

ST Finnian's

JANUARY 2025



Dear Friends

It's hard to believe that we stand at the cusp of another new year. As a new year dawns we are conscious of the benefits of looking back with thanksgiving, taking stock of where we are and looking to the future with anticipation. As this magazine goes to print we are preparing to say farewell to our curate Andy after three and a half years of very fruitful ministry among us. Andy has endeared himself to people of every generation and has been an outstanding colleague. He has supported people through the best and the worst of times with wonderful pastoral care. He has been courageous and imaginative in mobilising outreach ventures like welcoming a family fleeing the war in Ukraine, training teams to go into a local school to help with literacy and numeracy and recent events like our guest service in September. He also assisted at the Christmas film outreach where we welcomed people from the community to watch a movie and share something of the true meaning of Christmas. Andy has brought reverence and dignity to leading worship and prepared thoroughly for preaching and teaching. He also initiated the

Hedge project with the help of his wife Jackie and this offered a great connection point for people from the home educated community. He has wonderful gifts which will enrich his new congregations greatly in Clonallon and Warrenpoint and Rostrevor. We hope to bring some cars to his service of introduction on January 6th in Kilbroney and, if you would like to come, please sign the list at the back of the church. Our loss is definitely Clonallon and Warrenpoint with Rostrevor's gain and we assure Andy, Jackie, Maddie and Emmy of our best wishes and prayers as they enter a new season. We will always be grateful for all they brought to this place. Can we ask people to let the office or the Rector know if anyone from their family or household is in hospital? Under new data protection laws, hospital chaplains are no longer allowed to inform us as once they did. This can mean people are in hospital at times for weeks without anyone being aware they are there. We recognise that being in hospital and going through illness are very difficult experiences and it has always been a priority for us to visit and

pray with parishioners and their families at such times, so please keep us informed if a visit would be helpful. We are always glad to visit in people's homes and nursing homes, so if there is any reason you want someone to call with you, please let us know.

We have been encouraged by the response to our Mind Matters project around the topic of mental health. Please see the article in this month's magazine about the event at the end of January which will offer people the opportunity to gather information and hear from a variety of organisations about the services they provide. It might be a great event to invite friends or neighbours to come along to as so many people are finding life tough in these days.

Can I say a huge thank you to the very generous responses to our Bishops' Appeal collection for the situation in the Middle East and the Christmas appeal for Christians Against Poverty. We look forward to James Myles from CAP coming to share about that very important work on 19th January at our morning service.

You will also find in this month's magazine a new feature as

parishioners share their personal memories of the parish over the years. We are trying to both capture and trigger important memories of life in the parish between involvement in organisations and activities and memorable parish events. Thank you to Mrs Jean Wallace for her beautiful article this month and maybe it might inspire you to put some of those memories down and send them to the parish office at stfinnians100years@outlook.com If you don't do email, we can organise someone to come and help you capture those special memories.

Can I also say thank you to everyone for all the work behind the scenes to make Christmas such a special season for us all.

Thank you especially to those who can no longer come in person but pray constantly and tune in online. There is a huge amount of extra administration in the office. The technology team have a lot of extra services to prepare. Thank you to the choir and band at our Connect service. Thank you to the Glebewardens who dealt with storm damage after Storm Darragh.

Thank you to our Churchwardens Julie and Rosemary. Thank you to the many involved in catering for events like Andy's farewell to funeral teas and the weekly refreshments we enjoy after services. The flowers were beautiful, the Christmas tree was wonderful as were the Advent wreath and the candles for Christmas services. As at every time of year there are so many hidden volunteers offering wonderful activities for our community and when people are so busy it makes such a difference. We greatly appreciate all that you do. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your household a happy and healthy 2025.

With very best wishes

Jonathan Pierce (Rector)
Telephone 02890 793822

PRAYER MEETINGS BY ZOOM

Our parish prayer meetings by Zoom will recommence on Thursday 2nd January at 7pm. If you would like to join us, send an email to zoomtostfinnian@btconnect.com or contact the Rector.

ANDY'S SERVICE OF INTRODUCTION

Andy's service of introduction will be held in Kilbroney at 7.30pm on 6th January. If you would like to go, please sign the sheet at the back of the church.

PRAYER WARRIOR

Do you have a concern or problem and would like someone to pray for you? If so, contact Robin by text or email, he will be willing to help. Your contact will be completely confidential and no details will be passed on to anyone else unless you want them to.

Mobile:07513947504

Email:robsmill24@gmail.com

CRECHE

A creche is now available during the 11am services. Feel free to leave your children over to the hall at any point before or during the service.

DIVINE HEALING MINISTRIES

The Divine Healing Ministries' service will be held on Tuesday 28th January at 7.30pm. Everyone is very welcome.

