

# ST Finnian's

**MAY 2026**

*A month of festivals -  
Ascension & Pentecost .*



# Dear Friends

Ascension Thursday falls on 14<sup>th</sup> May this year and we hope to share a celebration of Holy Communion together at 7.30pm using music from the Taizé community in France.

Ascension is a major festival in the Christian calendar but it never seems to capture the imagination of the public in the way that festivals like Christmas or Easter do. Maybe there are not that many commercial opportunities around it? People don't usually get time off work or buy gifts or chocolate around this festival!

It's not always easy to make sense of from the perspective of outsiders looking in. Does it make sense that this person Jesus Christ, who is so central to Christian belief, should ascend or return to God in heaven after his resurrection? What does that look like in our understanding? Is there a point or a purpose in it all?

Sometimes I find it hard to understand and explain things, so when it comes to Ascension my thought is a simple one. It brings to my mind the idea of lifting up. Jesus is lifted up to His Heavenly Father's throne having initially been raised from the dead after His crucifixion.

In order to make my own response to this, my question to myself is, how can I raise Him up or glorify Him in my daily life? Are there practices I can adopt to make much of Him? Could I listen to a hymn or worship song and think of all He has done for me? Could I return to Bible reading daily if that's a habit that has slipped in my life? Are there points in my day when I can stop for a few seconds and say thank you Lord for your presence with me, thank you for helping me with that conversation or email or something I found quite challenging to deal with? Could I see God's hand behind some of the beauty I observe in creation, from the views I get from my window, to the flowers and trees I see in people's gardens or in the parks near by my location? So often I get distracted or busy and unable to see these simple things even though they are before me all the time. Ascension invites me to look upwards again and seek to live a God glorifying, God honouring life. That has to be a good thing. The month of May often signals two things to me. On the first Sunday in May it's the Belfast Marathon.

The route tends to affect some of the roads leading to our church so do please allow a little extra time to get here on 3rd May. In the Connect Service that Sunday we look forward to welcoming Andrew and Joanne Quill who are our link mission partners with CMS Ireland and they are on home leave from their ministry in Ibba Diocese in South Sudan. They work in the area of healing from trauma following the devastating civil war, so we look forward to hearing about all they are doing and to have some helpful pointers to pray effectively for them.

As someone who has trundled around a marathon route on a couple of occasions, I always think of those doing the race and all the preparations they have made and all the charities they will be benefitting from this experience.

May is also a month I associate with exams.

Quite often the weather improves and it makes it that little bit more challenging to plug into the books and revision, so do please remember students in secondary school and university doing important exams in the coming weeks.

It's a stressful time and it can feel as if a great deal hinges on the outcome.

You will also find some details of the Cregagh Crafters' coffee morning and craft sale in June in aid of the Fields of Life Lenten Appeal through our Diocese. This promises to be a very special morning and so please do put the date in your diary for next month.

**With very best wishes.**

**Jonathan Pierce (Rector)**

**Telephone 02890 793822**

### **PRAYER MEETINGS BY ZOOM**

Our parish prayer meetings by Zoom will continue 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 meeting on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May due to The Ascension Day service.***

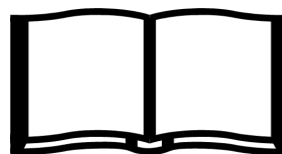
### **YOUTH GROUP**

This month, Youth Group will meet on Sundays 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May at 11am in the Coffee Bar.

## From the Registers

### Christian Burial

1<sup>st</sup> April - Iris Cummings  
21<sup>st</sup> April - Angela Moore



### 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 next Divine Healing Ministries' service will be held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm. The guest speaker will be Anne McKeen, River of Life Church, Ballyclare.

**Norman Sleator**

### ST. FINNIAN'S TODDLERS

The Toddlers' Group will not be meeting on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May or Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May due to the Bank Holidays.

### COFFEE & CRAFT MORNING

A coffee and craft morning will be held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June from 10.30am -12.30pm. All proceeds in aid of Fields of Life, I Am Fed project. Come along and support this very worthy cause! Everyone welcome.

