

ST Finnian's

MAY 2019

The Importance of Sharing Good News



Dear Friends

I wonder if you have ever had a really excellent customer experience when you have visited somewhere or attended an event.

We recently had a couple of such experiences when we spent some days at half term with my brother-in-law near Dungannon. Our visit coincided with Lucy's birthday and as I walked past a café one day, I saw a shop called Bumble and Blue that advertised slime making workshops.

It was a lovely shop stocking candles and soaps that were all made on site from natural products and when I explained Lucy's situation, they were very happy to give us a little family workshop on her birthday. When we arrived, we discovered scones and coffee set up for the parents and the staff took away the children to get busy and get messy. All we could hear were giggles and laughter and a wonderful time was had by all. Not only were the staff compassionate and helpful to our children but they really looked after us all and hearing it was Lucy's birthday, they gave her a

candle and soap which was so thoughtful and kind.

I also think of the staff at Boulderworld where Conor has been climbing for a couple of years now. We really appreciate all the effort they put into coaching and encouraging the children. They instil really good values in terms of watching and supporting others and organise competitions and travel all around the country to help the participants in these competitions. We could say the same for the wonderful coaches at Malone mini rugby or Special Olympics gymnastics or our Anchor Boys leaders or Sunday School teachers.

Word of mouth is a powerful thing. If you have had a great experience it can go even further these days through the power of social media. People post up their experiences on the different platforms and people are inclined to try them for themselves.

The flip side of this is when we have had a bad or negative experience. If you have had disappointing service and you post a negative review people will often stay away particularly if that has been the experience of others as well as yourself.

How does all of this relate to church you might ask? Well I think if Church is an important part of our lives, we find ourselves in a rather unique position. Church going is no longer the normal practice for those who live in Northern Ireland. Though historically it has been a big part of our culture its not such a big draw anymore in a more secular society.

When people do cross the threshold for whatever reason- if you are a regular attender, if you're attending an event or a concert, if you are popping in for one of the major festivals like Easter or Christmas or maybe coming to a baptism, a wedding or a funeral, your experience counts.

How did you find the last service you attended? Were you made to feel welcome? Did you find the experience drew you near to God and prompted you to think or was it hard to follow or understand? Was it the kind of thing you would invite others to experience or would you feel a bit embarrassed if someone you

knew showed up and saw you there?

I've been deeply moved by a campaign on social media throughout the Season of Lent by our neighbouring parish of Willowfield. They called it 40 days of grace and they invited 40 people from their congregation to share their story of faith, of how God is at work in their lives. Some did so on video, others wrote down their experience, there were people of all ages and backgrounds. There were children and people with learning disabilities and what I loved was how simple the stories were. They all pointed to the truth that God is here among us in Belfast, working in people's lives, touching them at their point of need and like those good customer experiences these are stories to celebrate and share.

After Jesus's resurrection the disciples were ignited by the realisation that he had defeated death and would be with them always. Later, on the day of Pentecost, they received that gift made available to all of us since, of God's Holy Spirit.

They realised God's love in a very personal way impacted

them and they wanted, above all things, for others to experience His forgiveness and His love.

It's a beautiful thing to hear people share these good news stories of How Jesus has become a part of their lives and transformed situations for the better.

Can we share those times when God has been especially close and real to us – Maybe in a time of illness or disappointment or loss? Can we remember times when circumstances were so difficult we had no idea how we would manage and somehow He came alongside us through different people and saw us through?

The days we are living in continue to be uncertain and the political landscape is very fragile as divisions are heightened over Brexit. In the midst of these challenges Christians have a really important and strategic role in being bearers of Good News of hope and life to those around us as we trust in a God who loves us and rescues and

delivers us in our times of trouble.

May we be unashamed to make Him known to those around us.

With very best wishes

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Pierce (Rector)

Telephone 02890 793822

Root Soup

This month Root Soup lunches will take place on Thursday 9th and Thursday 23rd May. If you are free at any point from 12-1.30pm and would like to enjoy a delicious home made lunch please do feel most



welcome to come along. The company is always good and suggested donation is £4. Please feel free to invite a friend or neighbour.

