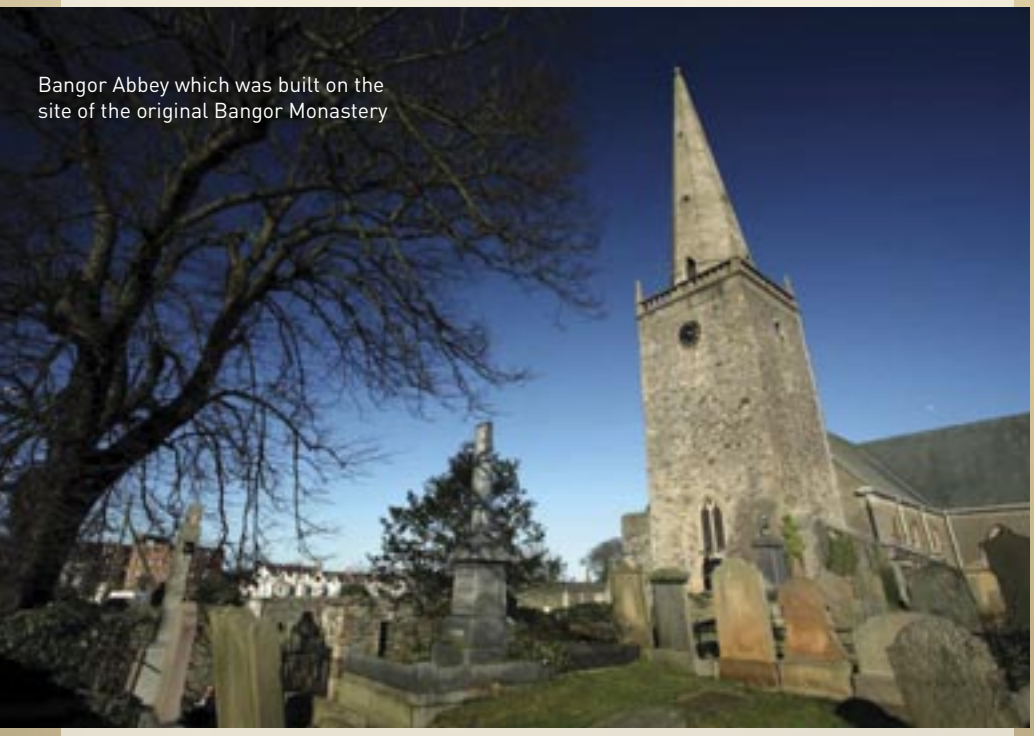
COLUMBANUS FESTIVAL

Commemorating the life and legacy of Columbanus and Gall

21st - 22nd November 2026
Bangor

THIS PLACE, OUR PLACE

The influence of the monastic heritage in Bangor and on the island of Ireland still pertains today in the Irish place names that are embedded in our local maps, songs, history, art, streets, roads, townlands, mountains, rivers and lakes. This sense of place was carried by Columbanus and his followers in the 6th and 7th centuries to continental Europe where his name and legacy lives on in cities, towns and villages not only in Ireland but also in France, Germany, Switzerland, Lichenstein, Luxembourg, Austria, and Italy.



Bangor Abbey which was built on the site of the original Bangor Monastery

Place of Learning

21 November/Columbanus Lecture: A Sense of Place

SPACE Theatre, Castle Park Road, Bangor/11.00am – 1.00pm/£10

This talk deals with places connected with St Columbanus and early Christianity in Ireland. The origin of these place names gives us insights into the transition from paganism to Christianity and life in early medieval Ireland. It will also discuss some of the places in continental Europe where Columbanus and his disciples founded churches and monasteries. The lecture will be delivered by Dr Paul Tempan, a linguist and expert on place-names who was a researcher on the Northern Ireland Place-Name Project (2006 – 2013). Ticket includes a light lunch.

Place of Saints

21 November/ Stained-Glass Window Tour

St Columbanus Church of Ireland, Ballyholme, Bangor/2.00pm – 3.30pm/£6

Adeline Cully, a qualified tour guide and Jonny Watson, Curate at St Columbanus Church of Ireland, will give an explanation of the beautiful stained-glass windows of Irish Saints including the Bangor Saints – Comgall, Columbanus, Gall, and Malachy. Ticket includes a booklet of the windows.

Place of Pilgrimage

22 November/Columban Way Walk

Meet at the Bangor Bell beside Bangor Abbey/1.30pm – 3.00pm/£6

This popular half mile walk follows the Bangor Bell Walk to North Down Museum. Local guides Brigid Watson and Barbara Boyle will tell the story of Columbanus' journey from Bangor to Bobbio. After the walk, participants will have an opportunity to view the Columbanus Exhibition in the North Down Museum.

Place of Worship

22 November/Columbanus Ecumenical Church Service

St Comgall's Church, Brunswick Road, Bangor/7.00pm – 8.00pm/All welcome

A cross-community church service to commemorate the life of Columbanus with guest speaker Sister Ann Gray, Columbanus Missionaries. To support those in need, please bring a Christmas food gift or grocery item which will be distributed by a local food bank.

For further information on the programme please visit
www.friendsofcolumbanusbangor.co.uk

With the exception of the Ecumenical Church Service, all events must be booked online at www.visitardsandnorthdown.com or in person at Bangor or Ards Visitor Information Centres or call the Visitor Information Centre on 028 9127 0069

FRIENDS OF COLUMBANUS BANGOR