

ST Finnian's

JULY/AUGUST 2026



*A great big thank you to all of
our volunteers and leaders.
Wishing everyone a restful and
refreshing summer.*

Dear Friends

One of the things I'm always conscious of as we enter the months of July and August, is how grateful we are for all of our volunteers in church.

During these months things sometimes quieten down a bit in terms of groups taking a well-deserved break after the busyness of the yearly programme.

Throughout these months we hope people will get the chance to take some rest whether it is around our homes or a bit further afield.

I was trying to do some calculations recently about how many people volunteer around our church and the more I thought about it, the more the list expanded.

We have leaders and helpers from groups that work with children and young people like Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, Messy Church and the Creche. We have our Toddlers' Group, the Anchor Boys and the Boys Brigade. We have groups that focus on the ladies in our church like Mothers' Union and the Ladies' Friendship Group and the Cregagh Crafters. There are active pursuits like Pickleball and Pilates. We have those who

volunteer with leading worship in the Choir, the Praise Group and the Technology Team who stream and broadcast our main morning service each week. We have volunteers who look after the church grounds, cutting grass, tidying up, clearing drains under the guidance of our Glebewardens. We have those who arrange flowers and count and bank money. We have the Select Vestry who oversee the governance of the church and those who have heavy responsibilities with our finances and correspondence. There are those who help to oversee safeguarding policies, those who post and update on our website and Facebook page and social media channels. There are teams of people who prepare and serve food and refreshments at funerals and those who serve refreshments after weekly services on a Wednesday and Sunday. There are groups and individuals who pray and fundraise for the church and groups we are involved in supporting. We have a caretaker and churchwardens who voluntarily come early to set things up for services and assist and welcome visitors and all who come.

Sometimes people comment on how they have experienced the church coming together around them perhaps in a time of illness or bereavement and when all these different parts work together, it's an incredible force for good and for encouragement and blessing in people's lives. If you are reading this magazine, either online or in its printed form, there was another team involved in getting it to you.

There is a danger in church life that we fail to acknowledge or recognise all those who are involved in so many ways and the reality, when it comes to our worship and witness, is that we couldn't do any of it without you. I want to say thank you for all you do and all you have done throughout this past year. Maybe in the course of an activity or a meeting of an organisation you had a conversation that really made a difference in someone's life at that moment. Maybe they felt stressed or overwhelmed by whatever was going on in their lives and you listened. Maybe you told them you would pray and those simple words gave the person hope and courage to keep going. Maybe as you

contributed to worship, you helped someone who is housebound or in hospital to still feel a part of their parish church. The likelihood is that you might not have felt you were doing very much, you quite possibly looked out on a dark night in November and thought I don't really fancy going out the door, but because you did, someone came into a welcoming space or knew that someone else cared enough about them to make that activity happen.

People in our church give a lot of themselves and I want to say thank you. I also want to encourage you to rest and recharge over these months. We hope during late June and July to offer a space to meet our neighbours for our community picnics on Tuesday nights from 5.30pm - 7.30pm. We don't want these nights to be an additional burden but to allow some simple opportunities to unfold where we meet our neighbours, have space for individuals and families to gather, eat some food, play some games and get away for a bit, if you wish, to the church for private prayer or if you'd like someone to pray for you.

We hope you get some rest and refreshment wherever you find yourself in the coming months. If you are going away please do take the opportunity to visit a local church and worship with the people there. They will be so encouraged by your presence and you will be blessed by the worship. Could I alert you to a special date for your diary in September.

We hope to have a Community Fun Day on **Saturday 12th September** where there will be fun and activities for all the family as we launch our autumn programme and make people aware of the different things we do and the different things we offer. We hope to host the Fun Day in the afternoon.

Our goal in all these things is to point people to the love of Jesus and the joy of living our daily lives in His presence and for His glory. Thank you so much for being part of this wonderful journey with us.

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 throughout the summer **with the exception of 16th and 23rd July**. 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 **will not** be taking place during the summer months.

Services will resume again on Wednesday 2nd September at 10.30am.

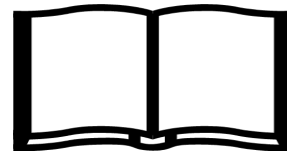
From the Registers

Christian Burial

9th June - Maureen Heaney

11th June - John Joseph (Ian) Leonard

12th June - Elizabeth Holmes



Sunday School will not be meeting during July and August. We hope all the children and Sunday School teachers enjoy the summer break. We will restart on Sunday 13th September.

