronym, SPARK, stands for Servants Pursuing a Radical Kingdom. The five-day programme was coordinated



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by Garvagh parishioner Melissa McGurgan and local volunteer leaders were supported by Diocesan Youth Officer Claire Hinchliff and Diocesan Children's Officer Kirsty McCartney. The Rector, Rev Carmen Hayes, was involved throughout the week



Traditionally, SPARK week combines practical community work in the local community with opportunities for worship and fun.

This year that meant the now traditional tasks of picking up litter, weeding gardens and painting fences. Covid restrictions prevented the young people from visiting the local care home or Garvagh Fold, so instead they wrote letters and made care packages for the residents.

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Prayer stations were set up so young people could connect with God in a more informal setting - especially helpful for those who had never been to church before - and Claire spoke to the group on the theme of 'community', as the young people explored what it meant to be 'salt and light'.

It certainly wasn't a case of 'all work, no play" though: the young people enjoyed activities such as a disco, team games, high ropes, Zorb football, messy games, and various sports and craft activities. There was even a leader hunt around Garvagh forest, where the leaders dressed up and hid in plain sight, inviting strange looks from passers-by. They say an army marches on its stomach, of course, and that is even more true of teenagers so, each day, a kitchen

## The President's Diary

SEPTEMBER 2022



1ST	GOVERNANCE BOARD TRAINING
3RD	75TH ANNIVERSARY OF GURTEEN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
4TH	KENMARE AND KILLARNEY
8TH - 15TH	VISITING ITALIAN METHODIST CHURCH WITH REV. BARRY SLOAN, LAY LEADER; TOM WILSON AND WORLD MISSION PARTNERSHIP COORDINATOR; DAVID NESBITT
17TH	FAITH AND ORDER MEETING
18TH	DUBLIN SOUTH CITY - TALLAGHT AND RATHGAR PM LOCAL PREACHER'S CELEBRATION SERVICE IN DUNLAOGHAIRE.
19TH	STATIONING MEETING
20TH	PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIP - SOUTHERN DISTRICT
22ND	WEDDING - ANNE BAENZIGER AND BERNARD MACKEY
23RD	CHURCH LEADER'S GROUP
24TH	OFFICIAL OPENING OF MOVILLE CHURCH HALL
25TH	LONDONDERRY MISSION CIRCUIT
26TH	CONNEXIONAL TEAM MEETING
28TH	CONFERENCE ON FAITH BASED YOUTH WORK, BELFAST



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They say an army marches on its stomach, of course, and that is even more true of teenagers so, each day, a kitchen team provided breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks for the young people.

Melissa thanked all those who made this year's SPARK a glorious and joyful week, including the "amazing" kitchen staff, the leaders who "came and brought enthusiasm every day, even when they were tired", Rev Carmen "for being there and supporting the team", the helpers who came to do sports, Dougie and Philip for their help with the practical jobs, the parents for their continued support, and the two Presbyterian churches in Garvagh for use of their bus and their hall for games.

"Spark is such a team and community effort," Melissa said, "and it wouldn't be here after 10 years without people putting their heart into making it happen. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support with this project as we look forward to the 11th year of SPARK."

## Praise and Prayer in Stranorlar

**The Stranorlar, Meenglass & Kiltcevogue Parish Grouping is hosting a 'Praise and Prayer Service' in Stranorlar Parish Church, this Sunday evening, the 5th September, beginning at 7.30pm.**



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The Rev Andrew Quill from Holy Trinity Church in Dromore will be preaching and his parish's praise band will provide music for the service.

All are welcome to what promises to be an evening of spiritual enrichment.



## **Monkstown Schoolhouse restoration auction**

A special fundraising Auction in aid of the Monkstown Schoolhouse Restoration Appeal will take place on Friday 16 September at 7:30pm in Monkstown Parish Church. Viewing will take place on Thursday 15 September from

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2pm to 4pm and from 7pm to 9pm and on Friday 16 September from 2pm to 4pm. Lots include antiques, paintings, books, silver, jewelry, collectables and treasures of every description. The organisers appeal -Please do come along and support us as we restore the historic 1791 schoolhouse.



