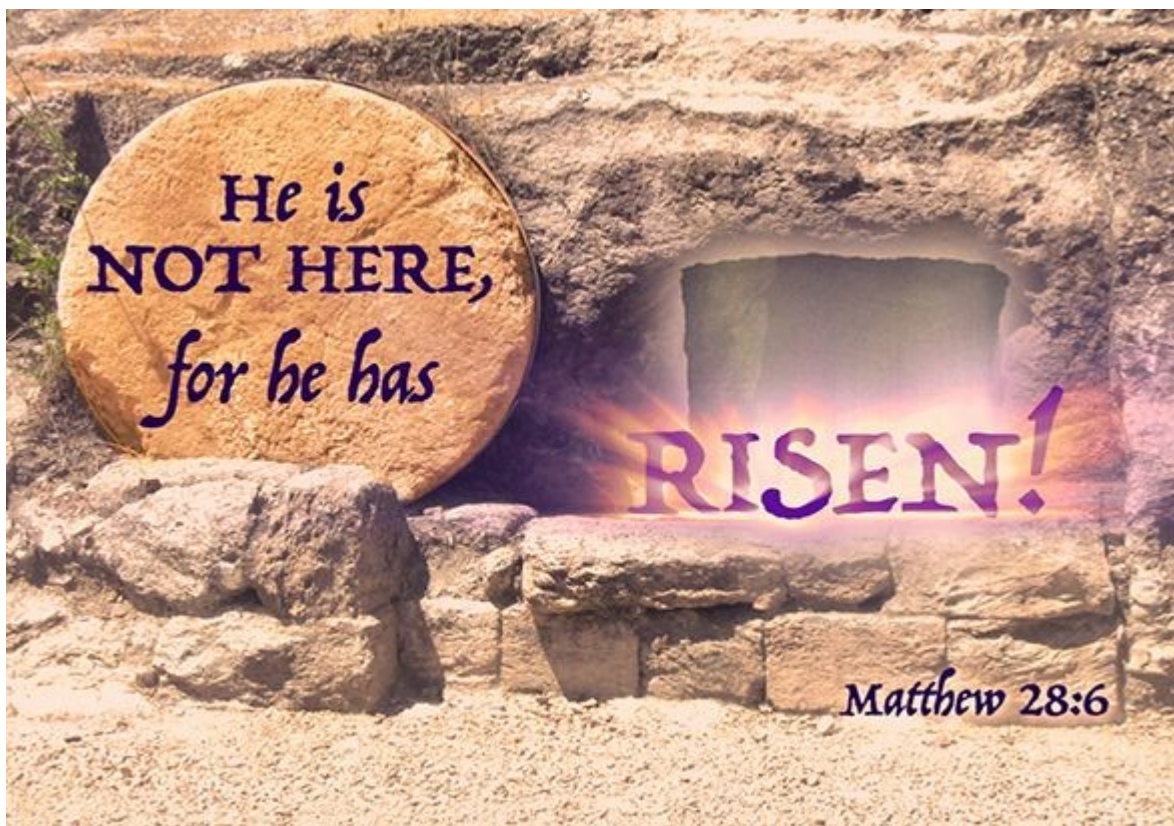


# ST Finnian's

**APRIL 2024**



*Join us to explore the  
significance of Easter.*

# Dear Friends

I wonder if you have ever waited anxiously for something to arrive. Maybe it's a gift you have ordered for someone for a special occasion? Maybe it's a significant day in your calendar like a holiday or a birthday or a concert for which you have tickets? Maybe it's a wedding or the birth of a child and there's a sense that when this day arrives things will never be the same again. As Christians journey through the season of Lent it can seem like a long season.

