

# ST Finnian's

**JANUARY 2022**



*You are invited to  
Alpha online -  
beginning on  
Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
at 8pm.*

# Dear Friends

Could I begin by saying thank you to all those who worked so hard to make our Advent and Christmas celebrations so special. Thank you to Mark and the choir, to all our visiting speakers and those who worked so hard on the technology team and behind the scenes to make sure services took place smoothly and safely. Barbara and Greg and Catherine our wardens all worked away to ensure this was possible. We don't take for granted anymore the privilege of being able to meet together in person and as 2022 dawns we seem to be continuously responding to the uncertainty of these times.

The news continues to inform us of new variants and potential restrictions and there remains a great deal of uncertainty around any plans we make for the coming months. On one level you would think we should be getting used to all this uncertainty by now as it has been going on for just shy of 2 years. There remains however the hope that things will settle down and return to some form of what we call normality. I spoke with a friend recently who told me about a WhatsApp group he is part of with a group of friends. They had the intention of travelling abroad for a short break

in 2020 when they set up this group. They called the group "Trip Away 2020", it became "Trip Away 2021" and is about to become "Trip Away 2022". Every time they think they can begin to make their plans there seems to be a new regulation to contend with or a spike in the numbers of infections and they need to reconsider.

We can feel frustrated by this inability to make plans in church life too. Already during the Autumn there have been discussions with some of our organisations about good ways forward to restart some in-person meetings. We're very aware that these discussions have to be revisited in the light of the ever-changing circumstances we are dealing with. In the next couple of months we are hoping to restart our Wednesday Holy Communion service with prayers for the sick. We will be watching the numbers and following the guidelines if this is something parishioners would like to see happening. In the meantime we want to continue to reach out to people online with our Thursday night prayer meeting and our online Alpha course which will begin on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 8pm.

The Psalms speak very powerfully about God's faithfulness even in the midst of uncertainty and challenging circumstances and we take great strength from those words. One of the things I have been trying to learn during these times is to lean in more to trusting God even when things don't work out as we plan. We can put a lot of planning and effort and prayer into certain events and organisations and despite our best efforts they don't work out as we had hoped. Does that mean that God doesn't care or didn't hear our prayers, I don't think so. What I think it does tell us is to hang in there and keep trusting as what He has in mind is better than what we had planned. As a stubborn and independent human being I can sometimes rage against that and wrestle with it. I was very struck by a guest blog one of our Advent speakers, Melanie Grimsley shared before Christmas when she spoke about resting in the Father's love rather than fighting against those things we can't control. She spoke from her own personal and very challenging experience but had discovered this was a much better way. It takes a lifetime to learn and

we won't always get it right but it's something worth returning to over and over again. New Year is often a time for resolutions and aspirations. Maybe this is the month I try to shed a few pounds, restart an exercise programme, take up a new activity or hobby.

All of these are good and noble goals to pursue but maybe the one we often choose to ignore is the most important. It's that little voice in our head that says what about your spiritual life?

What about revisiting the faith you gave up on after something happened all those years ago? What about looking to the future and the coming year with hope and expectation rather than fear and pessimism.

What about believing, no matter what happens in 2022, that Jesus promises to walk alongside you and uphold you in it? We take this opportunity to wish you a happy and healthy 2022.

With very best wishes.

**Yours sincerely,  
Jonathan Pierce (Rector)  
Telephone 028 90793822**





A new Alpha course is due to begin over Zoom for 12 weeks on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 8pm.**

If you would like to explore more about faith and the meaning of life in these one hour sessions from 8-9pm, please email [zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com](mailto:zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com) or email the Rector at [jonopierce@btinternet.com](mailto:jonopierce@btinternet.com) and you will be sent a link to the Zoom call and the relevant video for that week.

## **PARISH PRAYER MEETINGS**

### **BY ZOOM**

Our Parish Prayer Meetings by Zoom will resume in January on Thursday evenings. During these meetings, we pray for our province, our church and the world around us.

If you would like to join us at 7 pm on

Thursdays just send an email to

[zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com](mailto:zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com)

or contact the Rector.

## **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 on to anyone else unless you want them to.

**Mobile: 07513947504**



## ST. FINNIAN'S TODDLERS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

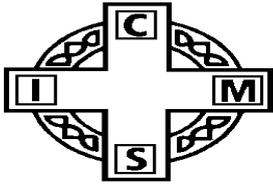
At our last meeting of 2021, we all had a great time at our Christmas party.

