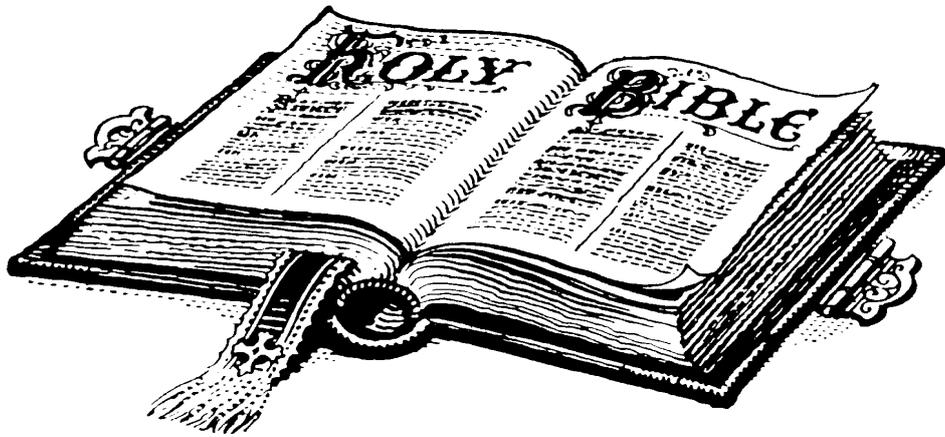


ST Finnian's

JUNE 2020



**Keep reading your Bible.
Keep worshipping & praying
and
carry on.**

Telephone no. for Sunday services:

028 9344 7225

Dear Friends

I hope that wherever you are and whatever you are doing you continue to be safe during the current pandemic. There are many difficult aspects to being in lockdown. We miss our family and friends. We miss the regular activities we take part in, not least attending church, if that has been our custom and practice throughout our lives. We miss our independence, the freedom to head out to get a message whenever we want to and if we are self-isolating, it is hard to feel dependent on others to get our messages and do our shopping. One of the biggest challenges of all however is the uncertainty. No one can tell us at the present time when the restrictions are going to end. The Government and the Chief Medical Officers are all taking the best advice available to them. Experts are trying to construct some sort of phased system by which we can return to some sort of normality again. It's a hugely difficult process to gauge. We need to enable people to return to work and business to rejuvenate the economy, people need that structure and discipline in their lives. There are very challenging effects on people's

mental health through prolonged periods of isolation and while we all know these things, they have to be balanced by the need to protect people while the virus is as active and deadly as it continues to be. As this magazine goes to print there have been celebrations to mark VE day 75 years on. I found it moving to see three veterans being introduced by video technology on the BBC news. They had all seen active service during the Second World War and now through the marvels of modern technology, they were getting to speak together and share memories. Another group that was acknowledged in the programme I saw were the women who worked in very responsible jobs on the home front during the war as well as rearing their families and looking after their homes. Like the current pandemic, when these women saw their men heading off to war, they didn't know for how long it would last or indeed if their husbands and sons and loved ones would come home. They didn't know either, what effect these terrible experiences

might have on their loved ones when they came home. In our house we have tried to watch something together on television most days. Our surprising channel of choice as we don't watch it too often has been Channel 4. Initially we watched the TV chef Jamie Oliver doing a cookery show each day which he entitled "Keep Cooking and Carry On." It was made with either his wife or one of his children filming the show on a mobile phone. He would also dig out a recipe or two from his archive of programmes and you could swap ingredients for whatever you had in the house. The idea was to encourage people to keep eating healthy nutritious meals that were not expensive to prepare and to use the sorts of things we might have in our cupboard. The second programme we have been watching is of a similar vein. It is called "Keep Crafting and Carry On" and features the presenter Kirstie Allsopp making crafts using things we might have in our homes which might otherwise be thrown out. I'm not a crafter at all but other people in the house are game to give it a go and it's a fun thing to do

together and some days the results are better than others! We do not know when we will be allowed to resume worship together again in the way we used to Sunday by Sunday. I would imagine there will be restrictions and social distancing as we are eventually permitted to do so. I know some people have been greatly blessed by being able to telephone each Sunday after 11am to our telephone service in recent weeks. If you telephone **02893447225** and wait 15 seconds or so after the initial message, you will hear a recording of the Sunday service. This has been a special connection for those who don't have or don't use the internet. Others have been able to connect into the services and blogs that appear on the church website and Facebook page. This is why we are continuing to try to post out this magazine to those who don't have the internet and may not be receiving many resources. If I could offer any encouragement or words of wisdom during this time and we don't know how long it will be for,