Although the days are getting brighter, the weather is often cold and wet. You perhaps miss those little creature comforts you may have given up for Lent. You long for the day you believe to be significant, the dawn of Easter and all that the day means and symbolises in human experience. As we look forward to that day, I wonder what it means for you or to you? Is it about an opportunity to get together with family and friends? Is it about hope breaking through after a season in the wilderness? Is it about light breaking through the darkness or about Jesus rising from the dead? What difference does this make to our ordinary everyday lives in 2024? What impact

might it have on our children or grandchildren? If you've never thought much about it before or attempted to explain it to someone else, it can be a bit tricky to unpack. When I talk to other parents at the school gate or people I meet at my children's sporting activities or chat with neighbours who know what I do, they are conscious in many cases that Easter is a busy time in the life of a church. When I try to describe it, I usually talk about it as an experience. If you have always lived your life without any reference to God or Jesus it doesn't necessarily make a great deal of sense to you. It's only when you come along and try to understand it and why it might be significant, that things start to happen that might be hard to explain. I read in a textbook that we used to use to prepare young people for confirmation about a journalist who sought to highlight the irrelevance of Jesus' teaching to modern life. To research his article he determined to read the New Testament in the Bible and to try to put into practice any of the teachings of Jesus he could find to show how out of touch they were in relation to modern life.

As his experiment continued, he found to his surprise that the barriers in his mind about Christianity began to evaporate. In fact, within 4 weeks he found himself starting to attend a church and, within a few weeks of that beginning, he decided to commit his own life to following Jesus.

In the life of our church, Easter is quite an immersive experience. We can't force anyone to come on the journey but if people engage with the events of the last week of Jesus' life (what we usually call Holy Week) they rarely remain unmoved and often they are changed.

Each evening during Holy Week (25<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> March), there will be special services and liturgies at 7.30pm.

These will not only reflect on some of the key moments in that week for Jesus of Nazareth and their significance, they will also offer an opportunity to think about our own lives.

We will be welcoming guests to come and share something of their journey from the Monday to the Thursday evening.

They might describe the difference it has made to have a sense of God's presence or

what their life looks like as a result of that decision to follow Jesus.

I'm excited about the people who are coming, not because they are particularly special or eloquent though I think they all are. I'm excited that they are all different and have a unique story to tell and as we hear those stories it often triggers something in us. Wouldn't it be amazing if those stories awakened something powerful and profound in our own lives? One of the significant things we can do as Holy Week and Easter approach, is invite someone to come along.

I'm thrilled the way our confirmation class has grown in size in recent weeks. Friends are inviting friends and coming together, some from other churches or communities but it's great to have the chance to explore the claims of the Christian faith together.

On Good Friday we have a special short service for children and young people at 12 noon and on Good Friday evening, we have the reflective service of Tenebrae where we hear a reading of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus from the Gospel of John at 7.30pm.

Good Friday is a day of prayer in our church and we ask people to take responsibility for maintaining a presence of prayer throughout the day from 7am-7pm. There will be some guiding points for prayer if people wish to utilise them.

On Easter Day there will be celebrations of Holy Communion at 9am, 11am and 7pm.

It would be very special to invite people along to some of these services. If you have family members or friends who are curious about spiritual things, church during Holy Week and Easter is reflective, thought-provoking and brings up all sorts of things for us. We hope many of these services will be live-streamed but nothing quite beats the experience of being there in person if we can. I know many people who don't consider themselves to be churchgoers but who make a point of popping in for a while on Good Friday to have some quiet and thinking time.

Please spread the word and let people know they are welcome. With very best wishes.

**Jonathan Pierce (Rector)**  
**Telephone 02890 793822**

## **Easter General Vestry**

The Easter General Vestry, the annual business meeting of the church will take place on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm. At the meeting, a new Select Vestry will be elected and the Rector and Treasurer will present annual reports. Everyone is welcome to attend.

## **PRAYER MEETINGS BY ZOOM**

Our parish prayer meetings by Zoom take place on Thursday evenings at 7pm. If you would like to join us, send an email to [zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com](mailto:zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com) or contact the Rector.