Santa's elves worked hard to make sure that they ticked off all the Covid regulations on Santa's list to make sure that everyone

stayed safe and had a good time. I think those little elves will be on Santa's "nice" list this year. Santa even found time to call in to see the children despite being so busy at the North Pole!

**We hope to see you all again on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**





## **Church of Ireland Men's Society**

The Committee of the Men's Society will be meeting in early February to discuss the viability of restarting meetings and the form they will take. We are conscious that we need to consider the current situation with regard to the virus so that our members stay safe and are confident to venture out.

We will keep you informed as to what is decided.

In the meantime, we sincerely hope that the New Year will bring many blessings and better times for us all.

**Ralph McMurray**

**Hon. Secretary.**



The Boys' Brigade and Anchor Boys are taking a break over the Christmas period but will resume again in the New Year **on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

**New members are always welcome : -**

**Anchor Boys** - aged 4-8 (Tuesdays - 6.45 pm-7.45 pm)

**Junior Section** - aged 8-11 (Mondays - 7.00 pm-8.15 pm)

**Company Section** - aged 11-18 (Mondays -7.15 pm-9.15pm)

**If you are interested, please contact Trevor Smyth,**

**Tel No. 07710732592.**

# Services for January



## **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas)**

11.00am Carols Songs of Praise  
7.00pm Evening Prayer

## **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany)**

11.00am Morning Prayer  
7.00pm Evening Prayer

## **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany)**

11.00am Holy Communion  
7.00pm Holy Communion

## **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany)**

11.00am Morning Prayer  
7.00pm Evening Prayer

## **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany)**

11.00am Morning Prayer  
7.00pm Evening Prayer



**BOOK ONLINE NOW**

## **Remember to book online for Sunday Morning Services**

Just a reminder that if you would like to attend the Sunday morning 11am service, it is still necessary to book online using the online registration form available on our website and Facebook page.

If you don't use the internet, you can reserve a place by phoning Linda in the parish office on 028 90792793 on either Tuesdays or Wednesdays between 9am and 2pm.

Alternatively, you can reserve a place with one of our Churchwardens the previous Sunday.

The 11am service will continue to be livestreamed on YouTube to enable those who can't attend in person to worship with us. The dial-in service will also continue to be available for those who don't use the internet on 028 93447225.

## **General Maintenance**

The church premises require regular maintenance to keep them in good order, so it would be an advantage to have a regular schedule for works both for buildings and grounds. This would give people an opportunity to volunteer a few hours a month to assist in the upkeep of our estate.

Accordingly, the **last Saturday** of each month will be designated for a work morning, with attendance programmed for, say 9.00 am to 11.00 am, for anyone who might be available. Work would include general light duties, tidying up, pruning, spraying, brushing etc.

**We will be commencing on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

See you then !

**Jim Haughey  
Glebewarden**



## Messy Church ... back in the Church Hall

St. Finnian's Messy Church went ahead in the Church Hall on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November. It was fantastic to be back in person (if a little different!). We had 14 children who came along with their parents to enjoy crafts, songs, juice and stories.

The Messy Church gang was great and had everything ready to go on the day. We took the last letter of HOPE and explored ***Expectation*** with the children. Hearing the story of Mary and Joseph and the birth of baby Jesus.

Thank you to the team and we look forward to more Messy Church in the New Year.

**Jill McPeak**



# 2022 - 90 YEARS OF WORSHIPPING TOGETHER AT ST.FINNIAN'S

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2022 it will be exactly 90 years to the day since St. Finnian's, Cregagh was consecrated. On that Saturday in 1932, it was a bright and beautiful day and the church was filled to overflowing. The Lord Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Right Rev. J.I. Peacock preached the special sermon. He selected for his text, the words from Revelation Chapter 3, Verse 8:-

*Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.*

The idea for building a new church on this site in Cregagh had been hatched four years previously in 1928 when a handful of men met on 11<sup>th</sup> September in a hall on the Knockbreda Road. Cregagh had always been part of the Parish of Knockbreda which at that time was still partly inhabited by dairy farmers. Belfast however was developing from the boom years of linen and ships in the 19th century. A new tramway service made travel cheap and easy and people started to move to houses on each side of the Cregagh Road. By 1928, Cregagh had acquired a residential character and the new families found Knockbreda church too remote. As a result, the church authorities established a hall along the Knockbreda Road in McCaughan Park at the foot of the glen. It was a bit like a mission hall and the curate from Knockbreda conducted services there. It soon became obvious that the diverse community that had settled in the area needed something more.



So it was that this handful of men met to transform this collection of people into a community to provide cohesion in a changing world. These men were driven by faith.