I think I would say 2 or 3 things. Keep reading your Bible. Even if it is just a psalm or a chapter from the gospels or working your way through an account of life in the early church, like the Acts of the Apostles, read a little something every day. Tune into things on the radio like the service on Radio Ulster at 10.15 am or the televised worship on BBC1 at 10.45 am or Songs of Praise on Sundays. Keep reading your Bible and worshipping.

The second thing that is vitally important is to keep praying. Pray for your family, for their safety and protection. Pray that this time would reveal Jesus to them especially if they have been far from Him.

Pray for our Government, for the Health Minister and medical officers and all who make important decisions affecting our safety and livelihoods. Pray for the frontline medical staff and supermarket workers and delivery drivers and pharmacists and those working in nursing homes and catering and farming and fishing and doing all they do to keep us safe and healthy.

So many people need your prayers at the present time and while we might often say we are too busy, at the present time the stakes are too important and too critical that we cannot afford not to pray. Every Sunday morning as I'm the only one allowed into church at the present time I pray for each household in the parish by name as I celebrate Holy Communion and say morning prayer and belt out a few hymns.

I look forward so much to the day when we can be together again. If services are permitted before the end of June we will be resuming with services at 9am, 11am and 7pm and people will be in touch to tell you when they are going to recommence but we cannot do anything until we have permission to do so and initially I suspect there will be quite a number of restrictions. Until the next time my friends, I encourage you to keep reading your Bible daily, keep worshipping regularly, keep praying and carry on.

Much love.

Jonathan Pierce (Rector)
Telephone 02890 793822

Devotional Resources for the Coronavirus Situation

The following pages contain some prayers and Bible readings that may be of help at this time.

A prayer for times of isolation

‘For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’

(Romans 8:38-39)

God of heaven and earth,
in these times of isolation,
apart from loved ones
distant from friends
away from neighbours
thank you that there is nothing
in all of creation,
not even coronavirus,
that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails
continue to be shared
through the kindness of strangers
looking out for each other,
for neighbours near and far
all recognising our shared vulnerability,
each of us grateful for every breath,
and willing everyone to know the gift
of a full and healthy life.
Keep us all in your care.

Amen.

A prayer for medical workers everywhere

Restoring and healing God,
thank you for medical workers everywhere,
embodying sacrificial love in these challenging times
putting the welfare of others before their own
staying away from their family and loved ones
comforting the concerned and bereaved
reassuring the anxious and vulnerable
working to heal and restore people who are ill.
Be their guide, strength, wisdom and hope.

We pray for those in authority to do right by them
for proper protective equipment to be provided
and for their dedication to be met with much gratitude
and appreciation when they return home, exhausted.

And we pray for medical workers around the world,
where resources and protective equipment
are always in short supply, not only now but always.

May these extraordinary times
lead to deep and necessary changes in how our world works,
resulting in a genuine effort to address the profound injustice
of life expectancy being determined by geography,
to awaken us all to the reality of how connected we all are
and to work together to create the community and world
we all want to be part of.

So help us, God.

Amen.

A prayer for the global pandemic

**Love...bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things.
Love never ends.'
(1 Corinthians 13:7-8)**

Loving God,
strengthen our innermost being
with your love that bears all things
even the weight of this global pandemic
even the long haul of watching for symptoms
of patiently waiting for this to pass
watching and waiting,
keeping our gaze fixed on you,
and looking out for our neighbours
near and far.