**Karen Underwood**

**COMING HOME**  
**Songs of Inspiration**

**When:** Saturday 10 Sept

**Where:** Christ Church,  
Rushbrooke, Cobh

**Time:** 8pm sharp

Tickets available from Eventbrite  
[www.eventbrite.ie/e/karen-underwood-coming-home-songs-of-inspiration-tickets-381114322197](http://www.eventbrite.ie/e/karen-underwood-coming-home-songs-of-inspiration-tickets-381114322197)  
& GIBBS PHARMACY + SUPER VALU  
CORCORANS + WILSONS at Super Valu **€25**

Fundraising event hosted by  
Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes

With Thanks to our lovely  
Sponsors & Supporters

COBH CREDIT UNION  
GREAT ISLAND MOTORS  
MJ O'Connor LLP Solicitors  
Charles Daly Solicitor  
Johanna Murphy & Son  
Bella Vista Hotel  
Gibbs Pharmacy  
BMC Stores  
Sorensen Engineering  
JANSSEN

## **Karen Underwood – Songs of Inspiration in Christ Church, Rushbrooke**

On Saturday, 10th September 2022 Christ Church, Rushbrooke in Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes will welcome Karen Underwood to sing about the story of her journey in faith from Chicago to Cork with songs of inspiration. The event is hosted by Cobh and Glanmire Union as a parish fundraiser.



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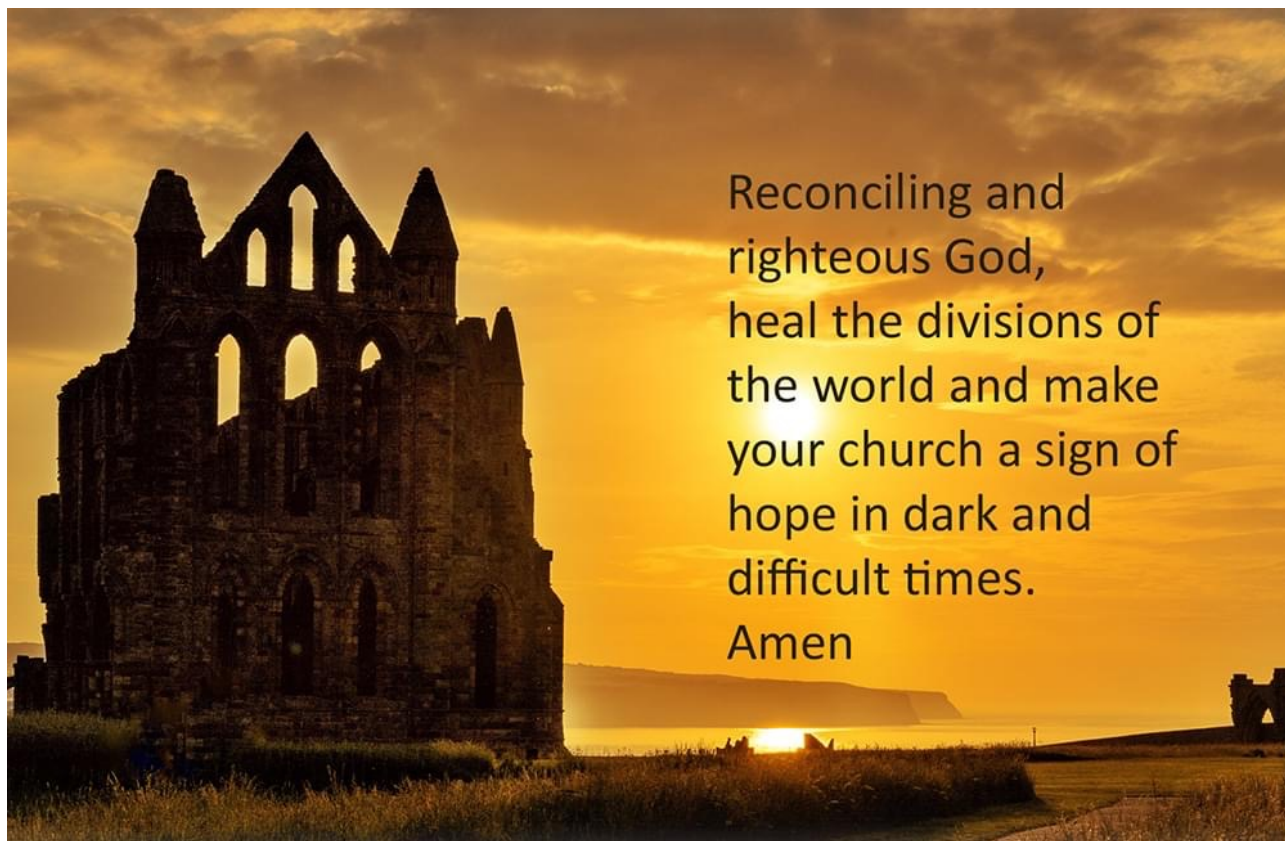
Tickets are on sale locally as stated on the poster above, or they can be purchased online here -