COMMUNITY PICNICS DURING JUNE & JULY



During the summer, we are opening up our church grounds to the local community for a series of community picnics. People will be welcome to come along with their families, bring a picnic and chat and get to know each other.

The church will be open for quiet reflection and prayer.

These events began on Tuesday 23rd June and will take place for 6 consecutive Tuesdays from 5.30pm - 7.30pm.

Everyone is very welcome!

Bishop's Bible Week

This year's Diocesan Bible Week will take place at the start of September with pastor and teacher Dr Tim Robinson. Tim has entitled his teaching series, *Surrendered - A Fresh Call to Full Surrender from Acts 11&13*.

The event will be hosted by Banbridge Parish and the Bible Week will run from 1st - 4th September beginning each evening at 7.45pm.

What's in store?

Tuesday 1st September: Surrendered in Prayer & Worship
(Acts 13:1-3)

Wednesday 2nd September: Surrendered to the Word & Spirit (part 1) (Acts 11:19-26)

Thursday 3rd September: Surrendered to the Word & Spirit (part 2) (Acts 13:1-5)

Friday 4th September: Surrendered in Radical Discipleship & Worldwide Mission (Acts 13:6-12)

As well as inspiring teaching, the Bible Week includes worship and prayer ministry. It is a wonderful opportunity for clergy, leaders and parishioners alike to be refreshed ahead of the busy autumn term.

Guest speaker.

Dr Tim Robinson is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministries at Dallas Theological Seminary. He was born in Belfast and pastored within the local church in Northern Ireland for 12 years. Tim is passionate about teaching and preaching the Scriptures in a way that is true, clear, relevant and interesting. His greatest desire is that he might encourage and equip others to faithfully feed souls the Word of God and form hearts into the likeness of Christ.

Come along!

1st - 4th September at 7.45pm in Holy Trinity Banbridge, Church Square, Banbridge BT32 4AA.

JJ (IAN) LEONARD

The family of the late John Joseph (Ian) Leonard wishes to thank everyone who visited them, sent sympathy cards, messages and supported them during their recent bereavement. We also thank all those who attended his funeral in St. Finnian's Parish Church on 11th June. In particular, Linda would like to thank Norman Sleator, DHM, CMH and the house group for their prayerful support for Ian and the family throughout his illness. We are grateful to Mrs Barbara Carlisle, Sexton, for making preparations for the Funeral Service, to Mr John Knaggs, Organist and to the Choir for leading the singing. Special thanks to Reverend Canon Jono Pierce for conducting the Funeral Service and Committal and for his pastoral care during Ian's illness. Also, to Reverend Dr. Ryan Hawk for his support to Ian and the family. Please accept this acknowledgement from Ian's family as a token of our appreciation and gratitude.

Linda, Brian, Peter and Claire (Phillips) Leonard

CREGAGH CRAFTERS

The Crafters are taking a break for the summer. We will restart on Tuesday 15th September at 10.30am. All are welcome to come along for craft, chat and coffee.
Janet Johnston (07711885203)

DIVINE HEALING MINISTRIES' SERVICE

The Divine Healing Ministries' services will not be held in July and August. Services will resume again on Tuesday 29th September at 7.30pm.
Norman Sleator

BB adventures continue during the summer

Although our BB Company is on a summer break, several of our members have been busy on Brigade activities which, interestingly, have a royal connection. Firstly, we were proud to see Philip and Lorna Seay invited to a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to acknowledge Philip's contribution of over 50 years to the work of the Boys' Brigade and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Philip achieved the Gold Award as a member of the 74th and has facilitated so many others to achieve the award since then.



Continuing the 'royal' theme, Conor, Liam and Solomon, having successfully completed their President's Badges, have, since March, been undertaking several activities for their King's Badges. This is the highest Award in the Brigade and requires considerable time and commitment to serving others inside and outside the church. It also fits neatly with elements of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the boys are progressing well towards completing the Silver Award.

As we approach September and the start of a new BB year, the following dates might be useful to existing and potential members.

Start of 2026/7 Session: Company and Junior Sections:

7th September/Anchor Boys: 8th September.

