

ST Finnian's

DECEMBER 2019



WAKE UP TO ADVENT

3 THURSDAYS IN DECEMBER AT 7.30 PM

5th December—Mrs Elizabeth Walker—

Wake up to Mission

12th December—Mr Michael Bailey—

Wake up to Mental Health

19th December—Miss Patricia Stewart—

Wake up to Physical Health

Dear Friends

It has been a habit of mine every couple of years to buy an Advent book to reflect on some of the key themes of this Holy Season through Bible readings and reflections. Just as I will endeavour to be as prepared as I can for the season of Christmas by buying gifts and exchanging cards and all those other traditions that are so important to us, it is important to prepare ourselves spiritually for the season also.

This year I bought the Archbishop of York's Book on Advent which will follow through the theme of waking up. Advent is a season that calls us to be alert and awake to Christ's coming and I thought we might borrow from this idea in our own Advent services.

These are short thirty minute services on Thursday evenings and they call us aside from all the busyness of our preparations to a more reflective place.

I'm delighted that 3 parishioners will be sharing a little with us about different ways in which we might be encouraged to wake up to different dimensions of life.

In our first service on Thursday 5th December, Mrs Elizabeth Walker will be sharing on the theme of Wake up to Mission. Last Summer Liz embarked on an exciting mission trip to Peru to assist at an orphanage run by a friend of hers from St. Andrew's Presbyterian church. It was a life-changing experience and so it will be good to hear her reflection upon it.

On Thursday 12th December, Mr Michael Bailey will be sharing on the theme Wake up to Mental Health. Michael is an addiction counsellor and has a passion to communicate how very important this subject is as daily life is increasingly complex and demanding and places us under considerable pressure at times.

On Thursday 19th December, Miss Patricia Stewart will share on the theme Wake up to Physical Health. With her background in physical education and zest and enthusiasm for life, Patricia will be very well equipped to encourage us in practical ways to look after our physical health.

We hope that you will be able to come along and enjoy some or all of these Thursday evenings as well as the many special services of the Christmas season from Advent carol services to the Festival of 9 Lessons and Carols, from the first Communion of Christmas on Christmas Eve to a Christmas Carols Songs of Praise on the Sunday after Christmas and our special services on Christmas Day.

We hope that all of these special services will indeed wake us up afresh to the wonder of the birth of the Son of God, that we will indeed see afresh the reason for the Season.

It would be lovely to see you as we share in these special celebrations together.

We hope too as many as possible will be able to come along and support Raymond as he begins his ministry in St. John's, Lurgan on 10th December at 8pm. Please keep him in your prayers as he begins this next stage of his ministry and adjusts to new surroundings.

We are very grateful to Raymond for all he has done in the parish over these past 3 years and wish him every blessing for the future.

We are always conscious at this time of year that this season can be particularly difficult and painful for those going through difficult times or who have recently lost loved ones. Please be mindful of all you know who are going through hard days and pray for them and call in. Remember as you do so you bring the presence of Jesus with you as he dwells within you through His Spirit generously bestowed upon us at our baptism and the way God equips us to serve Him and share His love.

Vicky, Lucy and Conor join me in wishing everyone a Happy and Blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Pierce (Rector)

Telephone 02890 793822

HOLY COMMUNION

If you are unwell or unable to attend any of our church services for health reasons and would like to receive Holy Communion at Christmas, please contact the Rector in early December and he would be glad to come to your home.