List of new Select Vestry members

Rector

Curate

Michael Allen

Neil Donaldson

Albert Gately - Rector's Glebewarden

Mrs Karen Gately - Peoples' Glebewarden

Stephen Geoghegan

Norman Halliday - Secretary

Geoff Harman

Mrs Ingrid Johnston

Jonathan Johnston - Peoples' Churchwarden

Michael Johnston - Treasurer

Brian Lavery

Stephen Leckey

Ryan Moore

Norman Sleator

Trevor Smyth

Miss Amy Wall - Rector's Churchwarden



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2019



Christian Aid Week this year will be from 12-18 May.

As usual St. Finnian's will be taking part in the door to door collection in the Cregagh area.

After last year's successful collection, we would like to invite those who took part then to collect again this year, any new volunteers would be very welcome. Please call David Gowen on 07899791983 or Fay Gowen on 90701640 as soon as possible if you are available.

Thanks.

David Gowen

2018 Accounts



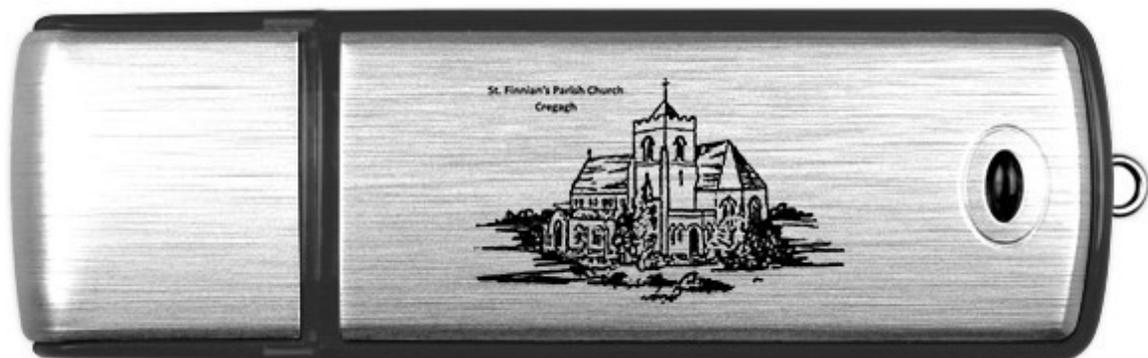
With this magazine you will have received a copy of the FWO giving for 2018.

If you would to see the full 2018 parish accounts which were adopted at the Easter General Vestry copies are available at the back of the church or alternatively contact the office where we can a arrange for a copy to be sent to you.

Recordings of Services

The installation of the new sound system in the church has given us the ability to more easily record our services. Recordings can now be distributed on CD or on a USB Memory Stick. Some parishioners are already receiving recordings of services and feel that it lets them feel part of our worshipping community again. If you, or someone you know, would like to receive a copy of the services please let me know and I'll make arrangements for a copy to be delivered. I can be contacted on 028 90402769 or at m.h.johnston@btinternet.com . Alternatively speak to the Rector or Curate and they'll let me know that you would like to receive a copy.

Mike Johnston



Thank You and Welcome

On behalf of the Clergy, the Select Vestry and the Parish I want to say a heartfelt thank-you to our amazing Parish Secretary Mrs Janet Johnston who will be retiring at the end of April after 9 years in post. During those years Janet has overseen the digitisation of our parish records, she has implemented the changes associated with GDPR, produced over a hundred parish magazines, thousands of service sheets and been the recorder of free will offerings. Janet has been the voice that answers the phone often in situations of crisis and difficulty and responded with courtesy and compassion to all who contact the office. She has supported and helped the ministry of the parish in countless ways and often arranged her own personal holidays around the various deadlines to do with the production of magazines, Christmas cards and correspondence that the parish is engaged in. She has been a great source of steadiness, diligent organisation and at all times her deep faith has undergirded her approach to all she does. We want to wish her every happiness, blessing and good health in her retirement as we say thankyou for her very significant contribution over these past 9 years.

