



# The Greeting

**CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE OF MAY STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BELFAST**

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## WHY DID JESUS RISE?

Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends. He witnessed his death on the cross, but at that time he did not understand what was going on. Later he did. Jesus died so that "all who believe in him might have their sins forgiven" (Acts 10:43).

What is sin? We all want to be in charge of our own lives. We do what we want to do. We please ourselves. We do not live how God wants us to live. The Bible calls this hard-wired bias towards self-centredness and independence from God 'sin'. It stops us from knowing God as our friend in this life and it will separate us from God forever in the next life. As he died, Jesus took all our sin upon himself, absorbing the punishment we deserved. He died in our place, as our rescuer, so that we can be forgiven.

But Jesus did not stay dead. After three days God brought him back to life. Peter was a witness to that as well as to his death. He saw that Jesus' body was no longer in the tomb and Jesus appeared to him alive.

Why did God bring Jesus back to life? He did so to show that he had accepted Jesus' death as full payment for our sins. He did so to demonstrate the way for us to be forgiven. All of us sin. We all live for ourselves instead of for God. Everyone will face the consequences of this deliberate choice at the end. But if we put our trust in Jesus, then all our sins will be forgiven—no matter how horrible and ugly they might be. We can be God's friends, and Jesus rising from the dead proves this. Have you put your trust in Jesus?

RODGER CROOKS



# EASTER GREETINGS



## ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

These are the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting of May Street Congregation, which was held in the sanctuary on Sunday March 11, 2012.

Dr Rodger Crooks, vacancy convenor, presided, and 25 members were present. Attendance and apologies were noted in the attendance register. Dr Crooks opened the meeting with prayers.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the 2011 ABM, which had already been circulated by means of publication in The Greeting, were agreed on the proposal of Arthur Acheson, seconded by Jimmy McCrossan.

**Matters arising:** None.

**Reports:** The reports of the Kirk Session, congregational committee, Weekly Freewill Offering and the treasurer were taken as read, as they had been published in the February 2012 issue of The Greeting magazine. They were adopted on the proposal of Gordon Kirkpatrick, seconded by Kathleen Rea.

**Accounts:** Dr Crooks told the meeting that the accounts had been subject to a delay this year, because the Urban Soul details had had to be reconstituted. The problem was that the Urban Soul laptop had been stolen in January, along with a bag containing a back-up print-out of the cafe accounts for 2011. The accounts had been reconstituted, and cafe manageress Avril Gracey had furnished the treasurer, Andrew Acheson, with a copy earlier in the week.

Andrew A then distributed to those present updated copies of the financial statement for the year ending December 31, 2011. He said outline details had been included in his report which was published in the February issue of The Greeting. Andrew A explained that the accounts had not so far been audited, but it was hoped to do this in the next few days.

Dr Crooks said it was not possible for the ABM to approve the accounts until they had been audited. In the circumstances, he suggested that the meeting should devolve to the congregational committee responsibility for approving the accounts once they were audited. This would save calling a further EGM of the congregation. This proposal was agreed on the proposal of Arthur Acheson, seconded by Clive Gilmour.

**Statistical return:** Andrew A explained that the delay in completing the accounts had had a knock-on effect on the annual May Street statistical return. He said that now all the figures were to hand, he would be able to complete the return and submit it to Church House. He said the new online version of the statistical return was more straightforward than the usual paper form.

**Auditor:** G Kirkpatrick was reappointed as auditor on the proposal of Arthur Acheson, seconded by Jimmy McCrossan.

**Church organisations:** The reports of the congregational organisations – Tuesday Circle, the Choir and the Peacemaking group – were taken as read, having also been published in The Greeting.

In winding up proceedings, Dr Crooks thanked the office-bearers and members of committee of May Street for their work. There being no further business, the meeting was closed with prayer.

ROBIN MORTON  
Congregational Secretary

## MAY STREET AND TITANIC

May Street Church, one of the Belfast churches at which memorial services were held in 1912 in the immediate aftermath of the loss of Titanic, will be holding a Titanic Commemoration in April.

