

ST Finnian's

OCTOBER 2025



Come ye thankful
People come...

*An invitation to our Harvest
Thanksgiving Services on
Sunday 26th October
at 11am and 7pm.
(See inside for further details)*

Dear Friends

As I write this magazine our thoughts are turning towards Harvest Thanksgiving. These are always very special services for us in the church as we give thanks to God for His faithfulness to us. We remember those who have many struggles and overwhelming challenges to contend with, from food shortages to crop failures, as a result of climate change. We think too of those whose very existence is constantly threatened because of war and conflict. After our response to the middle Eastern crisis some months ago, this Harvest we are partnering with Tearfund. Our harvest offerings will contribute to bringing some relief to those affected by recent devastating earthquakes in Afghanistan. Tearfund have people working on the ground in that very challenging situation where so much infrastructure has been destroyed and so many have lost loved ones, houses and livelihoods in these devastating earthquakes. If we are to be truthful, the world is torn apart through many divisions. Issues like immigration and internal political wrangling within mainstream political parties are causing a rise in anxiety levels.

People are fearful, especially those who work here from overseas. They feel vulnerable after a sharp rise in racially motivated attacks. They are unsure if they are welcome anymore, despite the huge amount they have contributed to our society in the health service as well as in hospitality and other industries. It's for this reason that we are blessed to have two very thoughtful Harvest preachers coming to share with us on October 26th. At 11am, Fergus McMorro from Divine Healing Ministries will share. At a time when we look in our helplessness to God for his strength and healing for our broken world in its need for hope and healing, Fergus will no doubt have some helpful and encouraging things to say. At our evening service we look forward to welcoming the Dean of Armagh, the Very Reverend Shane Forster. Shane has been the Archbishop's chaplain for many years. He has played a quiet but very important role in helping to guide the Church's response during Covid 19 bringing church leaders together and also liaising with Government figures throughout that time.

He also has experience of overseeing major civic services and gatherings in the cathedral including many royal visits and other occasions of national significance.

We are very grateful to all who worked so hard to make our community fun day and outreach weekend such a great success. Many people volunteered in all sorts of ways to make the local community feel welcome. Over 500 invitations were distributed in the local streets. Many who visited commented on our beautiful church and its grounds and how welcome they were made to feel with their families as we extended the hand of welcome. Particular thanks to the small organising committee of Heather Harman, Linda Leonard and Helen McKnight who oversaw catering with her marvellous team. David Cairns did a wonderful job in attracting support and sponsorship from local businesses which helped to defray the costs of running the day as a gift to our local community. We were blessed with favourable weather and it was a wonderful day to see the way people worked so hard and so well together doing so

many tasks. We provided information for visitors about our organisations and activities and told the local community in a powerful way that we are here to serve and bless them in all we seek to do and through the worship we offer week in week out.

Now that all our organisations are up and running again, we hope that you will find something that might be of encouragement to you during the autumn. Maybe you have questions about faith and life and would enjoy the Alpha course which meets on Wednesday evenings. Maybe you would enjoy the fellowship and company at activities like Pilates or Pickleball or our crafting group - Cregagh Crafters. Maybe you have children or grandchildren who might enjoy Boys' Brigade, Anchor Boys, Sunday School or Messy Church. Ladies might enjoy the Mothers' Union or the Ladies' Friendship Group. There are lots of opportunities to get connected and our busy Toddlers' Group has been supporting young families for many years now, so hopefully you can find something to get involved in.

I'm always grateful to those who lead our activities with such enthusiasm and passion and hold up the very best of what our church can offer to the wider community through giving of themselves with love and grace.

We are hoping that Ryan and his wife Sarah and their sons Liam and Jude will settle into their new surroundings in the curatage this month. We wish them well as they pack the boxes and get settled into their new home.

With every good wish.

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

PRAYER MEETINGS BY ZOOM

Our parish prayer meetings by Zoom take place at 7pm on Thursday evenings.
If you would like to join us, send an email to 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, 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

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 the service and also for tea/coffee, scones and friendship afterwards in the Sextons' Room.



SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

On the first Sunday in November (on 2nd November this year) at 7pm we are holding our annual Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance for those who have died in the past year. It is always a poignant service in which we give thanks to God for those people who have been part of our church's life. The Book of Remembrance is always updated at this time of year and should be returned to us in time for this special service. Family members and friends of those who have died are invited to submit photographs which will be displayed during the service.

If you would like a photograph of your loved one to be included, please email it to Peter Cooper at pswcooper@gmail.com before Sunday 5th October.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group meets at 11am in the Coffee Bar on the 3rd and 4th Sundays of the month (19th and 26th October). Come along for some fun and chat. Feel free to bring a friend.