From the Registers 2024

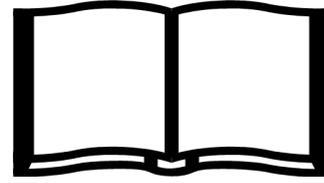
Christian Burial

3rd December - Ken Sloan

4th December - Samuel Robinson

12th December - Susan Hilton

23rd December - Jim Clarke



CAP CHRISTMAS APPEAL

A huge THANK YOU to all who contributed to this year's CAP Christmas Appeal. Over £1000 received in cash and gift vouchers and an abundance of toiletry sets means we can help our clients with the extra costs associated with Christmas. With these and some extra food items, they will be able to have a Christmas they were not expecting. Last year, 85 families in N. Ireland went debt-free. How different this Christmas will be for them than last year as the financial burden associated with Christmas has been lifted. Our prayer is that next year, many of the families we are presently helping will be able to experience that freedom a debt-free Christmas brings. Thank you sincerely for being a part of that journey. May your generosity of spirit result in what God promised the Children of Israel before they entered the Promised Land: *"You shall give freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give, because for this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all you undertake"* Deuteronomy 15:10

James Myles

CAP

**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 to join us for tea/coffee, scones and friendship in the Sextons' Room after the service.

**Please note that services will resume on
8th January.**

**Community Health Fair
Thursday 30th January**

The next event in the Mind Matters programme is a Community Health Fair which will take place on Thursday 30th January between 10.30am and 1pm in the Huston Hall and Sextons' Room. Representatives from 20 different health and social care organisations in the voluntary and health care sectors will be bringing information to share with you about where you can get advice and support. You will have the opportunity to go round and chat with them and to have a cup of tea/coffee while you are at the event. Please bring a friend. This event is open to everyone in the local community and we hope to see you there.

Services for January



Sunday 5th January (The Epiphany)

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

Sunday 12th January (The Baptism of our Lord)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Holy Communion
7.00pm Compline

Sunday 19th January (The 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Morning Prayer (Christians Against Poverty)
7.00pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 26th January (The 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany)

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

CONFIRMATION

On Thursday 21st November a Confirmation Service was held in the church. Congratulations to Patrick (senior), Patrick (junior), Grace, Lewis, Harry, Conor and Katherine who were all confirmed on the night.



COMMUNITY MOVIE NIGHT



Special thanks go to Charmaine and Mark for having the vision, commitment and generosity to organise the community movie night in December. Despite the stormy weather, the event was very well attended. The children loved the film and went away with a goody bag and a memento of the bell from the film engraved with that all important message - **BELIEVE**.

Register of Vestry Members

The Register of Vestry men and women will be updated in January 2025 and reviewed at the Select Vestry at its meeting on Tuesday 18th February 2025. 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, Mrs May Lavery, whose email address is secretarystfinnians@outlook.com

CREGAGH CRAFTERS



Cregagh Crafters will resume at 10.30am on Tuesday 7th January. Come along to knit, sew, crochet or any other craft you like to do. You don't need to be an expert. A warm welcome will be given to all.

Janet Johnston

Tel: 07711885203

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 in the halls and church and optional pruning, spraying, brushing etc. The next date is **Saturday 25th January.** See you then!

Jim Haughey, Glebewarden

LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Hello Ladies,

Happy New Year to you all.

Helen, Caroline, Dorothy and I wish you good health and the warmth of friendship throughout 2025.

We are very pleased to begin the year by welcoming our Rector to the meeting on Wednesday 8th at 2.00pm. Jono will give a talk to build us up as we face whatever 2025 will bring. Our meeting on Wednesday 22nd will be more casual than usual. It will revolve around getting to know each other better and strengthening our bonds of friendship. A very warm welcome is extended to any ladies who wish to join us.

Julie

Tel: 07814928398

FWO Envelopes 2025

The Free Will Offering (FWO) envelopes for 2025 are available for collection. If you haven't already picked up your envelopes, please collect them at the back of the church. If you donate by Standing Order to the Parish, envelopes were not ordered for you apart from a few donors that specifically asked that they receive envelopes also. 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. At the beginning of a New Year, we would like to thank all who support the work of the Parish by their regular giving by envelope or Standing Order. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Brian Lavery

Hon. Treasurer



ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY PROJECT 1932-2032

To celebrate 100 years of St. Finnian's we would like to collect your stories of the people, events and changes in the parish to publish in future church magazines. Do you have: -

- Photographs from over the years
- Old church magazines
- Any material for display purposes
- Information about church organisations
- Anything else that may be relevant

We are interested in your memories, particularly from older members of the congregation and people who have belonged to the parish since childhood. If you would like to write a paragraph or two of around 250-300 words, you can post this to Linda Campbell at the church office or email your story to **stfinnians100years@outlook.com**

We would be grateful if any contributions could be submitted in Word Document format for ease of editing.

