

ST Finnian's

NOVEMBER 2025



*Please join us in November as
we look back in
special services of remembrance &
look forward to
the season of Advent,
preparing to welcome Jesus afresh.*

Dear Friends

One of the themes that has been recurring in our Bible readings in recent weeks has been the theme of remembering. As we prepare shortly to celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving, it's a theme that plays a prominent role as the service looks back on the festival of first fruits when the Israelites brought the first fruits of the Harvest to the Temple as a thank offering to the Lord for His faithfulness. If it had not been for his provision, there was a recognition that they would have nothing to offer.

November is a month in church life when we think about remembrance in a number of special services but it's also a month in which we start to look ahead to the coming of Jesus as a baby at Christmas as we observe the season of Advent. In everyday life as well as in the liturgical life of the church, there is always a need to look back and remember as well as look to the future. As we are grounded in the present realities, sometimes those realities can be quite overwhelming. That's why it is so important to remember (there's that word again!) that we are not on our own and that the Lord has promised to be with us as we thank him for His

faithfulness in the past. We are reassured by His presence in all the challenges we face and we are confident that He will journey with us into the unknown future. On the first Sunday in November in the evening time, we invite the families of those who have been bereaved during the past year to a special service in which we remember those from our parish family whose earthly journey has ended. For some it might be their first visit back to the church where the funeral service took place and we recognise that it brings up many challenging emotions. People will be invited to make a personal tribute to those they are thinking of as they bring flowers which will form a focal point in an arrangement. We will reflect together on the Christian hope about life after death. As we think and remember, there will be photographic tributes.

The Book of Remembrance will have been inscribed and we will be naming all those who we remember with gratitude and thanksgiving.

On the second Sunday in November at 11am, we will be remembering those who gave their lives in two world wars and in conflicts since.

Ryan, our Curate, will be involved in leading a ceremony for the local community at the war memorial at the intersection with Picardy and Thiepval. Our local streets are full of names that are closely associated with some of the significant battles of these conflicts as many ex-servicemen settled in these houses on their return from the 1st World War. We are mindful that remembering these conflicts is complex and our world is still shrouded in conflict in various places which has caused immense loss of life and human suffering. It's never something we glory in but it's an occasion where we give thanks for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. We will be honouring their memory at these special services both in the church and the local community.

On Advent Sunday, 30th November, we will be using sacred readings from scripture and seasonal music to begin the process of preparing our hearts to welcome the Christ Child. On the first three Thursdays in December there will be special services at 7.30pm to help us to look forward and prepare our hearts

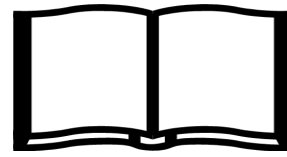
and homes to receive Him afresh. These are always important opportunities if we can avail of them. No matter how many or how few times we have made that personal and holy journey to Bethlehem, there are always new insights to receive, new and wonderful things to captivate our hearts and we hope as many as possible will be able to join us. If you are going through a time of ill health and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please get in touch with the clergy and we would be delighted to come and share that special service with you in this special season of preparation. So, as we come to this month, which looks back and remembers and looks to the future with hope and anticipation, we are grateful to the Lord who is the same yesterday, today and forever and has promised never to leave us or forsake us. Please note there will be one or two variations in our normal service pattern as we observe these special events this month.

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

From the Registers

Christian Burial

17th October - Frank Girvan



Christian Marriage

26th September - Natalie Gordon & William Napier

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.

DIVINE HEALING MINISTRIES' SERVICE

The Divine Healing Ministries' Service will be held on Tuesday 25th November at 7.30pm. Speaker to be advised.

Norman Sleator

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group meets at 11am in the Coffee Bar on the 3rd and 4th Sundays of the month (16th and 23rd November). Come along for some fun and chat. Feel free to bring a friend.

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.

WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

We hope to have a wreath making workshop on Saturday 22nd November from 10.30am -1.00pm. Please keep your eye on the website and an ear to church announcements for confirmation of the details. A great opportunity for some creativity and fellowship!