Mid-term Break: Company and Junior Sections:

26th October/Anchor Boys: 27th October.

Christmas Break: Company and Junior Sections:

15th December/Anchor Boys: 16th December.

Return 2027: Company and Junior Sections:

11th January/Anchor Boys: 12th January.

Mid-term Break: Company and Junior Sections:

8th February/Anchor Boys: 9th February.

Easter: Company and Junior Sections:

Holy Week Service: 22nd March/Anchor Boys: 16th March.

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 dates are **Saturday 25th July and Saturday 29th August.**

See you then!

Jim Haughey

Glebewarden



Hello everyone

Here we are, the traditional holiday season is truly upon us again! We hear about committed time, free time, down time etc. Barbara Bush, the former First Lady once said something like "no one gets to the end of life and thinks they should have spent more time at the office!" So how to attempt to be wise with our time and to focus on building relationships in our families, workplaces, communities including our churches? These take unhurried and generous portions of that most precious commodity - time. I have a book which was published in 2019 by John Mark Comer called The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry. What an arresting title! I read it back then and now seven years later I haven't really put the principles into practice have I, if I am in a hurry quite often? We all long for peace, quiet and solitude but are maybe looking in the wrong direction for these inner resources. So back to the drawing board and I shall make this my summer read to focus on Jesus who was busy but never in a hurry.

Just to remind everyone, this is the 150th anniversary year of the Mothers' Union. It was set up by a Rector's wife - Mary Sumner in 1876 and is celebrated on the 9th August 2026 and has over 4 million members worldwide.

Have a great summer and we look forward to the autumn when our activities start again

Dates for your diary:-

Mothers' Union 150th Anniversary Service in Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin on Sunday 9th August 2026 at 3.30pm to celebrate Mary Sumner Day and the 150th anniversary of MU. We intend to go on the 10am train, have lunch, attend the service followed by refreshments then return home on the 6.50pm train. It would be lovely if a group of our Branch could attend, there are a few names already down. **Please indicate if you are interested by contacting myself or Heather by Monday 6th July.**

Thursday 1st October 2026 7:30pm. First branch meeting of the Autumn season. Get together and General Knowledge Quiz

Thursday 5th November 2026 7:30pm. Presentation of long service certificates and talk by Lynda Thompson our Diocesan President.

Thursday 3rd December 2026 7:30pm. Advent Service in Church followed by Carols with the Choir and supper in the Huston Hall.

Angela Harvey, Branch Secretary. Mobile no. 07596 075081

Heather Leckey, Branch Leader. Mobile no. 07948 829799

Mothers' Union Midday Prayers - July 2026

Theme: [Sharing our Faith](#)

Reflection for the theme of sharing our faith

Jesus tells us to go and make disciples of all nations. At this time of year, we seem to have more time to do things, but do we have the courage to witness to our faith with pride, showing respect for others while remaining steadfast to our calling? St. Francis of Assisi said, 'Go out to preach the Gospel, and only if necessary, should we use words.' Mothers' Union was founded on faith; it continues to be built on faith by lives lived in faith for the future of our faith. Let us share this rich faith generously.

[Monday - Prayer for Boldness and Clarity.](#)

Heavenly Father, we pray for boldness to share our faith with those around us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may speak with clarity and conviction and that our words and actions may be a reflection of your love and truth. Lord, help us to overcome any fear or hesitation we may have in sharing our faith. Grant us the courage to speak openly and honestly about the hope that we have in Jesus Christ. Father, we pray that you would give us wisdom and discernment in our interactions with others.

[Tuesday - Prayer for Opportunities to Share](#)

Lord, show us the people you want us to connect with and the opportunities you want us to take to share your love. Father, we pray that you would use us as instruments of your grace. May our lives be a testimony to your goodness and may Lord, we pray that you would give us a heart for the lost, just as you have a heart for them. Help us to be a witness to your love and truth and to share the good news of salvation with those who do not yet know you.

[Wednesday - Prayer for Guidance and Protection.](#)

Heavenly Father, we pray for your guidance and protection as we share our faith. Keep us safe from harm and evil and help us to be a faithful witness to your truth. Lord, we pray that you would surround us with your Holy Spirit. May your Spirit be our constant companion, teaching us and guiding us in all our interactions. Father, we pray that you would protect us from any negative reactions or misunderstandings. Help us to respond with grace and love, even in challenging situations.