**Please note there will be no Zoom meeting during Easter Week (4<sup>th</sup> April) but meetings will resume again the following week (11<sup>th</sup> April).**

## **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.

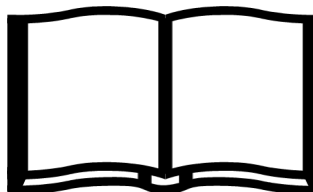
**Mobile: 07513947504**

## From the Registers 2024

### *Christian Burial*

1<sup>st</sup> March - Sadie King

5<sup>th</sup> March - Elsie Christie



From Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm each evening we have special Holy Week services and liturgies. We will be inviting a range of interesting speakers to share their spiritual journey as we reflect on the journey of Jesus towards Calvary in the final week of his life and the events that unfolded. **On Good Friday at 12 noon there will be a special short service for children and young people. It will last 20-30 minutes and will be incorporated into a day of prayer on Good Friday.** The church will be open from 7am and we will invite people to take responsibility for maintaining a presence of prayer throughout the day as we pray for our church, our land and the world. On Easter Day there will be services of Holy Communion at 9am, 11am and 7pm.

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



The Wednesday morning communion service with prayers for the sick takes place on Wednesdays at 10.30am. Everyone is very welcome. Please feel free to join us afterwards in the Sextons' Room for friendship whilst enjoying a cup of tea/ coffee and scones.

**Please note that the Wednesday morning communion service will be held as normal during Easter Week (3<sup>rd</sup> April) but there will be no refreshments served that day. Refreshments will be served as usual from the following week (10<sup>th</sup> April).**



***Our recent St. Patrick's Day themed get-together after the Wednesday morning communion service. Shamrock theme and shortbread courtesy of our master baker, Tom! Many thanks go to Tom, Hilda, Jean and Liz for their dedication and for making us all so welcome every week.***

## **DIVINE HEALING MINISTRIES**

The Divine Healing Ministries service will be held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm. The service will include a guest speaker, prayer ministry and anointing with oil.

Everyone is very welcome.

**Norman Sleator**

## **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 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

See you then!

**Jim Haughey**  
**Glebewarden**

# Services for April



## **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

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

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

9.00am Holy Communion  
11.00am Holy Communion  
7.00pm Compline

## **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

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

## **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April (5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

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





**Hello everyone**

**Reminder: No Branch Meeting on Thursday 4th April as it falls in the Easter Week holiday period.**

What comes to mind when the month of April arrives? Easter, flowers and April showers perhaps. Apparently, our word April may come from the Latin word 'aperire' meaning to open as in the flowers and trees blossoming with life, energy and vitality. Some birthday anniversaries are marked by special days of celebration such as 23<sup>rd</sup> April for William Shakespeare and 13<sup>th</sup> April for Alfred Mosher Butts (inventor of the Scrabble word game) On the 2<sup>nd</sup> April each year it is World Autism Day to recognise the gifts of people living with this condition and highlighting ways in which awareness of issues facing them can be raised and overcome. I've been looking at a resource on the parables of Jesus for people with learning disabilities called 'Secrets of the Kingdom', the first being "Heaven is a real place, and it is amazing!" Just a short sentence but so arresting! The prop for the lesson was a big old-fashioned key like the one I recently borrowed to access the church on behalf of the church flowers' team. As we prepare to celebrate Easter, this reminded me that the key into heaven is through Jesus alone because of His victory over sin, death and hell by his life, death and resurrection. We will be happy there because of Him.

Liz, the Committee and I send our good wishes for a lovely few days off with your family and friends at this Eastertide.