Instil in our shaken souls
the belief and hope that all things
are possible with your creative love
for strangers to become friends
for science to source solutions
for resources to be generously shared
so everyone, everywhere, may have what they need
for your perfect love that knows no borders
may cast out any fear and selfishness that divides.

May your love that never ends
be our comfort, strength and guide
for the wellbeing of all and
the glory of God.

Amen.

A prayer for nurses

***"May the Lord repay you for what you have done.
May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God
of Israel, under whose wings you have come to
take refuge."***

Ruth 2:12

Father, we lift up every nurse to You as they continue to look after Your children in need. We pray for their safety and protection against coronavirus in each and every department and hospital. We thank You Lord for them and their commitment and compassion.

Amen.

A prayer for the church



May your love that never fails
strengthen the weak
encourage the fearful
calm the anxious
heal the sick
through your church –
your washed hands
and feet on earth –
distant but still present
virtual but still connected
apart but still helping.
God in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Amen.

Prayers with children

*Jesus, you are good and wise
I will praise you when I rise.
Jesus, hear this prayer I send
Bless my family and my friends.
Jesus, help my eyes to see
All the good you send to me.
Jesus help my ears to hear
Calls for help from far and near.
Jesus, help my feet to go
In the way that you will show.
Jesus, help my hands to do
All things loving, kind and true.*



*I hear no voice, I feel no touch,
I see no glory bright;
But yet I know that God is near,
In darkness as in light.
God watches ever by my side,
And hears my whispered prayer:
A God of love for a little child
Both night and day does care.
Amen.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESOURCES - FOR USE AT HOME



Useful Website List

Sunday School Kids (<http://sundayschoolkids.com/>)

Printable Sunday School lessons, activities, prayers and much more.

Barnabas in Schools (<https://ideas.brf.org.uk>)

BRF have provided an ideas hub – search what you are looking for and they will point you to talk ideas, books, prayer ideas and much more. This is particularly useful if you are planning all age services.

Messy Church (<https://www.messychurch.org.uk/>)

The Messy Church website gives tips and suggestions for running sessions, as well as a number of complete sessions with crafts, talk and food ideas. You can also access all the Messy Church logos and branding.

God Venture (<https://godventure.co.uk/>)

Victoria Beech has lots of different ideas and resources on her website that help families share faith at home. She has a blog post, reviews Christian books for children and produces different resources for you to buy.





Hello Everyone

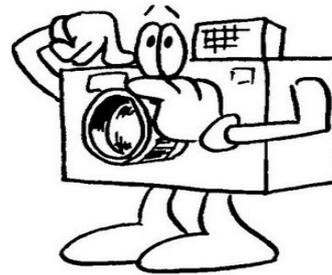
I hope you are all keeping well and coping with the current 'lockdown'. I'm sure the gardens are pristine but maybe the hair styles could do with some TLC - I know mine could!

We were so sorry to hear of the death of Florence Law who recently passed away in hospital. Florence will be known to many of you and she was a very active member of Mothers' Union over the years. Our deepest sympathies go to Richard, Belinda and the family circle at this sad time.

By now most of you will have received your personal copy of the Families First magazine. You will also have received a letter from Mary Sumner House outlining the financial difficulties that Mothers' Union is experiencing. I have attached a letter from Roberta McCartney, Diocesan President which explains how Down and Dromore have responded to this appeal. I have also included details of the Mothers' Union Photographic Competition (some of you may have picked it up from the Church website) and a copy of the Midday Prayers for June for your use.

Please know that we are thinking of you all at this time and if anyone would like someone to be included in the Mothers' Union prayer chain please do contact us and we will arrange for the name to be added.

Carol Bell
Secretary



PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

All Ireland have decided to run a competition with a small prize for each category. We would like you to submit a photograph – taken by camera, on your phone or iPad – with the theme ***“What I will remember from isolation in the Spring 2020”***

The five categories for the photographs are:

1. **Family Time**
2. **Going the extra mile (Knitting, crafts, sewing scrubs, helping others etc)**
3. **Back to nature**
4. **Something that made me smile**
5. **My abiding memory – with the most imaginative caption**

The closing date for entries is **31st May 2020** and they should be sent by that date to the Fundraising and Communication Unit Coordinator,

Mrs June Reain
150, Ballynahinch Road,
Dromore
BT25 1EA

or email jjreain@btinternet.com

Entries should be sent preferably by email and should state the name of the photographer and the category under which it is entered. We look forward to seeing your photographs so get snapping.

