

ST Finnian's

FEBRUARY 2024



*Please see inside for details
of our Lenten services.*

Dear Friends

The month of February marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a 40 day or 6 week period when we remember Jesus fasting in the wilderness after being commissioned at His baptism and beginning his public ministry.

Christians have always used this period as an opportunity to deepen their own spiritual life and many use the visual image of a journey as the period of Lent ends with a focussed concentration on the last week of Jesus' earthly life before His crucifixion and death. That's the week we usually refer to as Holy Week. Each Thursday night in Lent we hope to have a short reflective service built around the services of a Late Evening Office or Compline. The services will be about 35 minutes in length and we will be thinking about some of the spirituality of that great saint, St. Benedict. St. Benedict of Nursia, who lived from 480-550, was an Italian monk who founded monasteries which exist up to the present day. They were centres of worship, prayer and learning and places of welcome. There is a benedictine monastery not too far from us in Warrenpoint and the community there have a

great ministry right across the denominations.

He wrote the rule of St. Benedict which was like a collection of some of his important teachings and we are going to think about the blessing behind some of these teachings over the season of Lent. We will begin on Thursday 15th February as we consider the blessing of beginning. We hope to think a little more during Holy Week about this idea of spiritual journeys and during the course of the week we hope to have some guests who will share something of their spiritual journey with us as we reflect in our liturgies on the final week of Jesus' life.

It's always a very powerful season and we do hope people will make a special effort to come along and take the opportunity to go a little deeper on their own walk with God. At the end of February we hope to have a special Service of Thanksgiving to give thanks to God for the completion of the accessibility project in the church and around the grounds making it easier for people to enter and exit the building especially if they have mobility issues.

The path from the hall to the church and the garden of remembrance is being well used and we want to invite the contractors and some local guests and visitors to give thanks to God for the work being completed.

If you are considering coming to the Lenten services, it's a lovely thing to invite friends or neighbours and particularly if you can give them a lift. It's not always easy for people to come to a strange building or place and yet there is so much that is beautiful both in terms of our building and our worship that might well be a blessing to others.

Can we remind parishioners that if someone is going to be in hospital we don't always hear about that because of the regulations with data protection and if you would like a visit from one of the clergy please let us know. We are always delighted to come and to pray with people and are usually in the hospitals most weeks so please let us know so we don't miss you if you are there.

With very best wishes.
Jonathan Pierce (Rector)
Telephone 02890 793822



There will be midweek Lenten services on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm beginning on 15th February.

PRAYER MEETINGS BY ZOOM

Due to the Lenten services, our parish prayer meetings by Zoom will not take place on Thursday evenings at 7pm. We hope to be able to record or livestream the Lenten services.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation classes will begin in February. If anyone in school Year 9 (2nd form) upwards is interested, please contact Jono or our Curate, Andy. Any adult who has never been confirmed is also welcome.

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

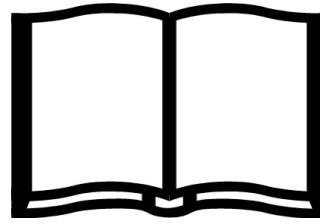
From the Registers 2024

Christian Burial

13th January - Brian McDowell

16th January - Jennifer McCullough

18th January - Peter Carlisle



Register of Vestry Members

The Register of Vestry men and women will be updated in January 2024 and reviewed by the Select Vestry at its meeting on Tuesday 20th February 2024.

The individuals recorded in the Register may stand for election to the Select Vestry at the Easter General Vestry and may vote in the election.

Anyone wishing to be registered must complete a Form of Declaration by 13th February so that their name may be added to the Register. Forms are available from the Churchwardens, on the Parish Website, and from the Secretary to the Select Vestry, Linda Leonard whose e-mail address is strathmore614@ntlworld.com

**Wednesday morning
communion & prayers
for the sick**



The Wednesday morning communion service with prayers for the sick takes place on Wednesdays at 10.30am. Tea/coffee and scones will be served afterwards.