FLOWER DONATION ROTA



DECEMBER

1st Mrs M Gallagher/
Mrs J Buchanan
8th Mrs P Moore
15th Mrs C Bell
22nd Christmas
29th Christmas flowers stay

ROOT SOUP

There will be just one gathering for Root Soup on **Thursday 12th December.** If you are free at any point from 12 - 1.30pm and would enjoy a nice home cooked lunch with some lovely company, please do feel most welcome to join us. Feel free to invite a friend or neighbour. **The suggested donation is £4.**



ST. FINNIAN'S MIXED INDOOR BOWLING CLUB

Meets on Wednesdays at 7pm
Enjoy an evening of bowls, fun, fellowship, chat and tea & biscuits

Bowls provided -

WE BOWL FOR FUN





It was the Beatles who sang, 'hello is the beginning of goodbye' in their song *Hello, Goodbye* and yet, I can scarce believe that having said hello to the church community of St. Finnian's just over 3 years ago, the time has now come to say goodbye. Those that know me will know that I am seldom one for emotion, but writing this, I can empathise with Paul's farewell to the Ephesian church: "When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. They all wept as they embraced him" (Acts 20:36-37).

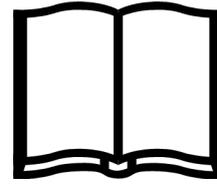
There is a real element of sadness as I leave St. Finnian's for I leave not only friends, but family. The sadness is overshadowed however by the thankfulness and gratitude I have to have been among you and ministered among you. I count it as a privilege to have been able to do so. Indeed, I count that there is no greater privilege than to know the Lord and serve his people.

And so, as I leave to pursue God's calling in St. John's, Lurgan I leave with you the endorsement to 'hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful' (**Hebrews 10:23**).

Till we meet again.

**Every blessing in Christ,
Raymond.**

From the Registers



Christian Burial: 11th October - Hetty Gaw
22nd October - Molly McGookin
23rd October - Sally Thompson
24th October - Catherine Thompson
25th October - Mervyn Gallagher
7th November - Millicent (Dixie) Dillon
13th November - Cecil McKee



Thank you from the Samaritan's Purse Shoe Box Appeal

I just wanted to say a huge heartfelt thank you to everyone who gave so generously to the Appeal again this year. As you can see from our certificate, we donated 120 boxes which is fantastic. Thank you to Holly and Susan who helped me with the Appeal, it was a wonderful effort by everyone.

I will let you know where the boxes went in the New Year.

**Thank you
Jill McPeak**

Services for December



Sunday 1st December (1st Sunday of Advent)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00 am – Connect Service in Hall
- 11.30am – Holy Communion
- 7.00pm – Advent Carol Service (followed by presentation to Reverend Raymond Kettyle)

Sunday 8th December (2nd Sunday of Advent)

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

Sunday 15th December (3rd Sunday of Advent)

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

Sunday 22nd December (4th Sunday of Advent)

- 8.30am – Holy Communion
- 10.00 am –Morning Worship
- 11.30am – Morning Prayer
- 7.00pm – Service of 9 Lessons & Carols

Tuesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

- 11.00 pm – The First Communion of Christmas

Wednesday 25th December (Christmas Day)

- 9.00 am – Holy Communion
- 10.15 am – A Family Celebration of Christmas

Sunday 29th December (1st Sunday of Christmas)

- 9.00am – Holy Communion
- 11.00 am –Christmas Carols Songs of Praise
- 7.00pm – Holy Communion

The Twelve Days of Christmas (the story behind the song)

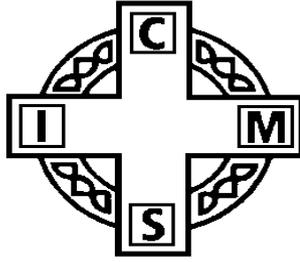
The song is believed to date back to the religious upheavals of 17th Century England when the Puritans suppressed Christmas and Christmas carols. Eventually when the season was restored, Catholics still were not allowed to practice their faith so parents used coded nonsense songs to teach their children the basic doctrine.

In the song, 'My true love' refers to God,



- **The partridge** - Christ
- **The pear tree** - the cross
- **Two turtle doves** - the Old and New Testaments
- **Three French Hens** - faith, hope and love
- **Four calling birds** - the Four Gospels
- **Five gold rings** - the first five books of the Old Testament
- **Six geese a-laying** - the six days of Creation
- **Seven swans a-swimming** - the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit - prophecy, service, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy
- **Eight maids a-milking** - the eight Beatitudes of Jesus
- **Nine ladies dancing** - nine fruits of The Holy Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control
- **Ten lords a-leaping** - The Ten Commandments
- **Eleven pipers piping** - the eleven Apostles who remained faithful to Jesus
- **Twelve drummers drumming** - the twelve beliefs of the Apostles' Creed

Written by Helen Garland



Church of Ireland Men's Society

The next meeting will be held on
Thursday 19th December 2019 at 8.00pm.