At the Sunday morning service on April 22, special music will be played and hymns such as “Nearer My God to Thee” and “For Those in Peril on the Sea” will be sung. The service, which will be conducted by the Rev Jimmy Johnstone, will take place almost exactly 100 years on from the memorial service which was held at May Street on April 21, 1912.

According to contemporary records, that service was conducted by Dr William Patterson, whose subject was “God and the Disaster”. The Belfast News Letter records that: “His eloquent words were listened to with rapt attention, while many of the congregation were moved to tears.”

Then the newly formed May Street Seniors Club will be opened with two special meetings focusing on the loss of Titanic. The first, on Thursday April 19, will feature a PowerPoint presentation called “Titanic Tartan” by historian Clifford Smyth. The meeting, which is open to all, takes place from



# URBAN SOUL CAFÉ

**Seniors 50+ Interest Group**

**Every Thursday 10am - 12noon**

**Fun & Friendship Free  
Special Events & Speakers**

Please contact us for further details.

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only £2.00**

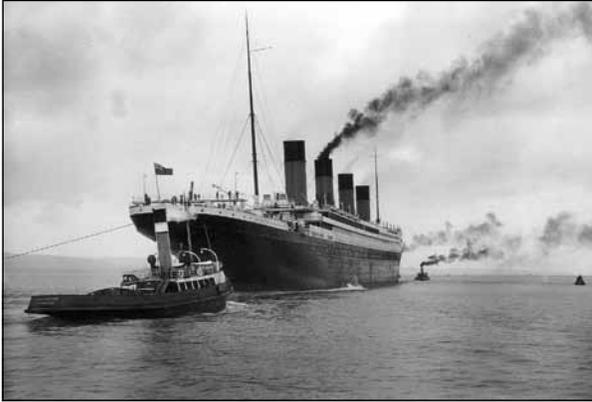
Come join us at:  
**Urban Soul Cafe,  
May St, Church Belfast, BT1 4NU**  
*(Opposite Ross's Auction Rooms - Bus Stops at Cafe Door)*  
**Email: [urbansoulcafe@live.com](mailto:urbansoulcafe@live.com)**  
**Tel: 02890 325554**



Open Daily for Breakfast, Morning Coffee & Lunch

11am to midday at the church's Urban Soul basement cafe.

The second lecture in the series will be given on Thursday April 26, and will be an interactive presentation by Terry Madill on the work of the cross-community Titanic Schools Project.



**Commemoration time:** *Titanic leaves Belfast on April 2, 1912. During April, May Street will be commemorating the centenary of the loss of the liner.*

Arthur Acheson, clerk of session at May Street Church, said: "Although we do not believe that anyone from May Street perished in the disaster, it is clear that our church was in the forefront of the staging of special memorial services on the first Sunday after the loss of the liner.



**Stepping out:** *Robin and Valerie Morton from May Street pictured on the staircase at Titanic Belfast on the occasion of the Titanic Society's gala centenary dinner on March 31. For the function, Robin wore his grandfather's top hat and his father's silk scarf.*

"May Street was then – and is now – at the heart of the city centre community and we are keen to mark this anniversary in a tasteful and respectful way.

"We expect to welcome many visitors to the service on April 22 and to the Seniors Club, a new initiative which will be open to all and which will meet in the informal atmosphere of our Urban Soul Cafe."

For further information, contact Urban Soul at 028-9032-5554 or check the May Street website, [www.maystreetchurch.co.uk](http://www.maystreetchurch.co.uk)

## LESSONS FROM THE DISASTER

*This is a transcript of the report carried in the Belfast News Letter on Monday April 22, 1912 of the Titanic memorial service which took place in May Street Presbyterian Church on April 21, 1912.*

There was a very large congregation in May Street Presbyterian Church at both memorial services yesterday in connection with the disaster to the Titanic, the Rev Dr Patterson preaching on each occasion. In the morning his subject was "God and the Disaster" and his eloquent words were listened to with rapt attention, while many of the congregation were moved to tears. The music was appropriate to this sad occasion, and Mr Sam Leighton presided at the organ.