CREGAGH CRAFTERS

Come along on a Tuesday morning at 10.30am and join in the fun. Plenty of chat, a cup of coffee and lots of projects to make. It does not matter what your ability is, you will be made welcome.

Janet Johnston (07711885203)



Hello everyone

It is hard to believe that Christmas is only weeks away. We will have to get our thinking hats on for some fun ideas for 28th November's get-together in Messy Church. We had another enjoyable gathering on Friday 19th September with around 20 children in attendance. Love was our theme and through that wonderful example of The Good Samaritan, Jono shared with the children and us all, the importance of being kind and loving to everyone. We crafted little love birds, friendship bracelets and 'Love is' mobiles. As always, our day ended with copious amounts of chips, nuggets, ice-cream and treats. Thank you so much to all who came on the day and to our faithful MC team. A big shout out of thanks to Tracey for all her help that Friday too.

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness" Jeremiah 31:3.

God bless everyone. **The Messy Church Team**

Garden of Remembrance

As part of the overall review of Diocesan policies in June, the Select Vestry reinstated our policy for the Garden of Remembrance based on the Diocesan rules.

The Select Vestry wish to remind families using the Garden of Remembrance that ***any floral tributes used at the funeral may be placed on the garden wall and will be disposed of by a Church Officer after a suitable period or when withered. No artificial wreaths, any other memorials or adornments, inscriptions or flower containers may be placed in the Garden of Remembrance.***

Please note that the main access times to the church grounds are as follows: all day Sunday, Monday 9.30am-noon, Tuesday 9am-3pm and Wednesday 9am-3pm.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

The Select Vestry

FLOWER DONATION ROTA

NOVEMBER

2nd Mrs D Callan
9th Mrs E Walker
16th Mrs P Hamilton
23rd Mrs J Buchanan/Mrs M Gallagher
30th Mrs R Rogers



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



Hello everyone

At our next MU branch meeting on Thursday 6th November at 7:30pm** we are having a speaker from Women's Aid Northern Ireland to help us with the launch of the campaign against gender-based violence (GBV). What is domestic abuse? Here's a definition from the Women's Aid Site:

"Domestic abuse takes many forms, physical, verbal, psychological, economic, sexual and emotional and can often be a combination of several of these. It includes forms of violent and controlling behaviour such as: physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats and intimidation, harassment, humiliating and controlling behaviour, withholding of finances, economic manipulation, deprivation, isolation, belittling and constant unreasonable criticism."

It's grim reading about all this information and when you read or hear about women's stories of their experiences, it is distressing to say the least. Hence the importance of raising awareness of this problem, locally, nationally and globally as you can't begin to change a culture without admitting there is a problem in the first place. The 16 days of activism (25th November-10th December 2025) arises from the "UN Women" organisation and the theme for 2025 is "End digital violence against all women and girls" which MU supports. The MU theme for our organisation for the triennial period 2025-2027 is "JOIN US and JOIN IN - MU is changing lives" By acting together as one body, we can be stronger in the fight against GBV and support vulnerable people, women, men and children. MU also is involved in their campaign RISE UP. The letters of which stand for Respond, Inform, Support, Empower, Unite and Pray.

Here is a MU prayer about abusive relationships which was first printed in the November 2022 magazine.

“My people will live in peaceful places and safe homes and in calm places of rest. (Isaiah 32:18)

Loving Lord,

Your care and love are ever present in our lives. We pray for our brothers and sisters

Throughout the world

Who live in situations of abuse and violence.

Give them hope in their hopelessness.

help them find strength in their weakness;

grant them freedom from their oppression;

transform their brokenness into wholeness;

and heal their wounds, visible and invisible.

grant us all the courage and wisdom, grace and humility,

to act at all times with compassion and care.

And grant all who are harmed by abuse or coercion,

peace through justice.

This we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Dates for your diary

** Julie our treasurer has asked if anyone wants to contribute financially to the MU Overseas work please bring their offering to the November Branch meeting:

Mothers' Union Down and Dromore Diocese Holy Communion Service Thursday 6th November 2025 in St. Columba's Church, Knock.