The Guest Speaker will be James Tohill who will be presenting "The Northern Irish in Hollywood, USA" A celebration of home-grown talent with film clips.

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of Christmas to enjoy a relaxing evening in the company of some of the stars of Hollywood , USA who boast Northern Irish heritage.

A special invitation is extended to all members of the congregation to join the men for this occasion.

MAGAZINE BY E-MAIL

If you would like to receive the magazine by e-mail each month please let the secretary know and she will add your name to the list. This may be of use to people who live further afield and will reduce the number of copies printed and save money and time printing and delivering.

office.cregagh@down.anglican.org





At our November meeting, Chris Sloan from Crime Prevention, PSNI gave us an excellent, lively and informative talk on the Scamwise NI campaign . From the 'cold calls' we all get on a daily basis to serious internet fraud, Chris outlined the pitfalls to us and what we should do to avoid falling victim to scams.

SCAM test:

Seems too good to be true
Contacted out of the blue
Asked for personal details
Money is requested

For help and information or to report a Scam visit nidirect.gov.uk/scamwiseni. You can also download a copy of **The Little Book of Big Scams** from this website.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 5th December at 8pm** following the Advent Service. We will be hosting our annual Advent Supper and the choir will be leading us in singing Christmas Carols/songs.

Other dates for members to note are as follows:

**2nd December 2019 - Diocesan Advent Carol Service ,
Bangor Abbey @ 8pm**

**4th January 2020 from 10am - 12.30 pm in the Huston Hall -
Ladies' Quiet Morning - Theme:-'Only ONE thing is needed'
led by Gillian Stevenson, Diocesan Lay Reader.**

UGANDA PROJECT - FIELDS OF LIFE

In deprived and impoverished areas of East Africa, the Fields of Life (FOL) built schools are educating over 50,000 children. These are sustained by the local churches (who normally take responsibility for the stewardship of the school), by Child Sponsorship and a strict inspection regime by FOL personnel.

You will appreciate that in remote areas a number of the teachers are not qualified but follow the National Curriculum under the guidance of senior staff. FOL has now set up a new project which entails bringing the school teachers and school management committees from 5 of these schools together at any one time. On these residential courses, teachers are instructed and supported in how to deliver high quality lessons and the management committees in how to promote good governance and leadership. There is also provision for improved teaching and infrastructure facilities where necessary. This will provide a positive impact on the education of thousands of children.

Our Uganda Committee recently sent a donation of £6000 to FOL to help fund this project currently operating in Rwanda. This has been made possible through the hard work of our volunteers and supporters in *Helping Hands for Uganda*. We are very appreciative for your commitment over the years and also the generosity of all who have given donations.

You may have heard on the news recently how poverty and malnourishment not only affect the physical wellbeing of children but also reduce the power of the brain to develop properly. This has an adverse effect on the child's ability to learn. FOL has been aware of this for many years and supply at least one cooked meal to pupils each day. Many children arrive at school without having eaten food since the previous day.

With its significant experience in primary and secondary education, FOL along with the Diocese of Northern Uganda, has embarked on an ambitious project at Gulu in Northern Uganda. Over a 5 year period it is developing a large Vocational Training Institute covering several acres which will provide business, technical, agri and skills training for school leavers in an area that has been traumatised by conflict. The college will have boarding facilities and can cater for students from different areas of East Africa. Our universities and colleges in Ireland are involved in this project, in addition to funding and support from America.