[\[https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/karen-underwood-coming-home-songs-of-inspiration-tickets-381114322197\]](https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/karen-underwood-coming-home-songs-of-inspiration-tickets-381114322197)



## Wealth of Information from a West of Ireland Parish Archive

**The C of I RCB Library's Archive of the Month for September is an exploration of Parish No.1218, a collection of material from the east county Galway parish, Ahascragh.**



Reconciling and  
righteous God,  
heal the divisions of  
the world and make  
your church a sign of  
hope in dark and  
difficult times.  
Amen

Hand-delivered to the RCB Library by the Revd John Godfrey in 2021, the collection of records from Ahascragh parish remains the most recent acquisition of parish material to be received by the RCB Library, bringing the total number of parish collections to an impressive 1,218. The aim of this article is to give an insight into the wealth of information available within parish collections and the potential that they have as a source for local history and human-interest stories. The full piece can be read on Archive of the Month blog at [www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive)

The article focuses on the evolution of St Catherine's Church, Ahascragh, by drawing on vestry minute books, account books, drawings and plans as well as the Church of Ireland Gazette (the archives of which are fully digitised and available from 1856 to 2010 at <https://esearch.informa.ie/rcb>). These records dating from the early 19th century

describe how the parish and the wider locality was run and document the local people who were involved with its administration. The big landowning families of the time were often heavily involved with their nearest Church of Ireland parish, and this was no different for the village of Ahascragh and the families of the Barons Clonbrock (Dillon) and Mahons of Castlegar. These names made frequent appearances in all records relating to Ahascragh from baptismal registers, church ground plans, and the register of vestrymen throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The collection also contains a register with a record of timber given to tenants in the 19th century, which shows how records from estates could double up as parish records.

An unusual document included in the collection is a copy of a typescript account from the late Ethel L. Dillon, daughter of Luke Dillon, the 4th Baron Clonbrock. In this account, she describes the aftermath of the burning of Ahascragh Church on the night of 9th July 1922 by a group of unknown persons suspected to be Anti-Treaty republicans.

The account reveals how this tragedy affected a local Protestant family during the Irish Civil War. The building was subsequently reconstructed and it continues to be open for regular public worship.

Dr Susan Hood, Librarian and Archivist remarks: “The listing and accessioning work on the Library’s most recent parish collection is the first to be carried out by Aisling Irwin in her new role at the Library as Assistant Archivist, and we are grateful for her thorough analysis of the content.”