Letter from Roberta McCartney

Dear Branch Leader and Mothers' Union Members

I hope you are all keeping safe and well at this time. We are all having to be patient staying in and keeping ourselves safe as well as others. We are now into week 5 of lockdown and I know some of you are cocooning and not able to go out. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

We have been very fortunate that God has provided us with glorious weather and what a beautiful Spring we have had. On my daily walk I have been amazed at the bird song. I have stopped many times and looked up to see if I could spot who has been singing to me along the way but he always eludes me. I do hope you too have been able to enjoy this. Many of you work or have family members working in front line services which are so important to us all at this time. Doctors and nurses and all the caring profession as well as food producers and suppliers. A friend of mine who works in a supermarket with a husband who drives a lorry said to me *"I never thought we would be front line workers, with people depending on us so much."* Indeed, everyone has been playing their part.

Some of you will have been knitting and I know others have been involved in making 'Scrubs' and bags for hospitals and nursing homes and many other things that we haven't heard about. This has brought out the good in so many people. I know some of you are looking after your neighbour's shopping and in some cases making meals for those whose carers or family are isolating. Even a phone call can brighten someone's day. Well done to all of you. Please let us know what you have been doing in the lockdown. Some of you will have received your 'Families Worldwide' and will be shocked to see Mothers' Union, like so many other charities, are in financial difficulties. A letter was sent out centrally from Mary Sumner House and Diocesan Trustees have approved and already sent a per capita contribution on your behalf from Down and Dromore Mothers' Union. I know many of you will be supporting your own families at this time. Mothers' Union may look a little different at the end of this but then so will a lot of other things. Please pray for guidance and direction for when we come out of this lockdown.

Many of you will have friends and family who have had someone in hospital in Intensive Care unable to visit or know what is happening to your loved one. Others will have lost family members and indeed Mothers' Union members over the past number of weeks and have not had the usual support of family and friends around you. This has been a very difficult time for so many. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. It is hard to keep in touch with everyone in the diocese with no meetings. Some branches have set up 'WhatsApp Groups' or are phoning each other and it is still lovely to see the postman bringing a card or a letter. Please do try to keep in touch. We too need to be informed of any changes if any branch loses a member to avoid any mail going to the address as we do not want to cause any distress to families. During this time with our churches closed we have been worshiping very differently. I do hope you can access a Sunday Service by some means. I know recently some have made available the Sunday worship down the telephone. There is also Mid Day Prayers on MU Facebook page and the Mothers' Union websites have prayers and other material to help you at this time and keep you updated. Any of you who know me will know that I love singing and I have so many favourite hymns it is impossible to chose one over another. As I was thinking about everyone cocooning at home a children's hymn came to mind.

***“Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light,
Like a little candle burning in the night;
In this world of darkness so we must shine,
You in your small corner and I in mine.”***

Take time to read the rest of the hymn and “shine,” remember He is watching over you.

God be with you always.

With love,

Roberta

Mothers' Union - Midday Prayers– June 2020:

Monday: Hope in times of uncertainty

The Lord is good,

a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

In our anxiety, fear and uncertainty,
when hearts are heavy with the load we bear,
and there is no one to turn toward but you;

yours is the peace that calms,
the peace that comforts,
the peace that gives us strength to carry on.

Yours is the voice we long to hear,
the persistent whisper in our ear,
'Be still, and know that I am God'.

Yours is the presence in the dark
that banishes our fears.

Yours is the hand that guides,
the footprints in which we walk.

**In our anxiety,
fear and uncertainty,
in confidence we turn to you.**

Amen.

Tuesday: Hope in times of isolation

The Lord is good,

a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.