If you are aware of anyone who may need help writing their memories, we would be grateful for any assistance from friends and family. If you would like to become involved in the planning and gathering of material for this project then please email **stfinnians100years@outlook.com** or contact Linda with your name and details.

The first article in this history series can be found overleaf. Our thanks go to Jean Wallace for sharing her memories.

ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY - JEAN WALLACE

I have been a member of St. Finnian's for almost 71 years. I well remember the day I first saw St. Finnian's. My friend and I were out walking, past the American Graveyard, all those little white crosses, so sad, on down the Rocky Road. This was before the dual carriageway was built. It was a Sunday evening and there was St. Finnian's! We thought how lovely it looked, people were coming out of the church, standing around chatting. Little did I know what a big part it would play in my life. I hadn't even met my husband at this point. Our children were baptised, confirmed and married in St. Finnian's. Our seven grandchildren were also baptised in the church. My husband William is resting in the Garden of Remembrance where I will join him one day. I have known all the Rectors - Canon Huston, Bishop Mehaffey, Canon Battye and now Jonathan as well as all of the Curates. I have always been proud to say, "I belong to St. Finnian's!"

THE AMERICAN GRAVEYARD, ROCKY ROAD

During the war years, the American Graveyard, as it was known, was where the bodies of American servicemen were buried. The graveyard was neatly kept with little white crosses and there were cherry trees planted there. After the war, the bodies were repatriated and the area became a field once again. However, in 2005 Castlereagh Borough Council decided to place a plaque at the site and subsequently erected a monument in 2013. The Council recognised the importance of preserving history for future generations. The monument is now well-tended and will forever be a place of remembrance and respect for those who lost their lives during the Second World War. Kay Johnston (nee Close), our former Sexton, lived with her family on the Rocky Road. She was a child at the time but remembered the graveyard and the American soldiers who looked after it.

Kay often told stories of how on her way to and from Castlereagh Primary School on Church Road, the American soldiers were kind to the children. On the other side of the graveyard was a German prisoner of war camp and Kay remembered the prisoners trying to talk to the children through the fence. They often made little wooden animals and handed them through the fence to the children. Kay and two of her sisters and friends are pictured below with two of the American soldiers. The photo was taken in 1944.



Back row: L-R, Kathleen (Kay) and Mary Close, Evelyn Barnes
Front row: L - R, Beth Smyth & Ann Close. The US soldiers on caretaker duty are Don Fluge & Melton Hale.

The graveyard as it is today.



“Lest We Forget”

Hello everyone

Here we are at the turn of the year again. There are certain big days in the calendar which we all mark such as Easter Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day among others not so obvious like May Day and Midsummer's Day or Halloween. Have you heard of the phrase "Whatever you do on the first day of the year you will do all the year round"? (I heard this in the prison comedy Porridge spoken by Mr MacKay a Prison Officer to the new batch of inmates.) Thus many of us make resolutions to change the often poor habits of a lifetime for better ones. Apparently the old rituals surrounding New Year like first footing and in other cultures things like smashing plates, eating twelve grapes are designed to bring good luck. However Christian people would not go along with those type of traditions. When the holidays are over, and everyday life resumes it's then that what's important to us is revealed. Here are a few lines of a 1972 song "Any Old Kind of Day" by the late Harry Chapin: "And it was just an any old kind of day, The kind that comes and slips away, The kind that fills up easy my life's time." Isn't life like that sometimes? Say for example you've got a cold and you can't be bothered doing anything so the day goes by, that's normal but as I get older I can't really afford to live in an aimless way. Each day is a new gift with opportunities to learn, reflect and treasure. So to revisit one failure which I've mentioned before, (i.e. not finishing reading the Bible in a year) I'm going to give it another go along the lines of what our former late Rector Noel Battye called "Granny cramming for her finals!" We are so looking forward to our January Branch meeting at 10:30am (note revised start time) when our own Gillian Stevenson will be leading us - see full details opposite. Liz, myself, Julie and our other Committee members Joan, Carole, Belinda and Karen join me in wishing you a Happy New Year.

Angela Harvey, Branch Secretary



Ladies, this is for you! Learn about and celebrate Nollaig na mBan (Women's Little Christmas). Come and enjoy the craic! Reflect on the year that has past and look forward to the year that lies ahead.

Gillian Stevenson

The Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord,
we thank you for your love so freely given to us all.
We pray for families around the world.
Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share
your love through the encouragement, strengthening and
support of marriage and family life.
Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and
worship, and in love and service reach out as your hands
across the world. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

ST. FINNIAN'S BOYS' BRIGADE



The following are the starting dates for 2025 for the BB and Anchor Boys: -

New Year Return:

Company and Junior Sections 6th January

Anchor Boys 7th January.