CRECHE

During the 11am service there is a creche available for younger children who are not yet old enough for Sunday School. Feel free to bring your children to the Huston Hall before or during the service.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE **2025 SHOE BOX APPEAL**



Hello everyone

As the season changes to autumn and we bring down our warmer clothes and heavier duvets can I gently remind everyone that shoe boxes are still available for 50 pence each. If we can help you buy items for your box or if you need any assistance with sending a shoe box online, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mark or me. We would be so happy to help you in whatever way we can.

We would be grateful if you could return your shoe boxes by Sunday 26th October. Please remember to put £5 inside your shoe box to cover collection and processing, shipment and transport costs

Thank you very much dear friends for your continued support of the poor and needy. All for Jesus.

God bless.

Mark & Charmaine
(07870 567449).

ST. FINNIAN'S TODDLERS' GROUP



The St. Finnian's Toddlers' Group will be taking a break during the Halloween week and will not meet on Monday 27th October. We will meet as usual the following week on Monday 3rd November from 10.00am - 12 noon in the Huston Hall. All parents, grandparents, carers and childminders are very welcome.



The Company and Junior Sections as well as the Anchor Boys will not be meeting week commencing Monday 27th October to facilitate the school holidays. We will meet as usual the following week commencing Monday 3rd November.

DIVINE HEALING MINISTRIES' SERVICE

The Divine Healing Ministries' service will be held on Tuesday 28th October at 7.30pm. This month's speaker will be David Hamilton.

Norman Sleator

MOTHERS' UNION BARNABAS PROJECT

Over the summer, the Mothers' Union had a collection for dried goods to be sent to Christians and others in the Lebanon. Once again, the congregation of St. Finnian's was very generous and 60 kilos of dried goods were donated. On behalf of the Mothers' Union and the Barnabas Project at Drumbo, we would like to thank all those who donated.

Liz Walker

Branch Leader

CREGAGH CRAFTERS



Cregagh Crafters meet on Tuesdays from 10.30am -12.30pm. Bring whatever craft you are interested in. Wool and needles are available and there is always plenty of advice on hand. Come along for a chat and a cuppa and enjoy the friendship.

Janet Johnston

07711885203

FLOWER DONATION ROTA

OCTOBER

5th Mrs C McGlavery
12th Boys' Brigade
19th Mrs A Thompson
26th Mrs M Rankin





Hello everyone

On Saturday 9th August, some members of our Branch had the opportunity along with other Branches in our Diocese to celebrate Mary Sumner Day* (our MU founder) by going to a morning prayer walk at the Tobar Mhuire monastery and retreat centre at Crossgar. It was a glorious sunny summer's day. At the entrance to the monks' walled prayer garden, there was a wooden door with a cross cut into it so you could see the sunlight shining through. It was like stepping into another world, more peaceful, less hurried. As we walked around the various prayer stations, we each had a booklet with readings and prayers read by someone from each Branch represented. It was a privilege to be there and we also enjoyed coffee and scones afterwards. Autumn is here along with the shorter days and darker nights. I have a friend who surprised me recently by saying he liked nothing better than the onset of winter evenings as he liked to draw the curtains and lock the front door shutting the world out. I suppose there are times when we all would like to get the PJs on and live in our own interior world. As we come into another season of monthly Thursday Branch meetings, I hope we can work to build and maintain our MU community gathering with each other, enjoying the company, sharing our joys and sorrows together. Members, visitors, those just looking or curious are all equally welcome. So, come along and join on Thursday 2nd October at 7:30pm for a light-hearted evening when we look at baby photos and try to work out who they are, followed by supper.

Advance notice: Branch meeting 6th November 2025 - Launch of Diocesan Programme against Gender-Based Violence. Speaker from Women's Aid.

*Mary Sumner Day is marked to remember the anniversary of her death which is actually the 11th August but somehow the 9th was chosen incorrectly.

Please see the MU Wave of Prayer overleaf for October 2025 .