Diocesan Advent Carol Service: Date time and location tbc Thursday 4th December 2025 7:30pm Advent Service in church followed by Advent Supper in the Huston Hall and carols led by the Choir

Please see the MU Wave of Prayer opposite for November.

Angela Harvey (Branch Secretary) Mob 07596075081

Email: angelaharvey542@btinternet.com)



Mothers' Union Midday Wave of Prayer November 2025

2-4 November: Lebombo in Mozambique; Makueni in Kenya; Newala in Tanzania; Niger- Delta North in Nigeria; Riverina in Australia and North East India in India

5-7 November: Antananarivo in Madagascar; Taita Taveta in Kenya; Ikara & Ife in Nigeria & Argyll & The Isles in Scotland

9-11 November: Kadugli & Nuba Mountains, Sudan; Kinkiizi in Uganda; Amichi & Igbomina West in Nigeria and Ottawa in Canada

12-14 November: Ukhahlamba in South Africa; Maseno West in Kenya; Oji River in Nigeria; Dunkwa-on-Offin in Ghana; Guildford in England and Coimbatore in India

16-18 November: Iraq; Katakwa in Kenya; Kafanchan & Asaba in Nigeria; Lincoln in England and Trinidad & Tobago

19-21 November: Musinga in Burundi; Lake Rukwa in Tanzania; Okrika in Nigeria; St Asaph in Wales; Bendigo in Australia and Gujarat in India

23-25 November: Southern Malawi, Malawi; N Uganda, Uganda; Lafia & Ilaje, Nigeria & Thoothukudi-Nazareth, India

26-28 November: Zululand in South Africa; Lodwar, Kenya; Isiala Ngwa South, Nigeria; Accra, Ghana; Bangor, Wales & Colombo, Sri Lanka

30 November: Mpumalanga, South Africa; Central Buganda, Uganda; Zonkwa, Nigeria; Bo, Sierra Leone; Newcastle, England & Barrackpore, India

Services for November



Sunday 2nd November (The 4th Sunday before Advent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Connect Service (Huston Hall)
- 7.00pm Service of Thanksgiving & Remembrance
(for those who have died in the past year)

Sunday 9th November (The 3rd Sunday before Advent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Holy Communion (with Act of Remembrance)
- 7.00pm Compline

Sunday 16th November (The 2nd Sunday before Advent)

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

Sunday 23rd November (The Kingship of Christ)

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

Sunday 30th November (The 1st Sunday of Advent)

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am A Service of Wholeness & Healing
- 7.00pm Advent Carol Service

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.



Update on the **St. Finnian's Fields of Life (FOL) Project**

Over the past year the Fields of Life team have been concentrating their focus on the Let Every Child Thrive programme.

***The four fundamentals of the Thrive programme are:
I am Educated, I am Fed, I am Safe, I am Loved.***

In the **past year** the following objectives have been achieved:

I am Educated

2085 children sponsored for their education, 130 young people given a vocational scholarship at the FOL Vocational Training Institute, Northern Uganda. The first South Sudan student in a FOL College (built 2018) has qualified to go to university (in Uganda). 358 Teachers trained in Continuous Professional Development. In South Sudan most teachers only have Primary School qualifications. FOL are passionate about training teachers and equipping them with the skills necessary to achieve the best results for their pupils. Several schools updated or refurbished.

I am Fed

Children in all FOL partner schools get one cooked meal each day. Prior to this, many did not have anything to eat before arriving at school.

45 boreholes have been drilled, providing the gift of clean water for both children and adults.

32 schools have been trained and equipped in sustainable agriculture, which benefits both students and the whole community. Different methods of growing produce, such as new seed varieties, helps them cope with climate change, particularly drought. Crops such as maize, cassava, matoke (bananas) grown at schools, provide the children with nutritious food during the day.

I am Safe

The FOL 'I AM Girl' Project has seen a significant impact in the lives of young girls. 3569 adolescent girls (and boys) have been trained in personal hygiene management. 27 toilet blocks with water provision have been constructed at schools, creating a safer, cleaner environment for students. This project also teaches families and communities the value of supporting girls through education. Attitudes in families are changing from the cultural practice of marrying off girls, perhaps as young as 13 to older men and becoming mothers while they are still children themselves. I AM Girl enhances women's empowerment and gender equality by addressing barriers associated with adolescent hygiene management, the absence of safe learning environments and teenage pregnancy. The number of young teenage mothers returning to school has increased by 50% in the past year.