As we say farewell to Janet from the office we are delighted to welcome Mrs Linda Campbell as her successor. Linda's family have a lifetime of involvement and service to the church and we know everyone will be very supportive in this time of transition. Linda brings a great wealth of experience to this role from her previous roles in administration and a deep love for the church and we want to reassure her of our prayers as she begins this new position. The parish office is open from 9.00am to 2.00pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Telephone 02890 792793.

Email office.cregagh@down.anglican.org

Devoted Bible Study



We're continuing our monthly series of looking through Genesis 1-4. On Thursday, May 30th at 7pm in the Huston Hall we'll be looking at God's Beautiful Design for Family in Genesis 4. All welcome.

From the Registers

Confirmation: 21st April in Knockbreda Parish Church

John Blythe

Ethan Ritchie

Theo Hayward

We pray for our candidates and their families as they make this significant step on their faith journey.

FLOWER DONATION ROTA

MAY

5th Mrs E Kells

12th Mrs P Kennedy/Mrs J Cunningham

19th Mothers' Union

26th



Services for May



Sunday 5th May (The Third Sunday of Easter)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00am – Connect Service
- 11.30am – Holy Communion
- 7.00pm – Evening Prayer

Sunday 12th May (The Fourth Sunday of Easter)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00am – Holy Communion
- 11.30am – Morning Prayer
- 7.00pm – Evening Prayer

Sunday 19th May (The Fifth Sunday of Easter)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00am – Connect Service
- 11.30am – Morning Prayer
- 7.00pm – Evening Prayer

Sunday 26th May (The Sixth Sunday of Easter)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00am – Morning Worship
- 11.30am – Morning Prayer
- 7.00pm – Evening Prayer

At our meeting on 4th April Lianne Mulholland, East Belfast Mission spoke on how the EBM is changing lives in East Belfast particularly the Ballymacarret area, a particularly socially deprived area of East Belfast. Lianne shared residents stories with us and outlined the work that EBM are involved in . EBM -works across all communities offering a range of services to meet the needs of everyone. With over 100 staff currently employed and approx. 200 volunteers , there are a wide range of social projects offered – Church and community, Hosford Homeless Support Service , Stepping Stone employability, New Life counselling service to name a few . The social economy projects are the business arm of EBM and the income helps sustain the social projects – Restore retail shops including a bridal vintage shop, Refresh Cafe , Refurb work-shops , Recycle bicycle repair shop and Bright Sparks day care nursery. It proved to be a very interesting evening and we were delighted that our guests also enjoyed the evening.

Our next meeting is on **Thursday 2nd May at 8pm.** Our speaker will be Mrs Mae Burke who will be speaking on Dementia Awareness. She will be focusing about raising awareness amongst the general public about dementia and how to best to relate to someone with dementia. Anyone who would be interested in this talk is very welcome to attend our meeting.

The annual **MU Indoor Members Holy Communion Service and Tea Party** will take place this year on **Thursday 23rd May at 2pm in St Gall's Parish, Carnalea, Bangor** . An invitation is extended to all Indoor Members , letter writers and senior members and transport will be organised. If you would like to come please give your name to **Hilda Arnold Tel : 028 90790924**

Our annual outing in on Saturday 8th June. We will be going to Glaslough Village, Co Monaghan leaving from Cregagh Road bus terminus at 11am. Anyone interested in going should contact me or any of the Committee Members. The cost is £30 and the monies will be collected at the May meeting.

Carol Bell



CHURCH OF IRELAND MEN'S SOCIETY

Annual Outing and AGM - Rockmount Golf Club

This year our Annual Outing and AGM will be held on Thursday 16 May at Rockmount Golf Club, the venue of one of Ireland's finest parkland courses. Rockmount is situated within easy reach of Belfast, on the other side of Carryduff. To enable us to arrive at the venue at the appointed time, we will be meeting in St Finnian's car park at 6.20 pm on Thursday 16 May, to depart promptly at 6.30. We will share transport to and from the club.

We will have a private room in the clubhouse, where our brief AGM will be followed by a meal consisting of a main course and dessert from the menu, followed by tea or coffee. The cost for the evening will be £15.