Thursday - Prayer of Gratitude.

Lord, thank you for your love and for the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Help us to live a life that is worthy of your calling and to share your love with others. Father, we are grateful for the blessings you have given us. Help us to be generous and giving people, sharing our resources, time, and talents with others. Lord, thank you for your faithfulness and for your endless grace. Help us to follow you with all our hearts and to live out your teachings in our daily life.

Friday - Prayer for a Contagious Faith

Heavenly Father, we pray for a contagious faith. May our lives be a reflection of your love and grace, inspiring others to seek you and to experience the joy of knowing you. Lord, help us to live with the assurance of your presence, regardless of our circumstances. May our faith be a beacon of hope, shining brightly for all to see. Father, we pray that our faith will be contagious, inspiring others to live for you and to experience the fullness of life that comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Saturday - A Prayer for Courage and Wisdom

Heavenly Father, fill us with your Holy Spirit. Give us the courage & boldness to share Your truth and Your Gospel with those around us. Grant us wisdom & discernment so that we may speak Your words and demonstrate Your love in every interaction. Help us to overcome our fears & to see every person as one of Your children. Gracious God, we surrender our fears and weaknesses to you. We pray for your Holy Spirit to be our constant companion, teaching us in the very hour of need what we ought to say, as you promised. Empower us to speak with boldness and clarity, and to be a true witness to Your goodness in the world.

Final Blessing Prayer (monthly prayer from the Prayer Diary 2026)

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of faith that we have received from you. Please help us to know more deeply for ourselves the transforming power of the Gospel in our own lives. Give us a greater desire to share the Good News with people we meet so that they may find hope & may know for themselves the riches of your love. Through your Holy Spirit, may our words and actions bear witness to your presence, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wave of Prayer

1 July: Eastern Zambia in Zambia; Mombasa in Kenya; Gwagwalada & Ekiti West in Nigeria; Leicester in England and Temotu in Solomon Islands.

2-4 July: Renk in South Sudan; Cyangugu in Rwanda; Arochukwu/ Ohafia & Ile-Oluji in Nigeria; St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane in Scotland, and Sittwe in Myanmar.

6-8 July: Wad Medani in Sudan; Kondoa in Tanzania; Ikwo & Remo in Nigeria; Montreal in Canada and the Windward Islands in St Lucia, Grenada, St Vincent & The Grenadines.

9-11 July: El Obeid in Sudan; Butere in Kenya; Nnewi in Nigeria; London in England and the Province of the USA.

13-15 July: Toliara in Madagascar; Mbale in Uganda; Zaria & Ndokwa in Nigeria; Rochester in England and Chhattisgarh in India.

16-18 July: Lake Malawi in Malawi; Byumba in Rwanda; Jalingo in Nigeria; St Edmundsbury & Ipswich in England and Lucknow in India.

20-22 July: Gitega in Burundi; Murag'a South and Mbeere in Kenya; Enugu North in Nigeria; Tonga in Diocese of Polynesia and Jaffna in Diocese of Church of South India.

23-25 July: George in South Africa; Bungoma in Kenya; Western Tanganyika in Tanzania; Ideato in Nigeria; Sodor & Man in Isle of Man and Toronto in Canada.

27-29 July: Northern Zambia in Zambia; Mpwapwa in Tanzania; Gusau & Osun in Nigeria; Sydney in Australia and Rayalaseema in India.

30-31 July: Boga in DR Congo; Manicaland in Zimbabwe; Tanga in Tanzania; Ogoni in Nigeria; Carlisle in England and Melbourne in Australia.

Services for July



Sunday 5th July (The 5th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 12th July (The 6th Sunday after Trinity)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Holy Communion
7.00pm Compline

Sunday 19th July (The 7th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 26th July (The 8th Sunday after Trinity)

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

FLOWER DONATION ROTA

JULY

5th Mrs H Leckey
12th Mrs P Moore
19th Lyons family
26th Mrs E Walker

AUGUST

2nd Mrs M Downey
9th Mrs L Heatley
16th Mrs C Bell
23rd Mrs H Arnold
30th Seay family



Services for August



Sunday 2nd August (The 9th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 9th August (The 10th Sunday after Trinity)

9.00am Holy Communion
11.00am Holy Communion
7.00pm Compline

Sunday 16th August (The 11th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 23rd August (The 12th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Sunday 30th August (The 13th Sunday after Trinity)

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

Hello everyone



Our last Messy Church opened with a great celebration.