## First day of nursery

## Note to parents from Portstewart Primary School

## World news

### World Council of Churches Assembly opens with hopes for ‘a new beginning’



Delegates pause for a moment of prayer during the opening plenary of the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Karlsruhe, Germany on Aug. 31, 2022. Photo: Albin Hillert/WCC

**The World Council of Churches’ 11th Assembly, described as “the most diverse Christian gathering of its size in the world,” opened Aug. 31 in Karlsruhe, Germany, with leaders expressing a desire for a new era**

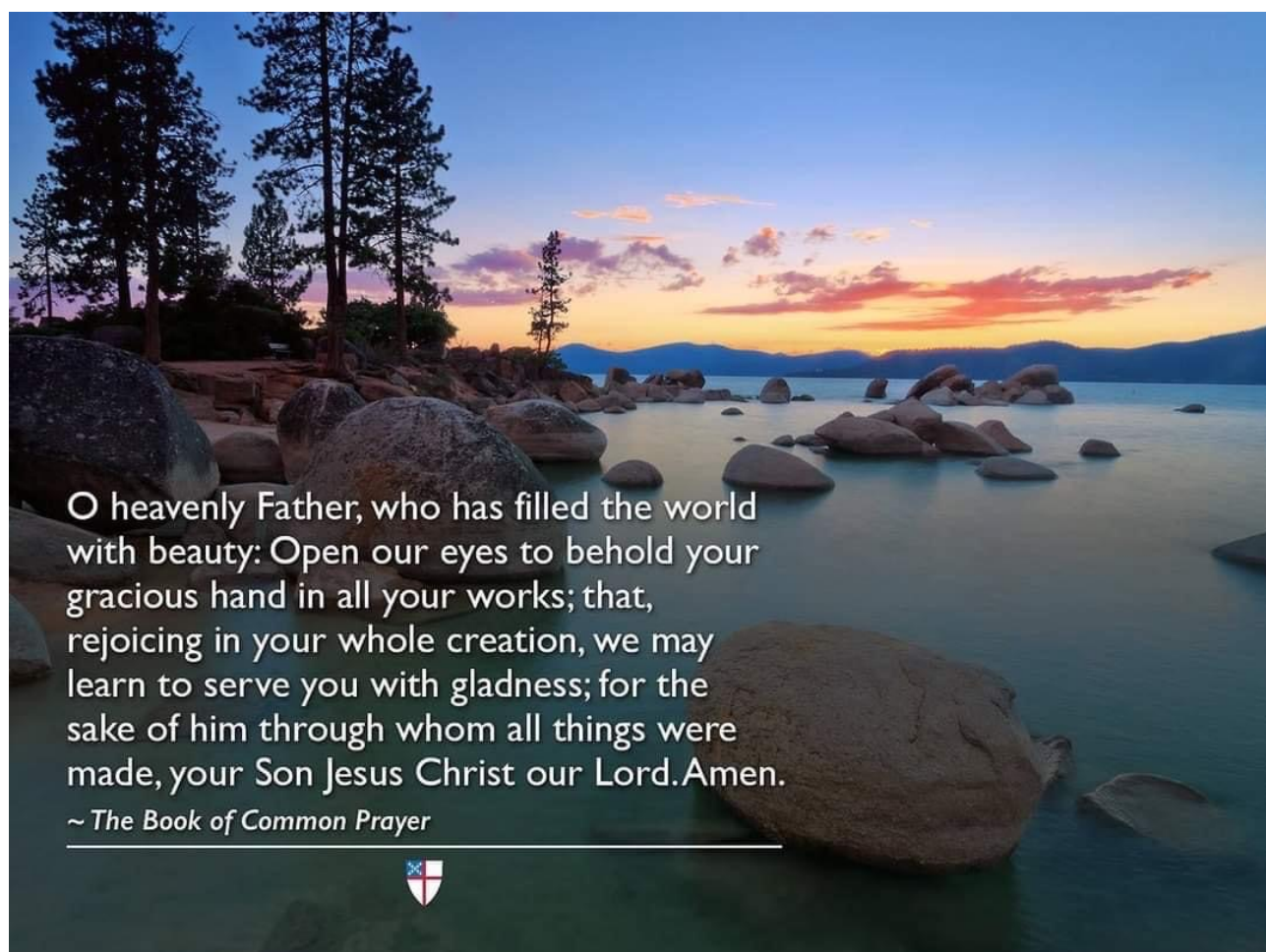
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## of Christian unity to counter the proliferation of global crises in the 21st century.