I am Loved

Children are encouraged in all FOL partner schools to explore their faith, ask big questions and dream big dreams, regardless of their personal circumstances. Teachers are trained and equipped to teach Christian values and thousands of Bibles are issued to teachers and students. Youth Camps providing Christian life skills and Christian Leadership programmes are promoted in partnership with local churches. There is the opportunity for young people to grow in Christian values including kindness, integrity and positive self-esteem.

St. Finnian's has supported numerous **Thrive** programmes in recent times. This month we have sent a donation of £5,000 to help fund the **Thrive** programme in South Sudan. In this impoverished country very few girls have the opportunity to receive an education. It is the aim of FOL to help every child thrive, not just survive, through holistic support. These goals are achieved by prioritising the needs of every child, one child at a time. This means intentionally reaching the furthest behind first, venturing into the difficult and hard to reach places where others may not go, to ensure no child is left behind. We are deeply appreciative to all our parishioners who donate to our FOL Project and especially to our Catering Team who have been providing Funeral Teas since 1998! All the revenues collected go to support our Fields of Life Project in East Africa.

Thank You! **John Downey**

And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name, welcomes me. Matthew 18:5

LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Hello Ladies,

November, where has the year gone? In keeping with the idea of remembrance, our speaker on November 12th at 2.00pm is Maciek Bator who will be speaking on the subject of "Polish Airmen in NI during WW2". As his talk will be of interest to a wide range of people, **EVERYONE** is welcome.

On Wednesday 26th we're having a first for our Friendship Group - a one woman play. "I'll Tell Me Ma" is a humorous and poignant portrayal of a Belfast family. A sparse audience would be very disheartening for the actor, so again

EVERYONE is invited.

We hope to see you and your friends on both afternoons.

Julie (Mobile no: 07814928398)



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 Dorothy Armstrong for providing the tenth article in this history series sharing her memories of the church choir, the Life Boys and her wedding.

ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY

DOROTHY ARMSTRONG

EARLY MEMORIES

It was a 15 minute walk for a 13 year old from my parent's home to St. Finnian's Parish Church. The Bryson family had just moved to a new home and that first walk in 1949 was to be many my father, mother and the rest of the family made with our association with the church.

A man of the cloth was one of our first visitors and after some confusion as to whether he was the local Roman Catholic priest we were pleased to ascertain he was Canon Huston from the local church and he made us very welcome.

The junior choir, under the direction of organist, the late Norman Scott, was certainly boosted when I and four of my siblings joined. I soon graduated to the senior choir and my brother was later hired to "pump" the organ. The organ in that period wasn't powered by electric and the pipes were operated by pressurised air flowing through them to create the music. More pressure meant a louder sound!

Being musically inclined I also played the organ on occasions and was delighted to sing a solo at a Christmas carol service.



Junior Choir - Dorothy is standing to the right of Canon Huston.

As I grew older and more knowledgeable of the Bible, I was pleased to be a Sunday School teacher after my Confirmation. Another role I enjoyed was to be a Life Boy leader with the 74th BB Company under the tutelage of Wilson Crawford. Visits to the Cregagh Glen were popular with the boys with its high banks and the river always the main attraction. Popularity never waned, even when the journey back to the hall included wet shoes and dirty socks. Crossing the main road before it was up-graded to a dual-carriageway was relatively safer when there was less traffic to worry about. Yearly excursions such as Portrush and Newcastle were always a highlight as well as the annual displays. These open nights showcased the work of the Company and some adventurous programmes were performed. On one occasion we decided to have battery powered lights attached to the boys' hats during the marching display. Most successful even though there was a need for running repairs. It was quite a sight watching the different marching configurations with the hall lights off.



The Life Boys pictured with Dorothy, Canon Huston & Wilson Crawford.

