

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – the NI Youth Assembly is recruiting**

## Image of the day

### The NI Youth Assembly is recruiting

**Imagine standing in the Assembly Chamber in Parliament Buildings, sharing your ideas, and helping shape the future of Northern Ireland...**

Since it was formed in 2021, the Northern Ireland Youth Assembly has given young people from all across Northern Ireland the chance to have their voices heard.

Every two years, a new cohort of 90 young people in school years 9-12 are chosen to represent their peers, debate important issues, and put forward ideas that can really influence change.

Applications are now open for the third mandate – and it could be your turn to get involved.

No matter who you are or where you're from, your voice matters.

You'll get training, make new friends, and have the chance to speak directly with decision-makers. It's fun, challenging, and an amazing opportunity to be heard.

This is your chance to step forward and help lead the way.

See more at -

[\[https://niyouthassembly.org/\]](https://niyouthassembly.org/)



# News



## Armagh MU Trustee in diocesan missionary trip to Burundi

A very  
uplifting  
service was  
held on

**Monday night to Commission one of the Trustees, Davina McAllister, together Rev Elizabeth Cairns, Rev Derek Kerr and Rev Keith Scott (CMSI) in Mullavilly Parish Church in preparation for their missionary trip to Burundi at the end of the week.**

Gillian Maganda from CMSI gave the address and carried out the act of commissioning. Please pray for the team as they prepare to travel to Burundi at the end of this week.





## MU Changing & Feeding Facilities at Ploughing Championships in Tullamore

**Just over a week to go until the Ploughing Championships in Tullamore.**

The Mothers' Union Baby Changing & Feeding Facilities can be found at Block 3. Row, Stand No. 201.

Do drop in and say hello. The MU is situated next door to the Church of Ireland stand.

Many thanks to **Pettitt's SuperValu in Enniscorthy** who have sponsored everything the MU required for this facility. The MU is very grateful for their support and generosity.

**So - Fancy a cuppa at the National Ploughing Championships on 16th, 17th, 18th September?**

Then the Church of Ireland stand is the place to be...

## **The King will attend Duchess of Kent's Catholic funeral**

**THE Duchess of Kent will be laid to rest in Windsor after a Catholic funeral service at Westminster Cathedral, Buckingham Palace has announced.**

The funeral will take place on Tuesday, Sept 16 at 2pm.

It will be the first Catholic funeral service held for a member of the Royal family in modern British history, and the first at Westminster Cathedral since its construction in 1903.

The King, who is head of the Church of England, will join the Duke of Kent at the Requiem Mass alongside the Queen and other members of the Royal family.

The Duchess, who at 92 was the oldest member of the Royal family, died peacefully on Thursday night at her Kensington Palace home with her close family by her side.

In 1994, she became the first member of the Royal family to publicly convert to Catholicism in more than 300 years. She described it at the time as “a long-pondered personal decision”. She went on to volunteer for the Passage homelessness charity, which Cardinal Hume had helped set up, and of which the Prince of Wales is now patron.

Buckingham Palace announced the Duchess's death on Friday as the Royal family joined the Duke of Kent, his

children and grandchildren in mourning. Union flags were lowered to half-mast at royal residences.

The Duchess's coffin is now resting in the private chapel at Kensington Palace.

It will be taken by hearse to Westminster Cathedral on the eve of the funeral for the Rite of Reception and Vespers, to be attended by the Duchess's immediate family. It will then rest overnight in the Lady Chapel.

After the Requiem Mass, led by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the coffin will be taken by hearse to the Royal Burial Ground at Frogmore, Windsor, accompanied by the Dean of Windsor.

Among the funeral guests will be representatives from the Duchess's charities and regimental affiliations. Her special military relationships will be reflected in the ceremony.

## Education

### Odes poetic at Wallace High

**Congratulations to WHS Year 9 pupils Lucas and Tania, who were highly commended in the prestigious Ulster University 2025 Poetry Competition, Special Moments, held in partnership with the Seamus Heaney HomePlace and the John Hewitt Society.**



They each received a goody bag from Ulster University in recognition of their work.

Head of English, Mrs Gillian Weir, commented:

"We are thrilled by the creativity demonstrated by our students and thoroughly enjoyed taking part in a competition that showcased local talent and celebrated Northern Irish literature."

## **Titanic Belfast pushes boat out for deprived children with return of school transport scheme**



**More than 1,300 children have benefited from Titanic Belfast's School Transport Bursary, the world-leading attraction has announced.**

The scheme, which has opened again for the new academic year, is funded through Titanic Belfast's Community Impact Fund.

It removes one of the biggest barriers schools face when organising trips: the cost.

Since its launch in 2023, in partnership with McComb's Coach Travel, the bursary has been widened to include schools within a 30-mile radius of Belfast.

September 9, 2025

Participating schools have travelled a combined 237.4 miles to Titanic Belfast, with McComb's covering almost 500 miles to make the visits possible. To qualify, schools must have



more than half of pupils in receipt of free school meals and must be located in Northern Ireland's most deprived areas. Applications close on Monday, September 22, with taking place between next month and March 2026.