**Advance notices:**

**Next Branch Meeting Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 7:30pm**  
**Overseas Meeting Speaker Jenny Smyth from Church**  
**Missionary Society Ireland (CMSI)**

**Angela Harvey**  
**Branch Secretary**

## **FLOWER DONATION ROTA**

You may have noticed over the course of many years, the flower arrangements that adorn our church not just at times like Easter, Harvest and Christmas but all year round. Did you know that behind these beautiful arrangements lies a dedicated, hard-working and talented group of ladies? Every week two flower arrangements are prepared for the Communion table by these ladies in memory of a parishioner's loved-one. There is a monthly rota printed in the magazine which shows who is remembering their loved-one in each particular week (see opposite page). The people on the rota donate money for the flowers (usually £20). There are currently some spaces available on the rota. If you would like to donate to the flower fund in memory of a loved one, please contact Linda in the church office to discuss what weeks are available. (Tel: 028 90792793 or email [office.cregagh@down.anglican.org](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org))



***Marion Carleton and Paddy Bailie passing on their expertise to some new recruits to the flower-arranging group.***

## FLOWER DONATION ROTA

### APRIL

7<sup>th</sup> Mrs B Carlisle  
14<sup>th</sup> Miss G Stevenson  
21<sup>st</sup> Mrs L Campbell  
28<sup>th</sup> Mrs E Kells



St. Dorothea's Church, Gilnahirk is holding a fashion show on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April to raise funds for the church.

**The show will be held in Our Lady & St. Patrick's college, Knock at 7.30pm.** Refreshments will be served and a raffle will be held. Fashion by Jonzara! Tickets cost £12.

Come along for an evening of fashion and entertainment.

**For tickets please contact: Esther: 07535107223**

**Ken: 07988391508**

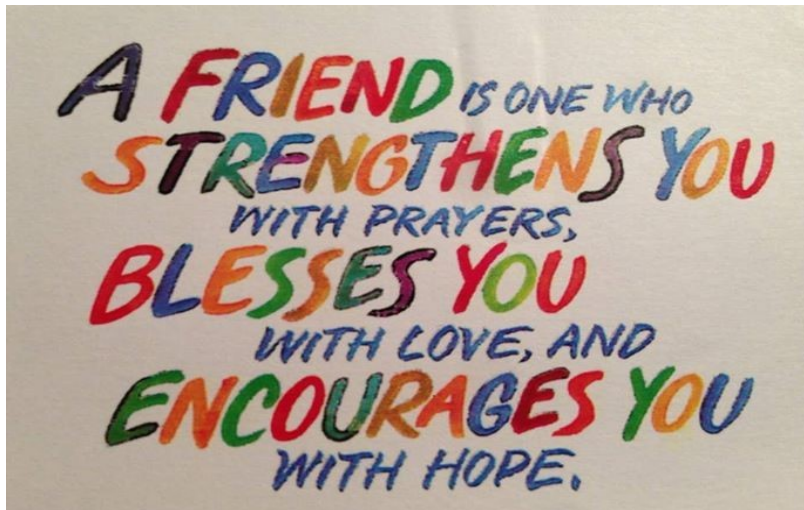
## **LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP**

Hello Ladies,

It will be lovely to meet after our Easter break on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm. "Last man to let me down" is the title of Chris Scott's talk. I'll let you ponder about its content. Chris is giving his fee to Marie Curie and there will be a basket if you wish to donate. Helen Sanlon's illustrated talk on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> is entitled "Drawn to life". She will explore how her career as an artist and life experiences are entwined.

We hope that you can join us.

**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.

**We will resume after the Easter break on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April.**

**Janet Johnston**

**07711885203**



## **Parish History**

Over the past few weeks a number of parishioners have mentioned to Linda Campbell that they have some archive material relating to the parish and have asked if it could be used.

It may seem a long way off until the 100th anniversary of St. Finnian's (2032) but it will take us some time to start planning those celebrations. We already have an excellent detailed history of the first 50 years of the parish written by David Hammond. Now it is important to add more to our story from its early beginnings to the present day.

If you have any articles, photos or memories please get in touch with Linda in the office on a Tuesday or Wednesday to let her know what you have. Tel. 02890 792793 or email her at [office.cregagh@down.anglican.org](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org).

We can then start to work together on how we can best build up a full centenary record and celebrate our 100th anniversary. We look forward to seeing what might be hidden in your attic or in that box under the stairs.