Angela Harvey (Branch Secretary) Mob 07596075081

Email: angelaharvey542@btinternet.com)



Mothers' Union Midday Wave of Prayer October 2025

October 1-3 October: Nzara in South Sudan; North Kigezi in Uganda; Kivu in Rwanda; Damataru in Nigeria; Auckland in New Zealand and Vanuatu and New Caledonia in Vanuatu

5-7 October: Mbhashe in South Africa; Kitgum in Uganda; Ukwa & Ilesa South-West in Nigeria; Tasmania in Australia and Central Melanesia in Solomon Islands

8-10 October: Ethiopia; Zanzibar in Tanzania; Awgu/Aninri in Nigeria; Freetown in Sierre Leone; Monmouth in Wales and Malaita in Solomon Islands

12-14 October: Ezo in South Sudan; Thika in Kenya; Jos & Akoko in Nigeria; Europe and União de Mulheres Episcopais Anglicanas do Brasil (UMEAB) in Brazil

15-17 October: Terekeka in South Sudan; Nairobi in Kenya; Maiduguri & Osun North in Nigeria; Edinburgh in Scotland and Calcutta in India

19-21 October: High Veld in South Africa; Nambale in Kenya; Niger-Delta in Nigeria; Guinea; Blackburn in England and Bhopal in India

22-24 October: Kimberley and Kuruman in South Africa; Kitui in Kenya; Kano & Kwara in Nigeria; Armidale in Australia and Myitkyina in Myanmar

26-28 October: Malakal in South Sudan; All Saints Cathedral in Kenya; Kontagora & Osun North East in Nigeria; Glasgow & Galloway in Scotland and Pune in India

29-31 October: Luapula in Zambia; Nakuru in Kenya; South Rwenzori in Uganda; Ibadan North in Nigeria; Connor in All Ireland and Pusan in South Korea

Services for October



Sunday 5th October (The 16th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 12th October (The 17th Sunday after Trinity)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Holy Communion
7.00pm Compline

Sunday 19th October (The 18th Sunday after Trinity)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Morning Prayer (Youth Group in Coffee Bar)
7.00pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 26th October (The 5th Sunday before Advent)

(Harvest Thanksgiving). Special collection for earthquake relief in Afghanistan.

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Morning Prayer (Youth Group in Coffee Bar)
7.00pm Evening Prayer



COMMUNITY FUN DAY

Our Community Fun Day which was held on Saturday 6th September was a great success. The weather was kind to us and we had a great turnout. Lots of fun was had by all. Thanks very much to everyone who volunteered and contributed in so many ways to make the day so special for everyone.





LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Hello Ladies,

Our first October meeting is on Wednesday 8th at 2.00pm.

Rosie Hickey's talk on the history of East Belfast cinemas should evoke many memories which we can share.

Our meeting on Wednesday 22nd will continue the theme of times past. We are pleased to welcome Dr Robyn Acheson, a local historian who has featured on television and radio programmes. "The Evolution of the Belfast Workhouse" is the topic of her talk. This will undoubtedly be an interesting and thought-provoking afternoon, prompting much discussion.

While we always encourage you to invite female friends to any afternoon, we would particularly ask you to extend the invitation to Dr Acheson's talk to any men who might be interested. There is much to look forward to in October.

We hope to welcome you and your friends.

Julie (Mobile no: 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 in the halls and church and optional pruning, spraying, brushing etc. The next date is **Saturday 25th October.**

See you then!

**Jim Haughey,
Glebewarden**



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.

Thanks to Denis Carson for providing the ninth article in this history series sharing his memories of being a boy chorister in the church choir.

ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY

DENIS CARSON—BOY CHORISTER

Striking a Chord

I have a significant memory for the year 1952. This was a special year in the life of St. Finnian's parish church choir. Although I may not have realised it at the time, I have since acknowledged that it was also a significant year for me. What, you may well ask, made it so special? The crucial issue was a decision taken jointly by the Rector (Canon Huston) and the organist and choir master, Norman Scott, to recruit a group of boy choristers. This was both new and challenging – and it has since occurred to me that it may have been a possible means to recognise the 20th anniversary of the consecration of the church. At any rate it was particularly significant for me, since my mother insisted that I (and my older brother, Brian) would “sign up” – and so it was that in September 1952 a small group of fresh and newly recruited boy choristers took their place in the choir stalls and began an intriguing journey into the rich world of choral music. I was the youngest among them – I was then just nine years old. However, I felt that I was among friends – and so began an amazing entrance into the world of chanting the psalms and canticles used in regular Sunday worship – both for Morning Prayer and Evensong. Then, it wasn't long before things got a bit more challenging. For example, I recall that, still in the 1950s, we learned some special settings of the evening canticles, by Charles Wood and Thomas Walmsley and, in 1954, a setting for boys voices only of the anthem “How beautiful are the feet” – not to mention my trembling experience of singing a solo verse in the Christmas carol “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

Then came a big, ambitious anthem to which Norman Scott devoted quite a lot of rehearsal time. This was a setting by Charles Wood of the text "O Thou the Central Orb." It was a substantial score and it made quite an impact on my young, impressionable mind.