When we think of Africa, we often envisage violence, war, corruption, poverty, disease and famine. However there is another emerging story to tell, a new Africa full of the immense vibrancy of young people, of hope, joy and educational opportunities taking place. God has led FOL to be part of that story and we in St. Finnian's are privileged to be part of the FOL family. J.D.

Save the Date.....



Ladies' Quiet Morning
Saturday 4th January 2020
Theme " Only one thing is needed....."

We invite all women of the parish to join us, the members of Mothers' Union, for a Quiet Morning on 4th January 2020 led by one of our members and Diocesan Lay Reader, Gillian Stevenson. We look forward to taking this short time out at the beginning of another year to think about what is needed as we continue on our journey of faith.

The morning is planned to begin with tea or coffee and scones from 10.00 am until 10.30 am and to end with a celebration of Holy Communion in the church at 12:00 noon.

We look forward to sharing the morning with all women of our parish.

Clare, Branch Leader

LADIES OPEN DOOR FRIENDSHIP GROUP



We only have one meeting in December on Wednesday the 4th when we will be visiting Parliament Buildings for Christmas Lunch at 1.00 pm.

Members who have booked to go should meet in the Church car park at 12 noon to share transport to Stormont. If anyone intends to travel independently from other directions, please let someone know so that we can make sure that everyone is accounted for.

Many thanks

Joan

Tel: 90795473

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

St. Finnian's on Facebook



Like it or loathe it, statistics show that social media is an increasingly important way for churches to connect with people. Recent research carried out by our friends across the water in the Church of England showed that whilst physical church attendance in England has gradually fallen by between 10% and 20% over a ten year period, digital efforts are gaining traction, with monthly reach on social media doubling from 1.2 million in 2017 to 2.44 million in 2018.

You may have noticed some recent developments on the St. Finnian's Facebook page as we work to evolve our own local community outreach through social media, and also to engage our parishioners in upcoming news and events, which is especially important for those who are physically unable to attend our services. Social media growth is something that takes time to nourish, but this is an area all digital users within the Church can actively help with!

Firstly, if you are a Facebook user and haven't already done so, please like and follow the St. Finnian's Facebook page.

Secondly, please support our page through regular engagement. Engagement can take the form of liking, sharing or commenting on posts and/or indicating your intention to attend events. This is critical to the development of our social media outreach, as it boosts our Facebook News Feed placement through the Facebook algorithm and also exposes our content to our audience's extended network. Equally important, engaged content shows that our church audience is – engaged! This is particularly vital for anyone considering attending our church for the first time, as it is a shop window for how active, engaged and vibrant we are as a church community. We appreciate that social media isn't for everyone, but if you are a Facebook user, your help and support would be much appreciated.



Just a quick update.

St Finnian's ran its second Messy Church at the end of October with around 45 people coming along from the wider community to enjoy the event. Our team of volunteers is growing and is fantastic at working together to deliver not only an enjoyable event but also reaching out with God's Word.



Our theme was based on Jesus' words 'I am the Light'. We had great crafts, worship and food. I would like to thank all those who gave of their time, energy and dedication to make it such a success. I would like to open the door to anyone else who feels they would also like to get involved.

Our next Messy Church is likely to be February / March time. We plan to meet in the New Near to make arrangements

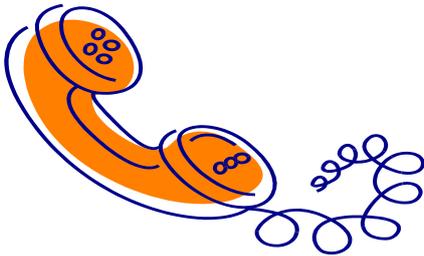
Come along. All welcome!

Thank you, Jill.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rector:

Telephone 028 90793822



Church Office Hours

Tuesday 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

Wednesday 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

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

Magazine

Please send articles for inclusion in the **January** magazine to **office.cregagh@down.anglican.org** or telephone Parish Office 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 10th December.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



Find us on Facebook!
[Facebook.com/StFinnians](https://www.facebook.com/StFinnians)

Registered with
The Charity Commission for
Northern Ireland NIC101977