Ryan brought in a cake and we all sang "Happy Birthday to you" but we stopped at who it was for, as we just didn't know. Ryan explained to the children that it was the birthday of the Church. He went on to tell them what happened at Pentecost when The Holy Spirit descended from Heaven like a roaring wind and what seemed like tongues of fire came to rest on the disciples. Many signs and wonders were performed by them. The children then crafted lovely lanterns with decorative flames, white doves with the gifts of the spirit attached and wonderfully coloured Pentecostal story sheets.

Our afternoon ended with the parachute game, tasty food, chatter and a goody bag to bring home.

A special word of thanks to Alison, Jono, Ryan and all our faithful volunteers.

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you".

John 14:16-17.

SOUP LUNCH - SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2026

It is planned to hold a Soup Lunch on Sunday 11th October in the Huston Hall after the 11am service.

Names will be taken in September on a first-come, first-served basis. In the meantime, please note the date in your diaries. All proceeds will go towards the church and St. Finnian's Mothers' Union.



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

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 Linda Leonard for providing the eighteenth article in this series about the Reverend Raymond Hay which also gives an insight into general historical information about the church and the surrounding Cregagh area.

ST. FINNIAN'S HISTORY

REVEREND RAYMOND HAY 1938 – 2025

When David Hammond wrote the history of St. Finnian's Parish, Cregagh to celebrate the first 50 years of the parish, one of the men he mentioned as having been ordained for the Ministry of the Church of Ireland was Raymond Hay.

Raymond was the first baby delivered by Dr Galbraith, who had his surgery in the large house at Bell's Bridge, which later became a Nursing Home and is now Abbeyfield's St. Finnian's House. Raymond was the son of John and Catherine Hay who lived at 238, Cregagh Road and had 3 sisters: Annie, Betty and Mary. He was the youngest of the family, which was one of the first families to belong to St. Finnian's. Raymond was baptised in the church and all the children attended Sunday School.

At that time, there was no Cregagh Greenway or Cregagh Estate and directly across the road from the Hay's home was McCormick's farm and Belmont Tennis club. Later this whole area became the site of the Cregagh Estate with a Primary School and playing fields to meet the demand for new housing and amenities in Belfast after World War II.

The daughters started school in the British Legion Hall on Private Road, now Montgomery Road. Raymond commenced school in the Mission Hall at Everton Drive where there were two classes: junior and senior infants. More classes were then provided in a Nissen hut on the site of the former Castlereagh Borough Council offices, now Schomberg House, the Museum of Orange Heritage and Grand Lodge of Ireland Headquarters and in the Allen Hall at Cregagh Presbyterian Church. St. Finnian's Parochial Hall was also used for a couple of years before the new Cregagh Primary school opened in 1951 with Mr Patton as headmaster.

Mr McElhinney taught Raymond in the new school. In his early years, Raymond and his chums spent many happy hours climbing trees, exploring Cregagh Glen and the surrounding countryside.

At Mount Merrion, The Church of the Pentecost, a daughter church of St. Finnian's, was dedicated to provide a new church for the growing population in the area. Shops, medical and dental services soon followed, turning Cregagh from a semi-rural area on the edge of the city into a thriving and busy suburb. In 1962, The Church of the Pentecost formally became the new Parish of Mount Merrion.

After a year at the new primary school, Raymond went to RBAI/Inst and then to Queen's University. He was ordained in St. Finnian's in October 1962 to serve as a Curate in Bangor and he also served in Christ Church, Parish of Carrowdore in the summer of 1970. Raymond moved to England to study Theology at Durham University and remained in Durham becoming a lecturer at St. John's Theological College, part of the University. He also served in a number of parishes and Methodist churches in the Durham area. Although Raymond spent most of his adult life in Durham, and in retirement enjoyed travelling on canals throughout England in a narrow boat, he never forgot his childhood home or Cregagh parish and retained his early friendships throughout his life. These included neighbours Jim Campbell and Desmond Patterson for whom he was best man at his wedding. Jim was ordained into the Presbyterian Church and, before retirement, served in Cooke Centenary Presbyterian Church on Park Road.