Services for February



Sunday 4th February (2nd Sunday before Lent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Connect Service (Huston Hall)
- 7.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 11th February (Sunday before Lent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Holy Communion
- 7.00pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 18th February (1st Sunday in Lent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Holy Baptism
- 7.00pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 25th February (2nd Sunday in Lent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am A Service of Thanksgiving for the recently completed Accessibility Project
- 7.00pm Evening Prayer



Hello everyone

Here we are again with the coming season of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday 14th February. It is normally a time when we reflect on our faith and draw nearer to God in repentance and devotion as we reflect on Jesus' journey towards the cross. We can follow a pattern of extra readings, give up sweet stuff, alcohol etc or take up something else e.g. reading a Lenten book, leaving a small gift anonymously on a nearby doorstep! Whilst driving past a church near where my niece lives there is a banner stating simply "Stay Curious." Only two words but very encouraging advice. If I come across the name of someone or something I've heard of before but never considered, or perhaps never have, I will "Google" it to find out a little bit more. So I'm embarrassed to say that I've never heard of Sir Hans Sloane, a native of Killyleagh who is the subject of our next Mothers' Union meeting talk by Clive Scoular. I must have been living in a bubble! Anyway, it's never too late to find out more about the world and people around us, past and present. Clive's talk will, I'm sure, prove most interesting. **All members of the parish, men and women are invited to this open meeting on Thursday 1st February at 7:30pm.**

Annual subscriptions of £30 are due and any outstanding can be brought along on 1st February.

The MU Midday Prayers are not available at the time of print.

Advance notice: Mothers' Union Meeting 7th March at 7:30pm - table games and Easter crafts.

Angela Harvey

Branch Secretary - Mob 07596075081

Church Finances

The Select Vestry would like to thank all who give financially to support St. Finnian's Parish Church. Over the last few years people have been especially generous in their support to the Building & Contingency Fund which, along with some external grants, has enabled the recent accessibility project to be completed and paid. We are very grateful for all the financial support received.

Like other churches, St. Finnian's depends on the generosity of parishioners for all our general income. Without this, we could not continue as a local place of worship, witness, support and fellowship. We are truly grateful to all who contribute financially despite the immense pressures on family and personal budgets in recent times as everyday costs have risen.

The general fund of the church is used to cover the cost of running the parish which has inevitably risen significantly in recent years. Basic overheads (electricity, gas, water, insurance, salaries etc) have increased to the extent that the cost of these now exceed our regular general fund income by over £2,000 a month. The parish cannot continue to meet the deficit in general funds and without additional support, the Select Vestry will need to make difficult decisions in relation to expenditure.

What can you do to help?

- If you do not currently give or have let your giving lapse, please give prayerful consideration to regular giving either through weekly envelopes or through a Standing Order with your bank.
- If you currently give by Freewill Offering (FWO) Envelopes or through Standing Order, if you are able, we would ask that you give prayerful consideration to increasing your giving.

- If you do not currently give by Standing Order, please consider doing so. This provides St. Finnian's with a regular income if you are unable to make it to church for any reason. It also reduces costs and administration.
- If you are a taxpayer and not already doing so, please consider Gift Aiding your giving. The church can then claim an extra 25% from the Government so that, for example, your offering of £100 is worth £125 to the church. This is at no extra cost to you and easy to put in place.

If you have any queries about your FWO contributions, weekly envelopes, setting up a Standing Order or Gift Aiding, please do not hesitate to speak to Brian Lavery the Parish Treasurer. Brian can be contacted by email at stfinnianstreasurer@btinternet.com or via the church office 02890 792793.

Sunday Collection Plate

As you are aware we have not been passing the collection plate around during church services since the Covid-19 pandemic began. We believe that it is now time to reinstate this important part of worship and plan to recommence it at the beginning of February. We are aware that many parishioners have switched to electronic giving which we very much welcome and encourage. For those parishioners who give by electronic means we are making an 'Offering Token' card available, whereby when the collection plate is passed around, they can place the 'Offering Token' on the plate if they wish. These tokens will be available in the pews. We feel that this system will enable everyone to feel a part of the physical offering during our church services.

The Select Vestry

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY 1ST MARCH



The Christian women of Palestine have written this year's service with the title, "I beg you, bear with one another in love." A very poignant theme given recent events. Our local service will be held on Friday 1st March at 8.00pm in Orangefield Presbyterian Church. It will be led by women from the various churches in the area. A cup of tea will follow to be enjoyed while chatting with friends. Everyone is most welcome to attend.