Titanic Belfast chief executive Judith Owens MBE said: “We know how important it is to ensure opportunities like this are as accessible as possible, especially at a time when financial pressures are placing such constraints on school budgets.

“We are delighted to open it up for the new academic year to give more schools and their pupils the chance to enjoy an educational visit to Titanic Belfast.”

September 9, 2025

McComb's Coach Travel director Caroline McComb added: "It's fantastic to see so many children getting the chance to take part in such a unique educational experience."

To view the full entry criteria or to apply for the School Transport Bursary, visit [www.titanicbelfast.com/schooltransport](http://www.titanicbelfast.com/schooltransport)

## Clergy and ministry

### Four C's at Tyrrellspass

**Congratulations to Mieke Scholte, William Edgill and Sandra O'Brien who were commissioned as parish pastoral visitors by Bishop Pat Storey at a very special service on Sunday morning at St Sinian's Church Tyrrellspass.**

Congratulations to Susan Carey and Robin Tottenham who were confirmed by Bishop Pat Storey at a beautiful ceremony in St Sinian's Church, Tyrrellspass.





**CHURCH OF IRELAND DIOCESES OF  
DOWN & DROMORE AND CONNOR**

## **Organ Scholarship Scheme**

### **Annual Awards Service of Choral Evensong**

**You are invited to a service of Choral Evensong**  
**St. John's, Malone**  
**Sunday 28th September 2025, 6.30 pm**



**This service is an opportunity to recognise  
the achievements of those leaving the scheme after  
3 years of study and to welcome new scholars to the scheme.**

**The guest preacher will be Canon Ronnie Nesbitt, Rector of  
Bangor Abbey. The choir of St John's will sing the service  
directed by Richard Campbell.**

**4C's - Commissioning, Confirmation and 2 Congrats**



## New minister formally introduced to Parish of Magheraculmoney, Ardess

**Revd Mark Loney was formally welcomed as the new minister of Magheraculmoney Parish, Ardess, near Kesh on Thursday night.**

A Service of Introduction was held for Revd Loney as the Diocesan Curate serving in the Parish of Magheraculmoney.

The Service of Introduction was led by the Bishop of Clogher, the Right Revd Dr. Ian Ellis, assisted by the Archdeacon of Clogher, the Venerable Paul Thompson. Other clergy taking part included Canon John

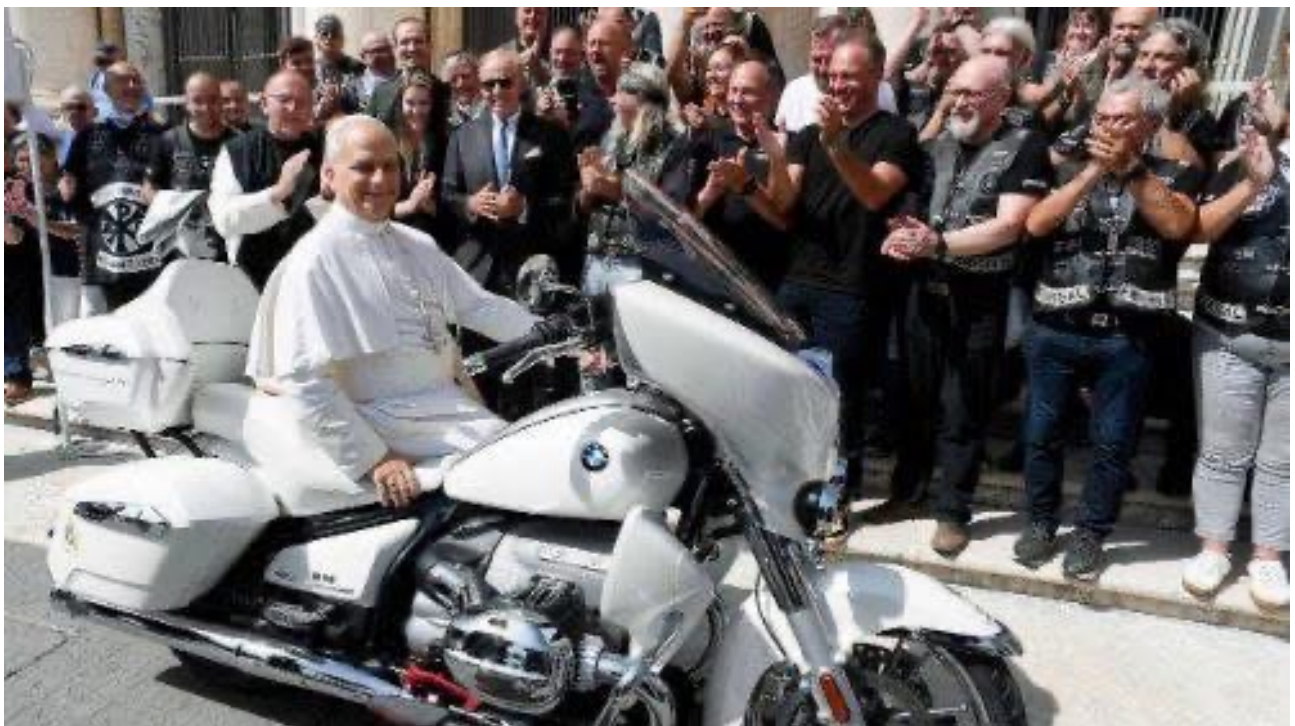
September 9, 2025

McClenaghan, Diocesan Registrar and Bishop's Chaplain, Revd Sampson Ajuka.