In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;

in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,

but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Wednesday: Hope in times of sickness

The Lord is good, a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

We are beginning to learn that this is a fragile world you've placed into our care.

But there are times, Lord, when we are reminded of our human fragility, needing your loving care through times of anxiety and illness.

Touch us, Lord, with healing hands and words, that we might walk together through this temporary darkness and into your glorious light.

**Lord of health and healing,
draw near to all who are sick
that they may find hope in you.**

**Lord of health and healing,
raise us all to fullness of life,
that we may find hope in you.**

Amen.

Thursday: Hope in times of disappointment

The Lord is good, a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

God of all hopefulness, when disappointments weigh us down open our eyes to see your creative ways; new plans for life, new instances of grace.

We pray for renewed vision: to see a path of life emerging through the wilderness of former hopes and dreams.

We pray for clear vision: to see a stream of grace flowing through the wasteland of deep disappointments.

God of all hopefulness, inspire us today with fresh revelation of your plans for our lives and our world. Instil in us a sense of adventure to embrace what lies ahead with anticipation and hope.

Amen.

Friday: Hope in times of sadness

The Lord is good, a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

God of love and mercy, embrace all those
whose hearts today overflow with grief,
unanswered questions and such a sense of loss.

Grant them space to express their tears.

Hold them close through the coming days.

Loving Lord,

who wipes away every tear from our eye,

draw near to all who weep with grief

and mourn the loss of that which is dear.

In the midst of sorrow be their comfort,

in the place of sadness be their hope.

The Lord is good,

a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him.

Amen.

Saturday: Hope in times of need

The Lord is good, a strong refuge in times of trouble.

He cares for those who hope in him. *From Nahum 1:7*

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the need of others,

open my ears that I may hear their cries,

open my heart so that they need not be without succour.

Let me not be afraid to defend the weak

because of the anger of the strong,

nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.

Show me where love and hope and faith are needed,

and use me to bring them to these places.

Open my eyes and ears that I may, this coming day,

be able to do some work of peace for thee.

Amen.



Donations by Standing Order — Thank You.

In the May Magazine I asked that parishioners would consider setting up a Standing Order to the parish.

Since then, some parishioners have taken up that option and either set up standing orders or have used the electronic transfer facility to make funds available for parish use. Others who don't have access to internet banking have forwarded cheques for parish funds. To all who have responded—a massive **Thank You**. This enables the parish to continue to meet its financial commitments and to continue the work of Christ's Kingdom in St Finnian's.

If you would still like to set up a Standing Order or Electronic Transfer, the parish bank details are: -

Sort code **95-01-34**

Account number **11089757**

Account Name **St. Finnian's Parish Church** (this can be shortened to whatever fits).

Reference Please include a Reference with your payment which should be the six digit number beginning 000 at the bottom right of the label on your envelope box and your surname e.g. 000999 SMITH. **This is not your envelope number. (If you can't find it, let me know and I can help).**

If internet banking is not available to you, please give me a ring and we can discuss alternatives. At the moment we prefer cashless donations. Our count teams are currently not operating and we must have a least two people present when opening envelopes with cash to preserve the auditability of the count. I'll let you know when we can start accepting cash again.

Mike Johnston,

Hon. Treasurer

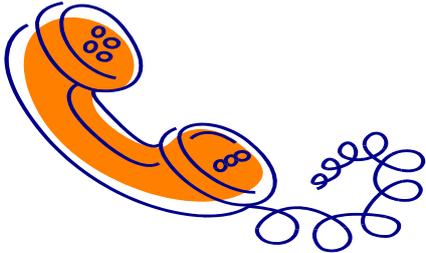
Tel: 028 90402769

Email: m.h.johnston@btinternet.com

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 **July/August** magazine to **office.cregagh@down.anglican.org** or telephone Parish Office 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 9th June.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



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

**The first ever
Cordless Phone
was created by
God.
He named it
"Prayer"...**

**It never Loses its
Signal and U never
have to Recharge it.
Use it Anywhere...!**



Registered with
The Charity Commission for
Northern Ireland NIC101977