## **ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING**

The new Select Vestry was appointed at a meeting of the General Vestry held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

**Chairman** – Canon Jono Pierce

**Rector's Churchwarden** – Stephen Leckey

**Rector's Glebewarden** – Jim Haughey

**People's Churchwarden** – Rosemary Gamble

**People's Glebewarden** – Geoff Harman

**Parish Treasurer** – Brian Lavery

**Secretary to the Select Vestry** – May Lavery

### **Vestry Members**

Peter Armstrong

Neil Donaldson

Julie Cunningham

Michael Cunningham

Carole McGladery

Trevor McIntyre

Claire Monaghan

Mark Robinson

Norman Sleator

Trevor Smyth

**Finance Committee:** Brian Lavery (Treasurer),  
Neil Donaldson, Timothy Leckey, Norman Sleator,  
Trevor Smyth

**Glebes' Committee:** Jim Haughey, Karen Gately,  
Geoff Harman, Neil Donaldson, Claire Monaghan

**Diocesan Synod Representatives:** Mike Johnston,  
Ingrid Johnston, Stephen Leckey, Norman Sleator

**Parochial Nominators:** Gillian Stevenson, Clare Stewart,  
Trevor Smyth, Ingrid Johnston

**Supplementary Parochial Nominators:** Brian Lavery,  
Geoff Harman, Brian Hayward, Stephen Geoghegan

## **CREGAGH CRAFTERS**

Cregagh Crafters will meet every Tuesday in May. We will be hard at work preparing items for sale at our **Coffee and Craft morning on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June.** All proceeds will be for Fields of Life, I Am Fed project.

**Janet Johnston (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 30<sup>th</sup> May.**

See you then!

**Jim Haughey, Glebewarden**

## **FLOWER DONATION ROTA**

### **MAY**

3<sup>rd</sup> Mrs J Cunningham  
10<sup>th</sup> Mothers' Union  
17<sup>th</sup> Mrs I Ireland  
24<sup>th</sup> Mrs K Hanna  
31<sup>st</sup> Mrs G Downey





## **Hello everyone**

May is an interesting month in the church's year. There are the fifth, sixth and seventh Sundays of Easter, Ascension Day which this year falls on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May followed by Pentecost Sunday on 24<sup>th</sup> May, so all in all a busy month in which to celebrate and contemplate Jesus' resurrection, Ascension and the promised coming of the Holy Spirit to his first followers, the disciples. Also, for those still in employment, there are two Bank Holidays to look forward to, one at the start and one at the end. For Mothers' Union in St. Finnian's, May is usually the month when we have an overseas theme. This year we are doing something a little bit different. Our Diocesan Chaplain The Reverend Duncan Pollock is coming to talk about The Book of Common Prayer service, the clergy robes and the layout of a Christian church (Anglican). When Jono was made incumbent of our parish, I remember Bishop Harold escorting our Rector around the church, to the font, the pulpit, the lectern and the altar with words of commissioning for the purposes of each place. It was a very moving service.

Our meeting will take place in the church on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May at 7:30pm as Duncan will explain the significance of how our Anglican service and our church building is as it is. It promises to be an interesting evening followed by supper in the Huston Hall. Please see also the Mu Worldwide Midday Prayers for May.

### **Date for your diary:-**

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 12pm - Outing for lunch to Harrison's, Greyabbey. (lifts will be available in cars).

**Angela Harvey Branch Secretary mob 07596 075081**

**Heather Leckey Branch Leader Mob 07833 905017**



## **Mothers' Union Midday Wave of Prayer May 2026**

1-2 May: Aru in DR Congo; Kigezi in Uganda; Ikeduru in Nigeria; Ho in Ghana; York in England and Guyana & Suriname in Guyana

4-6 May: Uppershire in Malawi; Maralal Missionary Area in Kenya; Makurdi & Ifo in Nigeria; Tuam, Killala & Achonry in All Ireland and Mumbai in India

7-9 May: Torit in South Sudan; Meru in Kenya; Ikwuano in Nigeria; Sekondi in Ghana and The Arctic in Canada

11-13 May: Twic East in South Sudan; Rorya in Tanzania; Owerri & Ughelli in Nigeria; Gippsland in Australia and Cashel & Ossory in All Ireland

14-16 May: Maridi in South Sudan; Kirinyaga in Kenya; Zaki-Biam & Ijesa North-East in Nigeria and Waikato & Taranaki in New Zealand

18-20 May: Grahamstown in South Africa; Masasi in Tanzania; Afikpo in Nigeria; Wiawso in Ghana; Chester in England and Northern Argentina in Argentina

21-23 May: Christ the King, S Africa; East Rwenzori, Uganda; Gombe & New Busa in Nigeria & Bunbury, Australia

25-27 May: Bor, South Sudan; Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania; Oru & Oleh, Nigeria; Rockhampton, Australia & Agra in India

28-30 May: Angola; North Ankole in Uganda; Okene & Ibadan-South in Nigeria; Aberdeen & Orkney in Scotland and Karnataka South in India

# Services for May



## **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May (The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

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

## **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May (The 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am Holy Communion
- 7.00pm Compline

## **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May (The 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter)**