Desmond became an engineer and spent several years working overseas. Desmond belonged to Cregagh Presbyterian church and was a member of the scout troop leading to great rivalry with St. Finnian's BB. In giving some information for this article, Desmond mentioned that Cregagh Presbyterian has been enjoying a year of celebration marking the 125th anniversary of that church on 7th December 2025.

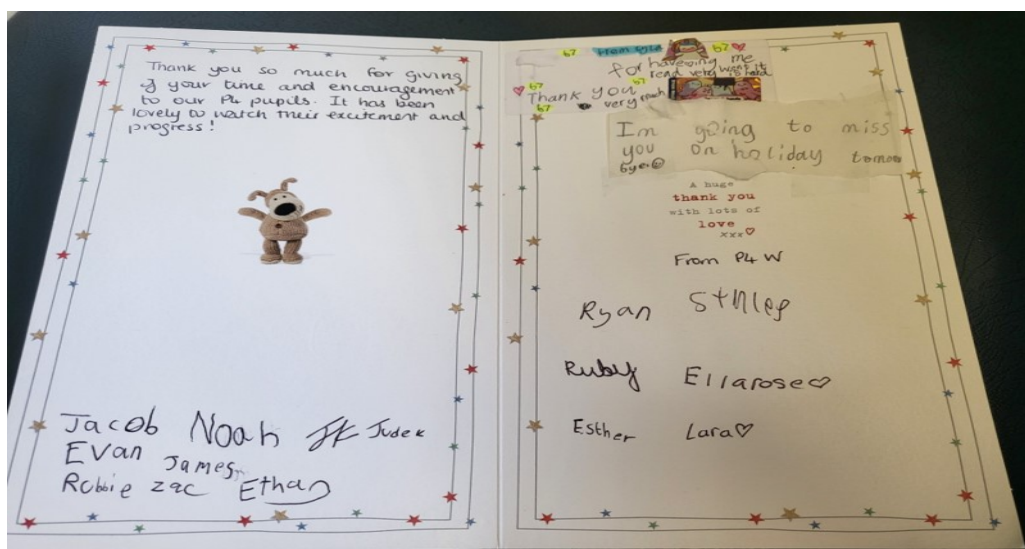
Like St. Finnian's, Cregagh Presbyterian had modest beginnings and some very committed and determined members who helped establish their church in the local community. From a first meeting on 7th December 1900 held in Brown Memorial School in Redcar Street, the congregation moved in 1902 to an Iron Hall built on the present site at 100, Cregagh Road, close to St. Finnian's House. The distinctive new church was opened on 29th September 1928 and has recently completed a major restoration and refurbishment programme. A history of the church and area written by Jessie C Barbour is in Cregagh library: "The Rock in the Plain: Cregagh Presbyterian Church 1900-1993."

During his teenage years, Raymond belonged to a close group of friends from the parish which included Norman Walker, Jean Buchanan and Desmond Logan, who also later became an ordained Church of Ireland minister. This group, who nicknamed Raymond "Straw" (on account of his surname "Hay") enjoyed cycling and regularly went Youth Hostelling. On visits home to Belfast, Raymond continued to meet up with them and his good friend, and former BB Captain, Wilson Crawford. He also regularly attended Sunday evening services at St. Finnian's. Raymond's sisters married: Annie to Fred Kershaw and Betty to Roy Walsh. They settled in Bangor, Mary married Trevor Clenaghan and their ashes have been interred in the Garden of Remembrance. Raymond married Patricia Lawrence in March 1964. Their daughter Allison lives in Aberdeen. Sadly their son John, named after his grandfathers, died on 26th December 2024, a few months before his father. Raymond and Pat have 6 grandchildren: Christy, Heather, Tara, Sandy, Chloe and Jessica. Raymond died on 27th August 2025 and his name will be recorded this year in the Book of Remembrance. In Raymond's lifetime the area of Cregagh within St. Finnian's boundary has changed significantly and there has been a gradual creep of housing from Bell's Bridge to the outer boundary of the Parish on the

Castlereagh Hills. More schools have been built and some like Lisnasharragh Secondary have disappeared. There are new leisure and sporting facilities throughout the area and a very wide range of commercial businesses, industries and retail premises. More churches of all denominations have been built offering both services of worship and activities for community engagement. While the green fields have gone, Cregagh Glen continues to attract walkers to the area and the homes in The Colony built for WW1 veterans provide a unique and integral part of the history of the parish. We, as a congregation, are blessed to have many ongoing contacts with founder members and their families both in our regular worship and through long distance links as we continue to celebrate St. Finnian's as a "place to belong."