Hello friends

At our last Messy Church of 2024 Andy began the day explaining to us that we should never feel scared or alone because Jesus, our faithful shepherd is right there with us and will never leave us alone.

The day was jam-packed with activities. We enjoyed some festive crafts together and the children got to make some beautiful lanterns, decorated cones for their trees, Christmas cards and coloured nativity baubles. Thank you to all parents, grown-ups and grandparents for their help with crafts and for the support in bringing each child to the quarterly sessions.

We would like to thank Andy for all his help in making Messy Church such a fun place to be. We shall miss you and your joyous way of sharing faith. We pray that God would richly bless you and your family as you take up your new appointment as Priest-in Charge come the new year.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you" Deuteronomy 31:6.

The Messy Church Team

SAMARITAN'S PURSE 2024 SHOE BOX APPEAL



Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated or put together a shoe box in-person or online. Janet and all the crafting folk lovingly filled 24 boxes for children of The Samaritan's Appeal, which gave us a final total of 84 parcels of sunshine for those needy, marginalised children. All of our boxes will be going to Bosnia this year, whilst the on-line boxes will be delivered to Malawi.



Our prayers are with you and those you love as we enter a new year filled with the hope given to us through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and He will reward them for what they have done.

Proverbs 19:11

Mark & Charmaine

FLOWER DONATION ROTA

JANUARY

5th Mrs H McKnight
12th Mrs J Cunningham
19th Mr R Hamilton
26th Mrs D Smith



ST. FINNIAN'S TODDLERS

The Toddlers' Group finished the year with a Christmas party and some very special visitors. Thanks to Santa and his elves for taking the time to visit at their busiest time of year.



We also bid a fond farewell to Andy and thank him wholeheartedly for his commitment to the group over the past few years. We will miss him greatly and wish him and his family well for the next new chapter of their lives.

The St. Finnian's Toddlers' Group will resume in the New Year at 10.00am Monday 13th January 2025.



St. Finnian's Pilates



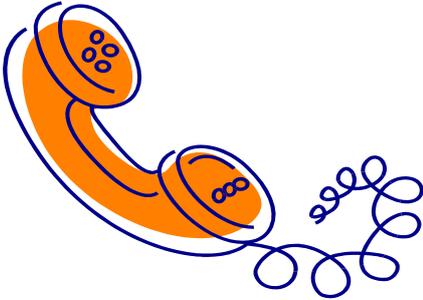
Hi everyone,

Happy new year everyone, and hopefully a healthy one too. Last month I started looking at Pilates and Sport and provided a general introduction to the role that it can play in maintaining fitness and flexibility to help reduce injuries. This month I'd like to consider the subject in relation to football which is a sport played by millions at elite and grassroots levels across the world. It will come as no surprise, given the money and pressures involved in the English Premier league, that injuries are perhaps the biggest headache for managers and players alike. Many of the injuries sustained on the football pitch are unavoidable, resulting from the inherently physical nature of the game, but many injuries that can see players side-lined for weeks are certainly avoidable and may be linked to the balance of their muscles and lack of flexibility. Fortunately a growing number of physiotherapists attached to football clubs and academies are now using Pilates, and this has been recognised by the English FA, with their Head of Sports Medicine stating that Pilates, with its focus on muscle balance, is an important aspect in the prevention of injuries. Some of the most common football injuries include hamstring strains, groin and ankle injuries and back problems resulting from placing the stress on the wrong part of the body during the act of kicking for example. Much of the problem lies with muscle imbalances such as strong overworked quadriceps, tight hamstrings, shortened anterior ankle muscles, tight hips flexors, weak core stability and overworked back extensors. These will result in poor trunk and pelvic stability and very poor flexibility. The following exercises are recommended for inclusion in an exercise programme to address the most common issues. Roll downs, the dart and spine curls will help increase spine flexibility and stability, hamstring and hip flexor stretches, single and double leg stretches and side lying quadricep stretches will address the problem of shortened tight muscles, curl ups (including oblique) and side rolls will help with core and lower back mobility and strength. In addition it is important to include balance exercises such as standing on one leg (especially on the 'weaker' side) to increase balance and body control and help avoid injuries caused by losing balance during simple movements. Obviously the majority of us will not be placing the same stresses and strains on our bodies that professional footballers do, but the principles remain the same no matter what level of sport and activity we are involved in and these exercises will help with injury prevention for amateur and casual participants alike. Take care and keep moving. **We meet on Wednesdays at 7pm in the Huston Hall. Everyone is welcome and a small donation of £3 per class is requested to go towards church funds. If you want to find out more about Pilates, please contact me - John Waterworth by phone (+447941368546) or email at icwworth@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 **February** magazine to office.cregagh@down.anglican.org or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 7th January.**

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