The Chairman of this first Committee Meeting was the curate-in-charge, the Rev. C.W.A. Huston, who later became the first Rector of the new St. Finnian's church. It was he who suggested that the new church at Cregagh should be dedicated to the early Irish cleric, St. Finnian.

Finnian, sometimes called Finbarr, the white head, from the blondeness or whiteness of his hair, belonged to the princely family of the Dal Fiatach, then one of the most powerful families in Ulster. By tradition, there were two feast days kept to St. Finnian, 11<sup>th</sup> February and 10<sup>th</sup> September. His church at Cregagh was consecrated on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1932.

**As this year is the 90th anniversary of the church, we would like to run a feature in the magazine every month if possible. Do you have any stories, information and photographs you would like to share with us all from any point over our 90 year history? If so, we would love you to get in touch with Linda in the church office -**

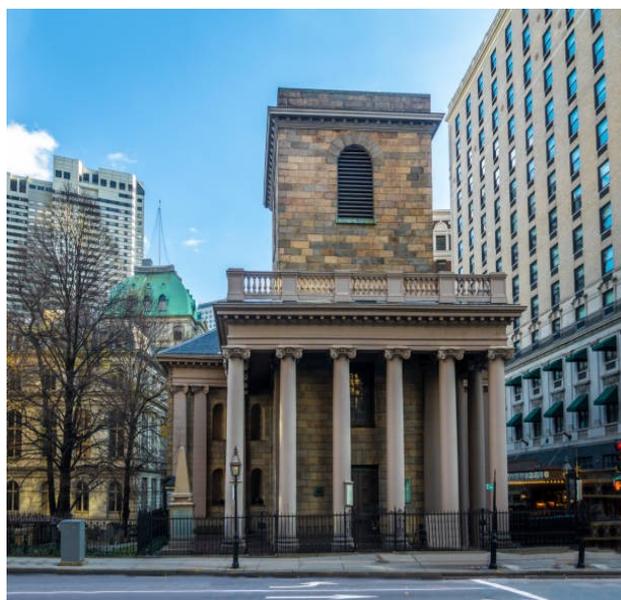
**Tel: 028 90792793 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9.00am - 2.00pm or email office.cregagh@down.anglican.org**

**THE LORD BLESS YOU**  
*and keep you; the Lord keep all  
those whom you love, whether  
here or in some other place. May  
God be your companion and you  
be his friend, as you walk together  
through all the days of your life;  
and at the journey's end, may you  
find the welcome of God's love.*

*It keeps us all. Amen.*

*by Charles Conrad Forman, 1926-1998  
Affiliate Minister, King's Chapel, Boston, USA*

**This 'walking benediction'  
was written by the  
Rev. Dr. Charles C.  
Forman, Affiliate Minister  
of King's Chapel, Boston  
from 1980-1998.  
It was delivered by him  
from the centre aisle  
at the end of each service,  
including weddings and  
has been incorporated into  
the services of  
several other churches.**



## Freewill Offering Envelopes



Freewill Offering Envelopes for 2022 will be delivered to parishioners in the next few weeks and we will be ordering envelopes for 2023 in March next year.

Over the last two years when we have not always been able to worship together as a congregation, many parishioners have chosen to make their Freewill Offerings via Standing Order or Electronic Transfers instead of using Freewill Offering Envelopes. Some parishioners will choose to continue to make their offerings electronically even when current COVID restrictions are lifted, while others will want to return to placing their envelope on the collection plate each Sunday.

As we have to order envelopes for 2023 in March, it would be very helpful if any parishioners who do not expect to use Freewill Offering Envelopes in future could let Linda, our Parish Secretary know, so that we do not order sets of envelopes which will not be used. Knowing this will avoid waste and reduce our costs.

Linda can be contacted at the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9.00am - 2.00pm on 028 90792793 or via email at [office.cregagh@down.anglican.org](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org)

Thank you for your help with this.

**Robert Crawford**  
**Hon. Treasurer**

**Ladies' Open Door**  
**Friendship Group**



Ladies, good news – our doors are opening. Assuming that the COVID-19 restrictions do not change from the time of writing, the Friendship Group will recommence in January. It will be heart-warming to share time with friends again. **Meetings will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 2.00 pm.**

Joan Logan and Eileen Bell have decided to step back from the guiding team. We greatly appreciate their considerable contribution to the organisation and fellowship of the Group. Helen McKnight and I are looking forward to joining the team. We are very pleased to welcome our Curate, Rev. Andy Hay as our first speaker on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January. On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January, we will be joined by Marietta Lammey for gentle chair exercises. Health and safety are paramount, so naturally, all prevailing COVID-19 rules and guidelines will be followed. We hope to see you in person in the New Year.