## **CHURCH KEYS**

If anyone has church keys that they no longer need, we would be grateful if you could return them to Linda Campbell in the church office. Alternatively, please give them to one of the Churchwardens. Thank you.



Hello friends

We had another wonderful Messy Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. It was lovely to see our regular children as well as a delightful group of new faces and toddlers.

With around 25 children on the day, we created a number of crafts including our own stained glass effect windows, lighthouses and lanterns to brighten our bedrooms and tiny twinkling stars made of all things fluffy and glittery. There was a real sense of fun and creativity as we completed our illuminating firework display board which is currently on show in the hall.

Andy reassured us all that through Jesus, our Light of the World, God sees us, hears us and loves us and that we are never alone. We all sang and did the actions to 'My Lighthouse' - what a brilliant song to remind us that God's love will see us through every trial in our lives.

***"I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the Light of Life " John 8:12.***

Our lovely afternoon finished with delicious food treats, ice cream and an Easter egg to take home in our goody bag. We look forward to more fun and fellowship at our next Messy Church which is due to take place on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June Lord willing. We are hoping for some dry weather to be able to use the new parachute and outdoor games that Alison has purchased through funding.

**A sincere thank you to every person in our Messy Church team for all their continued hard work and dedication.**



Here we go again, spring is in the air and hopefully everyone is feeling that bit better with more sunlight and just a little more heat. In the meantime Pilates at St. Finnian's continues to be well supported and I trust that one of the reasons for this is that people are appreciating the impact that the exercises are having on their general well-being and in particular on the health of their spines. I mention this because a key focus of Pilates is to help maintain the natural curvature and to fully utilise the potential range of movement in each segment of the spine in a symmetrical manner and to do this through a series of specific exercises designed to improve its alignment and flexibility . I have often heard it said that you're as old as your spine and, when you think about it, this makes perfect sense. If you have strength or flexibility, imbalances in your spine or bad postural habits and injuries, the range of movement without pain or discomfort will be restricted and you will often look or feel older than your years. The opposite is also true in that a person with good posture and a strong, well-aligned and flexible spine, will appear younger than they actually are. Our spines are wonderful things and, rather than being a straight rod, they consist of 33 bones in 5 specific sections with each section having a distinct curve which enhances its ability to move and act as shock absorbers. However, the 12 vertebrae in the thoracic section (the upper back) and the 5 larger lumbar vertebrae (lower back) are key for the major movements of the spine from below the neck to hip level and are the focal point of many of the exercises we do in the class. Some exercises will help develop the muscles that control the back in flexion (bending forward or sideways) while others will do the same in extension (moving backward beyond the normal 'straight' position) and rotation to the left and right. In every case it is just as important to provide a series of movements that stretch and bring the muscles back to their relaxed position and help release any residual tension. Hopefully this wee article will provide a bit of fuel for thought and maybe increase your understanding of why, in the case of those who faithfully come along week after week, you're being asked to do all these odd movements. Time to sign off now with my usual exhortation to stay safe and keep moving.

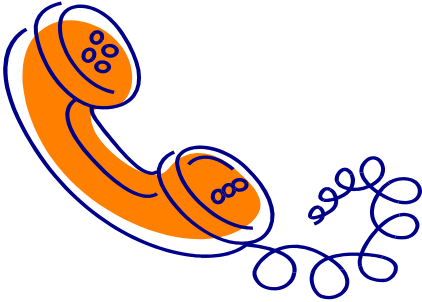
**We meet on Wednesdays at 7pm in the Huston Hall. Everyone is very welcome and a small donation of £3 per class is requested to go towards church funds.**

**If you have any questions or want to find out more about Pilates, please contact me - John Waterworth by phone (+447941368546) or email at [jcworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcworth@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](mailto: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](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org)

## **Magazine**

Please send articles for inclusion in the **May** magazine to [office.cregagh@down.anglican.org](mailto:office.cregagh@down.anglican.org) or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

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



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