Besides all this there came the truly memorable experience of singing the great anthem "God so loved the world" from the oratorio "The Crucifixion" by John Stainer, at which time, as far as I recall, the choir master was Hubert McLaurin.

I also have a distinct memory of the parish choir taking part in Choral Festivals in Armagh in 1953 and at St. Anne's Cathedral in 1955 as part of a Royal School of Church Music summer festival.

Beyond all these recollections there remains one quite unique experience in my time as a boy chorister. The choir was introduced to a short piece of very distinguished choral music by someone called Mozart. At that early stage in my life I had never heard of Mozart. Who is this composer with such a strange foreign sounding name? The piece was called "Jesu, word of God incarnate" – although I now gather that the original text which Mozart set was in Latin (Ave verum.....).

Quite simply this music seemed to me to be at a greater artistic level than anything else I had ever heard. In simple terms it made a lasting impression; it really struck a chord with me. It was my introduction to a higher quality of music that I have treasured ever since. To sing this piece in the parish choir was, to my mind, a truly special event. All these reflections, to date, relate to my experiences as a boy chorister. However, at a later stage, I rejoined the choir as a member of the bass section. Then, after some years that was to change, as I (to my great surprise) auditioned successfully, in 1969, for the Belfast Philharmonic Choir – and the chorus master decided that I should become a "second tenor."

So, on that premise, I crossed to the other side of the chancel, and became a tenor in the parish choir.

I remained in the choir until 1974 when, on my marriage to Jennifer (who had been a Sunday School teacher for eleven years), we moved to live in Carryduff where, after a few years, I again donned a cassock and surplice.

My adult life has been greatly enriched by my St. Finnian's choral experience. Without it I doubt that I would ever have become a member of the Belfast Philharmonic Choir, in which I remained for over fifty years. It was in this choir that I had the enormous privilege of taking part in choral concerts of astounding music by, for example, Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Elgar and Vaughan Williams all accompanied by the Ulster Orchestra.

I have no doubt that my childhood introduction to Mozart at St. Finnian's was quite influential. In any event I remain endlessly grateful for that musical journey which began in 1952 when, as a nine year old, I became the youngest member of St. Finnian's parish church choir.





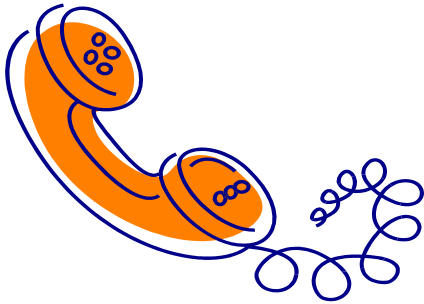
Pilates and men's health

As I was pondering about a subject for this month's article, I cast my mind back to my early experiences of attending Pilates classes in a local leisure centre nearly 30 years ago. I was doing this on the advice of a physio who was trying her best to get my back into shape after a bad car accident and so was determined to stick at it and give this strange sounding exercise system a go. One of the perceived barriers for a lot of men at the time (and possibly still is) was the perception that Pilates was not a 'manly' thing and in fact, I was the only male in my class for several years. This may have been because it had been adopted largely by the dance community, particularly ballet, despite having been created by a man for men! Thankfully the benefits have now been recognised more widely and it is used in football, rugby, tennis and other sports for both men and women. There are many ways in which Pilates can benefit men's health, not least in helping to prevent and treat prostate problems which, in this more enlightened time, is no longer a taboo subject. At the start of each session we 'switch on' the pelvic floor by 'zipping and hollowing' and thereby engaging the pelvic floor and, if done correctly, you will be working the pelvic floor throughout the whole session. Although it is a non-aerobic exercise programme, this doesn't mean that the heart won't benefit from the sessions - quite the opposite in fact as the exercises can improve circulation and those who have moved on to the more challenging options such as double straight leg lowers will testify that the heart rate can be significantly raised. However, the relaxing nature of the sessions and the mix of controlled slow movements and stretches is also very beneficial in working off the stresses and strains of the day. However, if you do want to hit the gym and particularly when using heavier weights, Pilates will allow the body to rebalance and you will be more aware of correct postural alignment and stability. In particular for the over sixties, this will help keep the body toned supple and mobile - stronger and leaner than ever. So the question is, what are you men waiting for? On that note I'll sign off and, until the next time, stay safe 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 for church funds. If you 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



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 **November** magazine to **office.cregagh@down.anglican.org** or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 7th October.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



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