Members should by now have had the opportunity to complete a reservation form. Any members who wish to attend and have not seen a form should contact Ralph McMurray, as soon as possible, on 0781 3030429.

LADIES OPEN DOOR FRIENDSHIP GROUP



We finish the 2018/19 season on the 1 May with a visit to Stormont for a guided tour of Parliament Buildings followed by afternoon tea in the Member's Dining Room. We will sort out transport arrangements at our Daffodil Tea when have final numbers of drivers etc.

As ever, our meetings are open to anyone who would like to come along.

Joan



Update April/May 2019

Plans for Messy Church are moving along with the support of everyone who has got involved so far. It's not too late to get involved so please speak to Raymond or myself if you are interested. So far we have 12 volunteers, which is fantastic and means we can run the first event on Friday 31st May in the church hall.

As you know by now, Messy Church is aimed at all ages and will involve:-

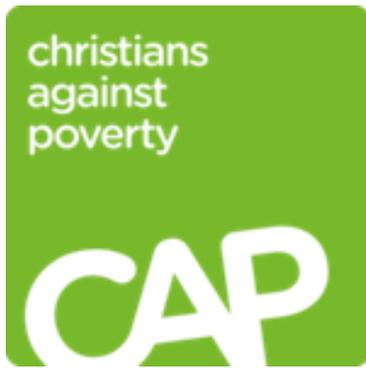
- crafts
- food
- worship
- set up / tidy up

The plan is to run the first Messy Church in May and then re-group in September to look at holding more events from October-time. In order to run the events, we will need a pool of volunteers. This is because the more we have the less often people will need to commit. I know committing to something on a regular basis can be difficult.

So as the old saying goes 'many hands make light work.' If you would like to get involved please let us know.

Thank you

Jill and Raymond



CAP FUNDRAISING CONCERT

- **Saturday 11 May at 7.30pm at Willowfield Church**
- Tickets £14
- Available on-line <https://cfc.churchsuite.co.uk/events/3bjknsn6>
- Or ring 9045 3041



PRAYER WARRIOR

Do you have a concern or problem and would like someone to pray for you?

If so, text Robin who will be willing to help

This is completely confidential and no details will be passed onto anyone else unless you want them to.

Mobile: 07513947504

Holocaust Survivors' Coffee Morning – 18th May

You are warmly invited to a coffee morning on Saturday 18th May from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm in support of the Holocaust Survivors. There will be a short talk at 11 am.

Following a visit to us last year in November from Judith (a survivor), a message came through expressing Judith's gratitude and thankfulness for the many kindnesses shown to her. She said it was heart-warming to be acknowledged and remembered in this way. This came from a lady who had lost her family at Auschwitz and afterwards suffered rejection and hardship over many years before eventually reaching the survivors home in Haifa. She has now been given back her dignity and the ability to end her days in safety and contentment. It is a privilege to be a small part of helping these deserving people. The numbers at the Home are diminishing yearly and there are currently 2000 survivors waiting for a place. There will be a list at the back of the church for any who may wish to supply traybakes or help serve tea and coffee.

Thank you.

Jean Johnston



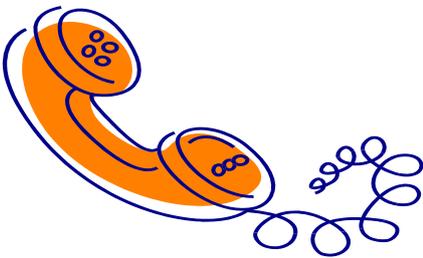
CONTACT DETAILS

Rector:

Telephone 028 90793822

Curate:

Telephone 028 90796193



Church Office Hours

Wednesday 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

Thursday 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

TELEPHONE 028 90792793
office.cregagh@down.anglican.org

Magazine

Please send articles for inclusion in the **June** Magazine to office.cregagh@down.anglican.org or telephone Parish Office 90792793 by NOON on **Wednesday 15th May**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



Find us on Facebook!
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Registered with
The Charity Commission for
Northern Ireland NIC101977