The pinnacle of my association with the church was a guard of honour given by the Life Boys after my wedding in 1959. Our connection with the church finally ended when the Church of the Pentecost opened in 1963 in the Cregagh Estate. The walk to our new church was only 5 minutes but it was taken with the same resolve as the walk to St. Finnian's fourteen years before.



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 29th November.** See you then! **Jim Haughey, Glebewarden**



Pilates and Women's Health

Last month I focussed on the beneficial effects of Pilates on men's health and so this month, just to balance things out, I'll do the same for women's health. Much has been written about women's health issues that come with each stage of life - puberty, menstruation, childbirth (ante-natal and post-natal), peri-menopause, menopause and post menopausal, and so I'll not even attempt to address these in detail save to say that Pilates is beneficial and is a versatile exercise system that can be adapted for each stage and the holistic approach ensures that muscle groups are integrated and the whole body works in harmony. The aim is to tone and strengthen muscles rather than bulking up - which is definitely something I see all too often in gyms - and the exercises carried out not only optimise how muscles are used, reducing the risk of injury but can prepare you for the challenges faced at each age and stage. For example, by zeroing in on the deep core muscles that are crucial for pelvic stability, Pilates can ensure that the pelvis and internal organs are correctly positioned and that the respiratory, circulatory and lymphatic systems are efficient to deal with the impact of pregnancy, particularly strengthening the pelvic floor muscles to provide support for the growing foetus. Improved posture can also help alleviate back pain and related neck tension/headaches, while the mind-body connection encouraged through mindful movements and breathing, can reduce stress and anxiety - a good thing at any stage of life! On a more general note, the holistic approach offered by Pilates can help to regulate hormones such as the stress hormone cortisol, which may also help to maintain a more balanced endocrine system. The benefits continue through life and can serve as a preventative measure in respect of osteoporosis and musculoskeletal issues by promoting bone density and muscle integrity (using body weight and resistance exercises) and improving balance to reduce the risk of falls, a particular problem for the elderly and one reason all classes now feature at least one exercise focussing on balance. All in all, there's a lot to gain at whatever age and stage you are at so I would encourage anyone to give it a go. Until the next time, 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 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

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY (CAP)

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Christmas ... a blessing or a curse? For many of our CAP clients, it is the most stressful time of the year due to the additional pressures put on their already tight budgets. While working with CAP, clients are not permitted to accumulate additional debt so, without careful money management during the year, Christmas is not an easy time. The Bank of England has issued a statement claiming that the average household spends an extra £700+ in December. Not our clients. We therefore like to help them as much as we can through the festive season. With your help, this is possible. It would be great if you were able to provide men's & ladies' toiletry sets for the clients or gift cards for local stores where the clients can purchase toys or clothes for their loved ones. Last year the response from your church was amazing with one mum moved to tears as she spent what little money she had on gifts for her children, while no-one bought her anything. Your gift to her made her feel valued and Christmas that bit more manageable. She continues to work well with CAP, so we would really like to bless her and her family again this year and all the other CAP clients. Thank you for your generous hearts.

"The Lord loves a cheerful giver" (2Cor 9v7) so not only does generosity bless others, it brings delight and pleasure to God."

James Myles
CAP Debt Centre Manager

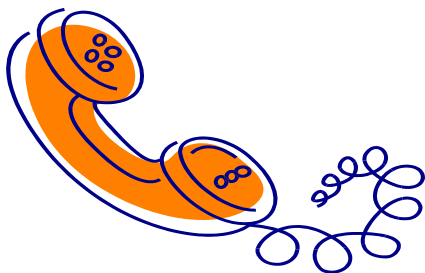
If you would like to contribute to making a difference to a family this Christmas, the gifts can be left at the back of the church during November or with Heather Harman. Donations by **Sunday 30th November** would be appreciated to assist with distribution.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rector: Tel: 028 90793822

Curate: Tel: 07594890019

Email: ryan.stfinnianscregagh@gmail.com



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 **December** magazine to **office.cregagh@down.anglican.org** or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 4th November.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



Find us on Facebook!
Facebook.com/StFinnians

Registered with
The Charity Commission for
Northern Ireland NIC101977