**Julie Cunningham**  
**Tel No. 07814928398**





**Pilates Update No. 3**

What can I say, the commitment of our regular Pilates group is amazing and has been tested by two evenings without heating in the lower hall - although we all had a good warm up which started as a gentle knee tap and morphed quickly into a strange version of the 'Can-Can'! Suffice to say we stayed warm thereafter, with a special focus on using exercise bands - thankfully no bands (or fingers and noses) were damaged in the process.

**By way of early notice, the last class before Christmas will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> December and we will be returning in the New Year on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January to work off the turkey etc.**

Merry Christmas everyone.

Ps - Christmas jumpers may be worn on the 15<sup>th</sup>, certainly by me!

***If you fancy coming along in the New Year or want to find out more about Pilates, please contact me by phone (+447941368546) or email at [jcwworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcwworth@yahoo.co.uk)***

***A small donation of £3.00 per class is appreciated with proceeds going towards church funds.***

**John Waterworth**



## **Hello Everyone**

It was lovely to see so many of you at the service in St Mark's on 27<sup>th</sup> November . After the service we all had a lovely lunch at The Secret Garden restaurant and then finished the day off at Mrs Arnold's for coffee and apple tart - never let it be said that the St. Finnian's Mothers' Union don't know how to enjoy life! I was so sorry I was unable to join you all at the service on 2<sup>nd</sup> December but I understand everything went very well and it's great that we have got everything organised for the new Committee. I know Elizabeth and her Committee will be great assets to our Branch. The Mothers' Union theme for 2022 is **TRANSFORMATION - NOW!** and I hope by now you all have got a copy of your Prayer Diary 2022.

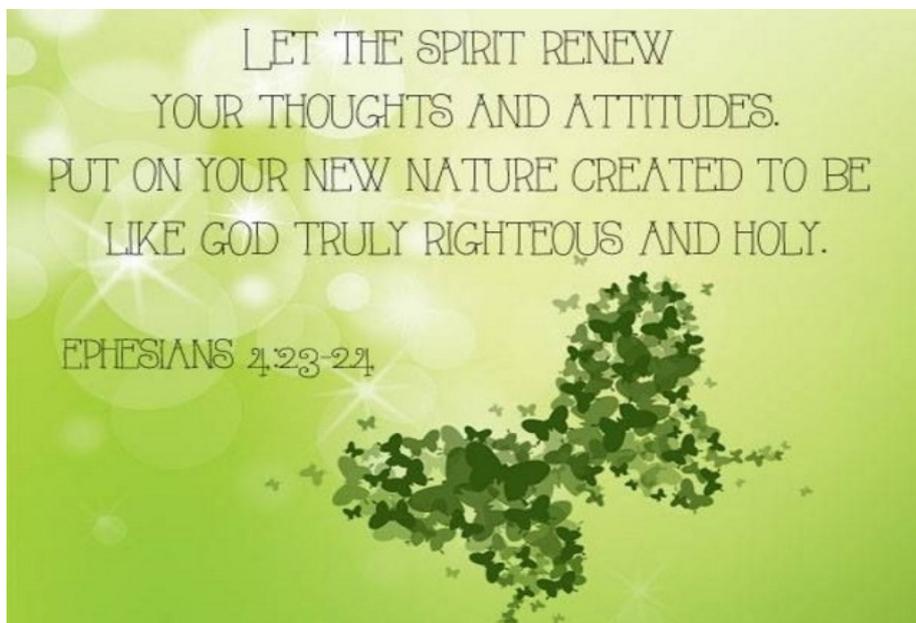
Finally on behalf of Clare, Helen and myself I would like to thank you all so much for the very generous gifts you gave to us . It has been a pleasure to serve on the Committee and to get to know you all over the years.

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year.

The Midday prayers for January are set out on the opposite page.

Best regards.

**Carol Bell**



*Mothers' Union—Midday Prayers—January 2022*  
*Transformation—Now!*

**Monday: Time for transformation**

See, I am doing a new thing!  
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

*Isaiah 43:19*

**Loving Lord, transform our lives  
that we may reflect the glory of Christ and share his love in the world.**

You are the potter, Lord,  
and in your skilful hands  
even the unlikeliest of clay  
becomes a thing of beauty  
and useful, bringing glory  
not to the pot, but its creator.