LISNASHARRAGH PRIMARY SCHOOL - LITERACY SUPPORT

For the past 4 years, a group of volunteers from St. Finnian's has been providing literacy support for P4 - P7 children in Lisnasharragh Primary School. The school and the children have shown their gratitude for all the help received by sending cards to the volunteers. If anyone is interested in volunteering with this group, please contact the church office.



St. Finnian's Pilates



Hello everyone

I thought I'd introduce this month's missive by misquoting a famous song i.e. "Summertime and the muscles are aching .." While this is a bit tongue in cheek, it's all too often a reality as the good weather and our love of all things garden related kicks in. Needless to say, we tend to jump right in and dust down the hedge clippers, lawnmowers and various gardening implements and get stuck in. The outcome in many, (if not most) cases, is at best a feeling of tired muscles that had been dormant for quite some time and at worst, painful joints and/or backs that can halt you in your tracks. Stretching up to reach overhanging branches, holding heavy clippers and leaning forwards or to one side as the hedge is trimmed is guaranteed to test even the most well-conditioned body. We then spend extended periods hunched over bedding plants doing the inevitable weeding or shifting pots and then carry out repetitive one side dominated movements such as painting fences and carrying watering cans - it's a wonder we survive the annual onslaught! And now for the Pilates related bit - it's not rocket science, but simply a call to do a bit of gentle pre-gardening warming up to prepare the body and then some post-gardening stretching and rebalancing to help the body recover. I would suggest that after the normal Pilates preparation of breathing, alignment and centring (as we do at the start of each class), a few exercises such as gentle roll downs, the cossack, side bend/reaches, triceps stretches and shoulder rolls would be a good way to warm up before the work starts and may be useful afterwards to help unwind and stretch out. Obviously I would also suggest that regular participation in Pilates classes over those late autumn, winter and early spring months will help to strengthen the vital core muscles, help improve posture and flexibility to give the best chance of hitting the ground running when the sun finally emerges. One thing I would definitely highlight is the need to work on balance, as we do in the classes, to help avoid falls when walking on the inevitable uneven surfaces or climbing ladders and in particular to guard against the dangers of overbalancing when working with electric hedge clippers. I'm certainly not trying to put anyone off gardening as it's a great way to reconnect with nature and to get the feelgood reward of outdoor activity and fresh air. I'm just saying that it's worth preparing physically to maximise the enjoyment from this excellent activity. As ever, and until the next time, I'll sign off by encouraging you to stay safe 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

Pilates will be taking a break during July and will finish on 1st July and restart on 29th July.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE

2026 SHOE BOX APPEAL

Hello everyone

We know that November is a little while off yet but we just wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone that the Shoe Box Appeal will be starting again in the autumn time in St. Finnian's.

Will you help us achieve our target of 100+ shoe boxes? Over the summertime we will be keeping our eyes peeled for little items that the boys and girls would have pleasure in finding in their boxes.

The age groups are: 2-4, 5-9 and 10-14.

Items such as dolls, blow up balls, wrist watches, pumps, musical instruments, yo-yos, pants, vests, clothing items, flip-flops, crayons, note books, rubbers, pencils, combs, toothbrushes, washcloths, fun stickers, plastic eating utensils, hats, hair accessories, play dough, colouring books, small action figures, frisbees, skipping ropes, cars, Lego and interactive toys are some ideas to consider.

During a time when there is great financial pressure on so very many, thank you so much for your generosity and thought for those children less fortunate than ourselves in very many parts of this world.

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' Matthew 25:40

Love and God bless you all.

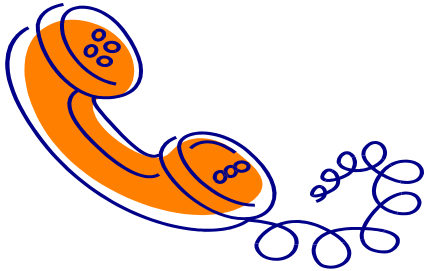
Mark and Charmaine

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

Don't forget to check out the church website:

www.stfinnians.org



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