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

## **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May (The Day of Pentecost)**

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

## **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May (Trinity Sunday)**

- 9.00am Holy Communion
- 11.00am A Service of Wholeness & Healing
- 7.00pm Evening Prayer

## **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May (The Ascension Day)**

- 7.30pm Holy Communion  
(using music from the Taizé community)



## **ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY PROJECT 1932-2032**

Many thanks to everyone who has already submitted such a variety of interesting stories, memories and photographs to the St .Finnian's 100th anniversary history project. We would be most grateful to continue to receive your stories about the people, events and changes in the parish so do please have a think about anything that might be relevant. We would also like to gather information from the last 25 years of all the new initiatives that have been developed in the parish for example, the Ladies Friendship Group, Messy Church, Cregagh Crafters, Pickleball and Pilates. Any contributions can be submitted on a word document. Please contact Linda in the church office by email, phone or post or email [stfinnians100years@outlook.com](mailto:stfinnians100years@outlook.com)

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](mailto:stfinnians100years@outlook.com)** or contact Linda with your name and details.

Thanks to Audrey Baker for providing the sixteenth article in this history series about her memories and her history of the Baker family as long-standing parishioners.

## **ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY**

**AUDREY BAKER**

### **MY MEMORIES AS A PARISHIONER**

I have belonged to St. Finnian's since the late 1940s. My grandfather, Herbert Henry William Baker, known as Harry was born in Cornwall. He served in the First World War in various parts of France. When he was wounded, after recovery, he was sent to guard Grey Point Fort in Helen's Bay. As my grandmother lived in Craigavad, she met my grandfather through one of her brothers and the rest is history. In 1922, my grandfather left the army and settled in one of the ex-servicemen's houses in Thiepval Avenue in what became known as The Colony. By then my father was born and the family attended church in a hall across the dual carriageway from the present-day St. Finnian's. In later years, when the church was being built, my grandfather attended the laying of the Foundation Stone on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1931 which was a very proud moment for the local community. My grandmother, Alice (nee McClelland) was one of the original members of the Mothers' Union and signed her Membership Certificate on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1938. Mrs Hammond was also another original member. My brother Mervyn and I were both christened in the church in the late 1940s. We attended Sunday School when David Hammond and Wilson Crawford were the leaders. They were great fun and I remember them both with much fondness. Any babies who were christened in the church in those early years received Cradle Roll cards on their birthday from aged 1-5. One of the church services, which would be my favourite, is Remembrance Sunday. My grandfather and my Great Uncle Jack would have been two of the many ex-service personnel taking part in the church service on that day. I can still remember the sense of pride as I looked at them.

I still find it very moving as I lost friends in the RUC during The Troubles.

Canon Huston was the Rector when I was young. He had been a school teacher and this was very evident in his commitment to teaching the younger parishioners. When I was doing the year preparation for my Confirmation, my notes were marked with great attention to detail. On RE day at school, my best friend Pamela McAdam and I always found that when we got Canon Huston we were last out of school by quite a bit! Canon Huston had very high standards and in those days in church, everyone had to be nicely dressed and women had to wear a hat otherwise he would not be best-pleased! Canon Huston's sister was his housekeeper in the Rectory. Miss Stevenson was a leader in the church. She had been a missionary in China before coming to join St. Finnian's and she was one of my Sunday School teachers along with Miss Savage. My friend, Liz Grech (nee Jess) and I became Sunday School teachers, teaching the younger children of around 4-5 years old. We also went to the Youth Club after the Sunday evening service, enjoying the chat with a cup of tea. When Canon Huston died, Rev. Jim Mehaffey became the new Rector. He and his wife and children were a lovely family and he continued Canon Huston's work and the church began to grow. He later became Bishop of Derry and Raphoe. During his tenure, we had pantomimes at Christmas in the church hall. I can't remember who the leading lady was but she was extremely good. My uncle, Billy Morton was the lead man. He had a beautiful tenor voice. He sang at many functions in the province and Ernie Robinson, another parishioner, was his pianist.

In 1980, Rev. Noel Battye became the Rector. Many will remember his Sunday radio show, "Sounds Sacred" which was very popular with listeners and parishioners alike. I remember him walking with his Red Setter dog and he liked to holiday in Rhodes. He was a very popular Rector.

Our current Rector, Jono is very caring to all his parishioners. He was very supportive to me during the Covid pandemic for which I will always be grateful.

The Cedar of Lebanon tree which is still standing on the front lawn was planted in 1988 by my father, Sydney Baker and me in memory of my mother, Elizabeth. Unfortunately the dedication plaque was stolen but I remember when I was younger, walking up the path to church with my father and we would go over to the tree and touch it, remembering my mother. St. Finnian's remains an important part of my family history stretching back three generations.