Julie Cunningham

07814928398

General Maintenance

The church premises require regular maintenance to keep them in good order, so it is an advantage to have a regular schedule for works both for buildings and grounds. This gives people an opportunity to volunteer a few hours each month to assist in the upkeep of our estate. Accordingly, the **last Saturday** of each month is designated as a work morning, duration from 9am to 11am, for anyone who might be available. Work would include general light duties, tidying up, pruning, spraying, brushing etc. The next date is **Saturday 24th February 2024.** See you then!

Jim Haughey, Glebewarden

FLOWER DONATION

ROTA

FEBRUARY

4th Mrs N Moncrieff

11th Miss A Harvey

18th

25th Mrs M Saunders



THANKS

Following the sudden death of my son Peter on 12th January, I would just like to thank everyone who text, sent cards, brought food, prayed and visited Heather and myself.

I cannot say how much it meant to us and a big thank you to the Uganda team for the wonderful spread. Last but by no means least, thanks to Jono and Andy for the amazing pastoral care and the beautiful service.

We are blessed in St. Finnian's.

Barbara Carlisle

LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Hello Ladies,

Our first meeting in February will be on Wednesday 14th at 2.00pm. Adrienne Smyth will bring some of her craft pieces and share her enthusiasm for crafting. On Wednesday 28th, we will be joined by Esther Ross for an afternoon of fun with numbers. In what can be a grey month, we look forward to your company.

Julie 07814928398

CREGAGH CRAFTERS

Cregagh Crafters meet on Tuesdays from 10.30am - 12.30pm in the Huston Hall. Feel free to come along for crafting, coffee and chat. Everyone is very welcome.

Janet Johnston

07711885203

An open invitation to all 3-11 year olds, their parents and carers for our next Messy church afternoon. Fun, food, songs, stories and crafts - you are very welcome to come and join us on **Friday 23rd February from 3.30pm - 5.00pm.**

Messy Church Team



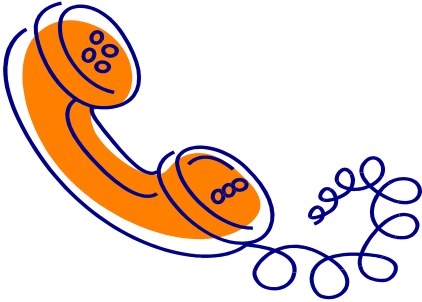


Welcome to February's article and yet another opportunity for me to draw your attention to an aspect of Pilates. On this occasion I'd like to talk about one of the start positions that we use for the various exercises. Classical mat based Pilates comprises the 34 exercises originally developed by Joseph Pilates of which 15 start from the supine position (on your back), 5 start from the prone position (on your front), 11 start from the seated position and 3 from a side lying /side kneeling position. I had previously talked about exercises on the chair as one of the newer options available for those who have difficulty getting down and up from the mat, and now I'm going to go into a little more detail on the seated position for mat Pilates. I'm sure many people can remember being told to 'sit up straight', either by parents or teachers or both, and there is a good reason for that. In Pilates a fundamental principle is alignment - whether standing, lying down (prone or supine) and indeed seated. In the case of the seated position the best way to maintain good alignment is by having the pelvis in its neutral position i.e. the pelvis is neither tilted forward or back, and as a consequence the lumbar spine will be in a neutral position exhibiting its natural curve. When seated properly, you will be perched on prominences at the bottom of each ischium (the lower parts of the pelvic bone) called the ischial tuberosity, sometimes termed the sit bone. I should be honest with you and state that this is not the most comfortable position to attain initially, since we have become more used to sitting in soft comfy chairs and sofas with our pelvis tilted backwards and resting on our gluteus maximus, the big muscle on our bottoms. However, it would cause a lot of lower back pain to attempt to carry out the sitting exercises with the pelvis out of neutral alignment so a lot of focus is placed on attaining the correct start position. Before I sign off I'd like to challenge you to sit the way you would normally and then consciously 'tilt' your pelvis forward slightly and feel the difference. Until the next time stay safe and keep moving. **We meet on Wednesdays at 7pm in the Huston Hall. Everyone is very welcome and a small donation of £3 per class is requested to go towards church funds.** **If you have any questions or want to find out more about Pilates, please contact me - John Waterworth by phone (+447941368546) or email at jcwworth@yahoo.co.uk**

CONTACT DETAILS

Rector: Tel: 028 90793822

Curate: Tel: 07905368474



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 **March** magazine to office.cregagh@down.anglican.org or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 6th February.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



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