So take these lives, this clay,  
and in your loving hands  
transform and make us  
into what we long to be;  
made useful, Lord, for you.  
Transform our struggles into victories.

**Transform our doubting  
into certainty.**

Transform our stumbles into confidence.  
**Transform our sorrow into worshipping,  
gracious God, we pray.**  
**Amen.**

**Tuesday: Spiritual transformation**

We are being transformed into his likeness  
with ever-increasing glory,  
which comes from the Lord,  
who is the Spirit.

*2 Corinthians 3:18*

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;  
Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;  
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;  
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;  
Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy.

*St. Augustine of Hippo*

**Loving Lord, transform our lives  
that we may reflect the glory of Christ.  
Continue in us the work of your Spirit;  
the miracle of transformation  
from the gloom of sin  
to the glory of Christ  
Amen.**

**Wednesday: Daily transformation**

Let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.

Put on your new nature, created to be like God—  
truly righteous and holy.

*Ephesians 4:23-24 (NLT)*

Lord of all time, forever working your purpose out  
for the good of humankind,

give us insight, born of faith in you,

that we may live in your transforming presence

and welcome what is new for us this and every day.

Reach into our hearts with hope and confidence

to embrace the tough transformations,

to make the real and lasting changes,

to seek the truly good answers;

for the sake of our families, communities,

and for our world.

*MU New Zealand*

**May all we are,**

**everything we think, say and do,**

**be blessed by God,**

**constantly renewed**

**and daily transformed**

**through his awesome power**

**and unfailing love.**

**Amen.**

**Thursday: Process of transformation**

“I know the plans *and* thoughts that I have for you,” says the Lord,

“plans for peace *and* well-being and not for disaster,

to give you a future and a hope.”

*Jeremiah 29:11 (AMP)*

**Gracious God, make known to us your plans**

**for peace and wellbeing;**

**to bring lasting transformation.**

Lord, we pray for lives to be transformed

into ones of self respect and sufficiency

through effective use of your resources.

We pray for families to be transformed

into strong and loving households

as they explore your ways for relationship.

We pray for communities to be transformed

into ones of resilience and prosperity

through trust and cooperation.

**Gracious God, guide us in your plans**

**for peace and wellbeing;**

**to transform lives for good.**

**Amen.**

**Friday: Lasting transformation**

I am making a way in the wilderness  
and streams in the wasteland.

*Isaiah 43:19*

**God the Holy Spirit,  
You are the restless breath of love  
that sweeps through the world.**

You move where you will, breaking down barriers,  
stirring hearts to change, making all things possible.  
Inspire each one of us to hunger and thirst for justice!

**Come, Spirit of God,  
sweep through our world  
bringing great change.**

May the bounty of your goodness be shared more justly,  
so all may share in the rich blessings of your creation.

**And, for us, bring transformation  
in our praying and living,  
so that we may act justly, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you all the days of our lives.  
Amen.**

**Saturday: Personal transformation**

Put on your new nature, and be renewed  
as you learn to know your Creator  
and become like him.

*Colossians 3:10 (NLT)*

**Lord, in you I am transformed  
and transformed still again.**

When the discouraged cry for hope, make me hope.  
When the hungry cry for bread, make me bread.  
When the thirsty cry for water, make me water.  
When the suffering cry for help, make me help.  
When the sick cry for healing, make me healing.  
When the bound cry for freedom, make me freedom.  
When the outcasts cry for love, make me love.

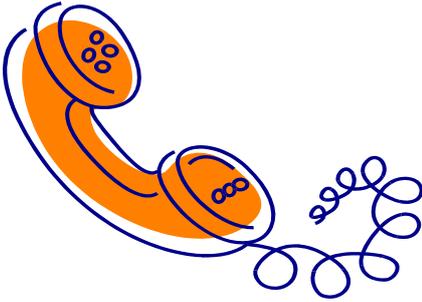
Lord who is hope  
who is bread and water,  
who is help and healing,  
who is freedom,  
and who is love,  
transform me anew.

**And so keep me close to you,  
as you transform the world.  
Amen.**

## 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 BY EMAIL**

Why not receive your magazine by email and help the environment by cutting down on the use of paper? If you would like to receive your magazine this way, contact Linda in the church office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 9.00am - 2.00pm. Tel. 028 90792793 or email office.cregagh@down.anglican.org

## **Magazine**

Please send articles for inclusion in the **February** magazine to [office.cregagh@down.anglican.org](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org) or telephone the Parish Office 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

**[www.stfinnians.org](http://www.stfinnians.org)**



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