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## **Hello everyone**

Our next Messy Church will be meeting on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June from 3.30pm - 5.00pm.

We look forward to welcoming children of nursery and primary school age.

**The Messy Church Team**

## **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**

## **BOYS' BRIGADE/ANCHOR BOYS**

The last week in April brings an end to our BB activities for the 2025-6 year. On reflection, although our numbers have remained low, the boys in all three Sections have attended regularly and participated enthusiastically in all our activities. In parallel with the experience and fun of the weekly activities, the boys are all achieving awards within the Brigade badge structure. A highlight this year was our three senior boys - Conor, Solomon and Liam achieving their President's badges. This is the second highest award in the Brigade and is the result of a strong commitment to the Company and wider church activities. As they embark on their journey towards the King's Badge, they are providing inspiration to the younger boys to emulate their achievements.

Behind the success of the boys is a strong parental contribution in ensuring and encouraging regular weekly attendances and support for off-site activities. The Officers of the Company greatly appreciate this support. Similarly, as Company Captain, I am thankful that the 74<sup>th</sup> Belfast Company has been blessed with staff who continue to serve with commitment and dedication. Officers and helpers in all three sections turn up each week but behind the weekly sessions there is a raft of planning overall programmes, planning weekly delivery activities to meet programme aims and outcomes and the increasing bureaucracy of Safeguarding, administration with Government Agencies and BBNI HQ and recording the achievements of each individual member.

We never lose sight of the Object of the Boys' Brigade which is "The advancement of Christ's kingdom among boys....."

Thanks to Michael, Thomas, Linda, Matthew, Katherine, Conor and Solomon for their invaluable contributions to this end and also to our Chaplain, Ryan, and the Rector for their prayerful and practical support throughout the year.

***Company and Junior Sections finish on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April and resume on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September.***

***Anchor Boys finish on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April and resume on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September.***

## St. Finnian's Pilates



Hello everyone

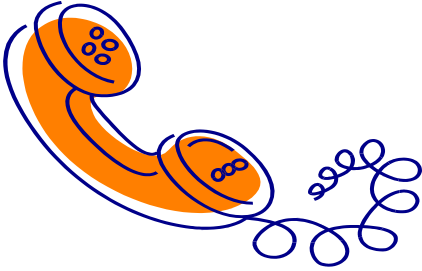
Welcome to the May article on a subject related to Pilates, although to be fair this month's offering is tangential to say the least. I had recently been reading a book called 'The Let Them Theory' and, despite a few misgivings over things such as the book's focus on financial wealth as the main measure of success (it is an American writer after all), there were a few nuggets which I think can be applied to any situation. One of them is the "5-4-3-2-1 RULE", another is simply allowing yourself to undertake a course of action without the usual worry about what other people may think or say i.e. "let them, and let me". In essence, these boil down to stopping the usual procrastination about doing something, and just getting on with it. In relation to exercise, and this is where I bring it back to Pilates, it can be intimidating to take the first step towards fitness and often there may be those little voices whispering (or indeed shouting) that you're not the right shape/too unfit/haven't the right outfit and so on to be part of an exercise class or go to a sports centre. You may be worried that everyone else will be judging you and wondering why on earth you turned up. Well, sometimes the only thing is to count to 5 and do it! and, in relation to what other people may think - just let them think it since you have no control over what their thoughts and opinions may be. The end result will be to free yourself from the usual roadblocks and just get on with what you know you want or need to do. However, even when you've taken that first step and made it to the class, those little thoughts can enter again and start you comparing what you're doing with what the rest of the group is doing, especially when many may be able to carry out more advanced versions of the exercises. The answer is very simple; 'let them' do it their way - they've obviously developed the level of strength, coordination and control over time to carry them out safely - and then simply decide to 'let me' do the exercises at the level that suits your level of fitness and experience. The beauty of Pilates is that it can be adjusted to suit all levels from beginner to advanced and even the base level exercises will be challenging enough for anyone at the start. I suppose the main message is if you've been considering starting an exercise class and find yourself wavering with the thoughts and concerns mentioned earlier, then I would suggest you simply take a deep breath and just go ahead and, after that initial step, the next will be easier. Until next month, I'll sign off with my usual encouragement to take care and keep moving. **We meet on Wednesdays at 7pm in the Huston Hall. A small donation of £3 per class is requested for church funds. If you want to find out more about Pilates, contact me - John Waterworth by phone (+447941368546) or email at [jcwworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jcwworth@yahoo.co.uk)**

## 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 **June** magazine to **office.cregagh@down.anglican.org** or telephone the Parish Office 028 90792793 by NOON on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May.**

Don't forget to check out the church website:

**www.stfinnians.org**



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