Rev Dr Patterson, who spoke from a pulpit heavily draped with black, said for some time men had been reading descriptions of the world's greatest and largest ship, studying details regarding her length, breadth, displacement and gross tonnage, her watertight compartments, and magnificent rooms; but at twenty minutes past two o'clock on Monday last she took her final plunge and since then she has been resting on the bed of the ocean, with 1,600 of her passengers.

During the last six days, all over the civilised world, she had been the absorbing topic of conversation. Flags had been flying at half-mast in honour of those who were gone, and in sympathy with those who were sorrowing. Now that the accounts had been read of the tragedy in the newspapers, some people were inclined to look upon it as a judgment from God.

Man had gone too far along his ambitious line, they said, and God had come down to humble his pride. Some of those who heard the Rev Dr Patterson that morning might be thinking along those lines, but he did not believe it. He (Dr Patterson) did not want to be misunderstood.

It was not necessary for God, if he was going to judge a corporation – suppose it were wrong – to crush over 1,600 lives, and leave in misery thousands of homes, to crush the innocent with the guilty in order to punish people who had been to ambitious and too proud.

Nothing could happen without God seeing; nothing could happen without God's permission; and when He created the world He put everything under law – a law that never varied. Sometimes God did afflict. Why did this thing happen? He had been in fogs, time and again, and the horn had sounded, but the steamer swept on. They must make a record, and they must run the risk.

The ship carried 2,300 passengers, and had boats for about one-third of the number. He had been over the ocean a good many times, and he was certain that he did not see fire drill or boat drill six times, and then 20 or 30 minutes were snatched out of the Sabbath to go through a perfunctory performance with a lot of poor, under-paid stewards, dependent upon the tips of the people who would have to use the boats. They could have saved more lives with the boats they had, with more efficient crews. What was human life anyway? Dash ahead and make a record.

Out of such disasters God worked good. Over 1,600 people were at the bottom of the ocean, and yet they might be the means of saving thousands of lives in the years to come. It often took an earthquake, a great disaster, to make men realise their responsibilities and to guard human life. It would make travel so much safer in the days to come.

Another thing it was doing; it was drawing men's hearts together; it unbuttoned people's pockets and enlarged their sympathies. The disaster was doing that all over the world. Again, it was going to bring the different nations closer together.

Rev Dr Patterson then referred in sympathetic terms to the death of Mr Stead who, he said, was heroic and fearless in his life, and equally courageous in the hour of death. The catastrophe had touched homes on both sides of the Atlantic and brought them, as dead did, both rich and poor, closer together. The great levelling hand of disaster brought them side by side, and they all found the same grave. He was sure that their heartfelt sympathy went out to all that day who were in sorrow, to those whose hearts were crushed. Let



### May Street Titanic Commemoration 2012

- o **May Street Presbyterian Church 11am Thursday 19th April**  
Powerpoint presentation on the story of the Titanic Tartan  
By Clifford Smyth - local historian and author of the book Titanic Tartan.
- o **May Street Presbyterian Church 11am Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April**  
Interactive presentation to Urban Seniors on work of cross community Titanic Schools Project.

them not imagine that God had come down in judgment on those people. The Son of Man was looking in compassion on the poor widows and on those whose homes were desolate. Might the God of all comfort and consolation succour them. A collection was taken up on behalf of the sufferers through the loss of the steamer.

In the evening Rev Dr Patterson took as his subject "The Sinking of the Unsinkable" and in the course of his address he paid a high tribute to the White Star Line and to the excellent construction of the steamers.

**Wikipedia on Mr Stead:** William Thomas Stead (5 July 1849 – 15 April 1912) was an English journalist and editor who, as one of the early pioneers of investigative journalism, became one of the most controversial figures of the Victorian era. His 'New Journalism' paved the way for today's tabloid press. He was influential in demonstrating how the press could be used to influence public opinion and government policy. He was also well known as a world peace advocate, an advocate of women's rights, a defender of civil liberties, and a fighter for the deprived and oppressed. He was among the most famous passengers aboard the RMS Titanic, losing his life when it sank in April 1912.