Hymns during the service included; "Praise to the Lord," "King of Kings, majesty," "Be still for the presence of the Lord", "What gift of grace is Jesus, my redeemer," and "To God be the glory." The organist was Mr. Glenn Moore.

Revd Loney was appointed to the Parish of Magheraculmoney after serving as Rector of Dungiven and Bovevagh parishes in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. He is married to Jo and they have two children.

## **"Jesus bikers" in the audience of Pope Leo XIV**



**They brought a motorcycle with Christian symbols, which the Holy Father consecrated and signed. To be auctioned to support a school in Madagascar.**



## Services and Events

### Memorial Service for trailblazer for women's sport

A memorial service to celebrate the life of **Dr. Maeve Kyle OBE OLY**, Ireland's first female Olympian, international hockey player and trailblazer for women's sport will be held on Saturday 25th October at 2pm in St Patrick's Parish Church Castle Street, Ballymena.

## In the media

### Presbyterian minister maintains his claim he was spied on by church

## **Retired Presbyterian minister spied on by his congregation denies church claims it would “welcome debate in the General Assembly” - Sunday Life reports.**

The former minister said that when he tried to bring evidence of the spying before the General Assembly, he was gagged.

He claimed the then General Assembly clerk and current moderator Dr Rev Trevor Gribben told him he was not allowed to speak.

Mr Gribben is alleged to have said that if he raised the matter, he would be “in contumacy” (wilful disobedience).

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) said it didn't comment on the church's “internal affairs”.

records

Responding to an email from a group of rebels, Presbyterian leaders said last week they would welcome debate on matters regarding church law and policy in the General Assembly.

The statement did not say how someone who feels they have been wronged by the church can seek redress.

The retired minister, who is now in his 60s and who disclosed his story to Sunday Life in July, was watched over three months between October 2012 and January 2013.

He only made the shocking discovery after a Subject Access Request brought to light seven A4 pages of charts, showing detailed records of his movements.

He believes the church kept these from him.

A surveillance rota was drawn up due to a belief he was not staying in a manse after the church refused his request to live at home.

The former South Belfast minister, who doesn't want to be named, was retired by the General Assembly in 2014. Feeling he had been treated unfairly, he complained to the church's Judicial Commission, but it stood by the South Belfast Presbytery's decisions.

It was only after the complaint was dismissed that the presbytery passed on the charts to him.

Police said they couldn't launch a criminal inquiry because the alleged offences had taken place more than six months beforehand so were statute barred.

The former clergyman told Sunday Life: "When the compelling evidence of the spying against me came to light, I wanted the matter reopened again before the commission as new evidence (had emerged)

"I met with Rev Gribben to explain the breaches, but Mr Gribben informed me that the new evidence was unsubstantial and I wasn't allowed to appeal the decision of the Judicial Commission as their decision was final.

## **Presbyterian leaders get second mystery email criticising governance of church**

**Ministers said to be stunned by correspondence lamenting adverse media coverage and ‘bullying’ at troubled PCI**

**A group of rebels calling themselves Troubled Presbyterians have sent a new email to all Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) ministers, warning of a financial catastrophe. Angela Davison writes in The Belfast Telegraph**

The message, the third in as many months, asks if the PCI is about to lose its charitable status.

The concerns surround a dossier of complaints compiled by Lord Alderdice which has been with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and its southern counterpart for more than three years.

The latest email warns that losing charitable status would be “catastrophic” and blames church leaders for “this potentially disastrous situation”.

The message appears to call ministers to action, reading: “It falls to our church's teaching and ruling elders to collectively overrule the leadership and decide what measures are required to resolve matters.”

In response to the email, PCI General Council convener Rev Dr David Bruce and acting clerk of the General

September 9, 2025

Assembly Rev Dr David Allen sent a “pastoral letter” inviting ministers to pray for unity and harmony.

The statement also defended the clerk and current moderator Dr Trevor Gribben.

It said the “targeting of an individual for special criticism is grossly irresponsible, unreasonable and deeply hurtful”, and added that Mr Gribben *is* accountable through the General Council.

The email also attempted to explain the church's much-publicised use of non-disclosure agreements.

It said: “The PCI has implemented such agreements on occasion in the past, but only on (human resources) and legal advice, and with the agreement of all parties, including our insurers.”

## Poem for today

### To Autumn

By William Blake

O Autumn, laden with  
fruit, and stained  
With the blood of the  
grape, pass not, but sit  
Beneath my shady roof;



there thou may'st rest,  
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,  
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!  
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.  
`The narrow bud opens her beauties to  
`The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and  
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,  
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,  
And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.

`The spirits of the air live on the smells  
`Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round  
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.'  
Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;  
Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak  
Hills fled from our sight; but left his golden load.

## 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

[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)

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

**Please recommend to your friends**