Delegates from the WCC's 352 Protestant and Orthodox member churches have traveled to Germany for the weeklong conference.

At an opening press conference, Acting General Secretary the Rev. Ioan Sauca noted that since the 2013 Assembly, the world has seen massive changes, many of them arising from political and cultural divisions. The Assembly's theme – "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity" – is more relevant than ever, he said.

"Karlsruhe will be a new beginning," Sauca said. "We have to come together as Christians, more united in addressing



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the challenges of the world. Because Christian unity is linked to the unity of all creation.”

WCC Moderator Agnes Abuom, in her opening address, added a tone of urgency to the Assembly, telling delegates that unity is the only way to address the existential crisis of climate change.

“Listen carefully to youth among us,” Abuom said. “They are the generation that is experiencing the first catastrophes of [the] climate crisis and the last generation that can take any action to stop global warming.”

She also expressed hope that the Assembly would rise to the challenge.

“At its best,” Abuom said, “the Assembly is a spiritual celebration of the power of God’s love to renew our minds and hearts so that we may become a countercultural force driven by solidarity with the most vulnerable people and God’s creation.”

## **Church of England’s Diocese in Europe joins European Climate Pact**

**The Diocese in Europe says it is proud to have become the first faith-based organization in Europe to have a validated Climate Pledge issued by the European Commission for its climate change mitigation efforts.**

“The Climate Pledge is a symbol of the diocese’s commitment to contribute to the EU’s goal of becoming



carbon-neutral by 2050 and move toward a more sustainable world.

“We are also determined to transform our intentions into practical action. This means progressively shrinking the carbon footprints of the buildings we use, the journeys we take and all aspects of our lives as a church community, at diocesan, archdeaconry and chaplaincy level”.

This initiative calls on individuals and organisations to take action, by outlining steps they will take to address the climate crisis. Our pledge stems from the diocese’s commitment to work towards net zero emissions by 2030, as enshrined in the Caring for Creation policy and the programme of activities, adopted by the June 2022 Synod.



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'Our objective for the diocese to become climate neutral in eight years is extremely ambitious – putting it “out there” publicly as a Climate Pledge is definitely an act of faith!,’ said Zélie Peppiette, a member of the Diocesan Caring for Creation Working Group and “Climate Ambassador”, who steered us through the Climate Pledge application process.

‘I liken it to loaves and fishes: knowing that God is with us, that He graciously welcomes all that we offer, and can transform it according to His power and purpose. It’s a collective effort, and I hope every chaplaincy feels encouraged to start on their own journey to net zero, however small that first step may be.’ she continued.

If as a chaplaincy you feel this is all rather remote, and are not sure how it may link to your church activities, and what might be relevant for you, a good starting point is to register for Eco Church [Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project ] and work through the survey questions.

Joining the Eco Church model demonstrates the importance we as Christians give to caring for God’s creation, and to climate justice for all His children.

## Poem for today

### Blackberry-Picking by Seamus Heaney

Late August, given heavy rain and sun  
For a full week, the blackberries would ripen.  
At first, just one, a glossy purple clot

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Among others, red, green, hard as a knot.  
You ate that first one and its flesh was sweet  
Like thickened wine: summer's blood was in it  
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for  
Picking. Then red ones inked up and that hunger  
Sent us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots  
Where briars scratched and wet grass bleached our boots.  
Round hayfields, cornfields and potato-drills  
We trekked and picked until the cans were full,  
Until the tinkling bottom had been covered  
With green ones, and on top big dark blobs burned  
Like a plate of eyes. Our hands were peppered  
With thorn pricks, our palms sticky as Bluebeard's.

We hoarded the fresh berries in the byre.  
But when the bath was filled we found a fur,  
A rat-grey fungus, glutting on our cache.  
The juice was stinking too. Once off the bush  
The fruit fermented, the sweet flesh would turn sour.  
I always felt like crying. It wasn't fair  
That all the lovely canfuls smelt of rot.  
Each year I hoped they'd keep, knew they would not.

Source: Death of a Naturalist (1966)

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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