**Rev Dr William Patterson** was minister of May Street from 1911 to 1915, so he would have been senior minister in 1922 (Dr Alexander Wylie Blue was installed in 1916). During his ministry Dr Patterson visited America and two occasions and within a short time of his arrival in May Street he was approached with a view to his returning to his first charge of Cooke's Church in Toronto. Much to the regret of the congregation of May Street he considered the proposal favourably, and resigned on March 31, 1915, whereupon he returned to Toronto.

ROBIN MORTON

## **TUESDAY CIRCLE**

Our meetings have now finished for the summer break. We will meet again in September which at the minute seems so far away - a whole five months - but we all know how time flies past as it seems to have done in the past winter session.

In February we welcomed May Street members Jean and Alan McCrum who entertained us with their holiday photographs which they showed us on a big screen, thanks to the wonders of the May Street digital projector. The McCrums spent some three weeks in Vietnam which was a very different holiday from the ones we usually have.

Alan gave us a little background to the history of that troubled country and how they have largely put the past behind them and are encouraging tourists to come and see for themselves. It is a colourful and friendly destination and the evening gave us an insight into life there. We thank Jean and Alan for sharing their experience with us and for all their trouble setting up the screen and all that entailed. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the little talk and the pictures.

Before supper on that evening we held our mini sale. Items which the members brought on the evening were sold. There were plants, toiletries, cakes, and much more and at the end of the evening we had made a total of £90. As this goes in to our funds, which we use to support a chosen charity every year and give a donation to the church, we were very pleased indeed.

Our March meeting took the form of a floral art demonstration. I shared with the ladies my efforts at flower arranging. I enjoy arranging flowers from the garden and also using the greenery which is

available to me so I felt anything I did was simple and could easily be copied so I hope everyone got some ideas and went home not too bored! I will let them be the judges.

We finished our evening with our annual general meeting. Patricia McCrossan retired as president after some three years and it was decided not to appoint anyone in that position for the time being. We thanked Patricia for her time in office and she was presented with some flowers as a thank you.

The evening finished up with a lovely supper prepared by our past president and her daughters Joanne Sims and Janet Booker, along with member Eileen Watt.

We were sorry to learn that since the meeting in February our member Paddy Ferris had been admitted to hospital after being taken ill. She is now at home recuperating and we are glad to hear she is doing well. We send her our love and best wishes and hope that she will be restored to full health and soon able to enjoy her holiday which had to be postponed. Also remembered is Vera Lemon, who is in a residential home. We send her our best wishes.

Our meetings will resume in September and will take place on the fourth Tuesday of each month. New members will be made most welcome and in the meantime, good wishes go to all for a sunny bright healthy summer break.

ENA KIRKPATRICK  
Secretary

## **THE CHOIR**

The members of the choir were delighted to be able to resume their normal seats in the choir stalls following the dismantling in February of the staging erected for various concerts and musical events. I think our period of absence has made us appreciate all the more the lovely woodwork in the choir stalls. Our thanks go to the new church cleaner, Liene Vlolaka, for making the choir stalls look so smart and the woodwork so shiny. Being back in our normal perch means that Colin Johnston, our organist, can keep a closer eye on us!

We enjoyed having with us for Sunday worship on April 1 a number of members from our fellow city centre church of Berry Street. It was lovely to

see some new faces and the extra voices helped to swell the praise. We hope they enjoyed the brunch which the May Street ladies served in Urban Soul after the service.



**Catering corps:** *Preparing to serve the desserts at the April 1 brunch in Urban Soul are (from left) Elizabeth Acheson, Ena Kirkpatrick, Ruby Fannin, Kathleen Rea and May Mercer. The rest of the team were busy behind the scenes in the kitchen.*

On April 8 the choir was pleased to be able to lead the praise at our Easter Day service which was all the more special this year because it featured the baptism of Arthur and Elizabeth Acheson's two new grandchildren – twins Bethanie and Isabelle Acheson. It was a memorable occasion not just for the girls' parents, Melanie and Graham Acheson from Edinburgh, and for the family circle, but also for the whole congregation.



**Food for thought:** *Members of May Street and Berry Street enjoy their brunch at May Street on April 1.*

We wish choir member Chrissie Hewitt well in her new initiative at Urban Soul – the Urban Soul Seniors Club which starts on the morning of April 19. It is a good idea to choose the topical subject of Titanic for the first two meetings and some of us look forward to being present.

We are also looking forward to the special service on April 22 when we will mark the centenary of the loss of Titanic with some appropriate items of praise. May Street held a memorial service almost precisely 100 years ago so we will feel a strong sense of May Street's links with the past as we remember those who lost their lives in this tragedy.

Plans are currently under way for our annual outing. We always enjoy this opportunity to socialise together. So watch this space to find out what we get up to!

VALERIE MORTON  
Secretary

## URBAN SOUL CAFE

Urban Soul Cafe, which operates in the basement of May Street Church, has enjoyed a good start to the year with a better than anticipated January and the fund raising at the Songwriters concerts helped us end February well. Some catering events such as an outside contract in Carrickfergus combined with a hygiene course and a similar event in Urban Soul Cafe provided additional earnings.

Funding is always an issue and so we have made an application to the Board of Mission in Ireland for further funding for 2012. BMI has given us support for a number of years and we are most grateful to the board for its backing. They meet in May.

We are indebted to those ladies who make a commitment to give of their time maybe once or twice a week to assist either at the counter or making sandwiches in the kitchen. This support is invaluable, particularly at busy times and at special events such as the May Street concerts.

Such occasions are a real team effort and we are pleased to learn that the May Street personnel enjoy engaging with cafe customers. It is a good opportunity to raise the profile of both the cafe and the church. The ladies have been fantastic in supporting our core staff Avril Gracey (cafe manageress) and Matt Baird, even covering their days off.

We have also been boosted in recent weeks by the arrival of an American couple. Carlos and Andi Fernandez, who are from California, have been working with Saintfield Presbyterian Church while

here on a PCI mission visa. They would like to be involved in the city centre and we hope they will be able to work with us in Urban Soul. Truly an answer to prayer, and a pleasure to be working alongside in Urban Soul.



**VIP visitor:** *Chatting after the prayer breakfast at Urban Soul on March 2 are (from left) Mark Finlay, Belfast Presidents' Club, the speaker, Dr Ahmad Iravani, and Dr John Dunlop, former Presbyterian moderator.*

The final weekend of February was a particularly busy time for us – it was the annual Belfast Nashville Songwriting Festival. May Street was the venue for three concerts and we provided catering before the concerts and during the interval. As well as serving tea and coffee in the cafe we set up a table in the vestibule to serve soft drinks and confectionery. It was all very worthwhile and we made a lot of new friends.

At Urban Soul we are always looking for new opportunities for outreach and on Friday March 2 we hosted a new venture – a prayer breakfast. It was organised by Mark Finlay of The Presidents' Club, who represents Ireland at the President's National Prayer Breakfast in Washington DC each February.

The speaker was Ayatollah Dr Ahmad Iravani, the President of the Centre for the Study of Islam & the Middle East and research scholar at the Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America, in Washington DC. He is a member of the Advisory Council of the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy, and in 2010, he founded the Center for the Study of Islam and the Middle East (CSIME) and serves as its President and Executive Director.

Around 30 people attended, mainly from the Belfast business community. Grace was said by Dr

John Dunlop, the former Presbyterian moderator, and a wide-ranging discussion followed Dr Iravani's address.

From a catering point of view, Avril and the team had organised a hotel style buffet, offering an excellent breakfast of juices, porridge, cereals, croissants, tea and coffee. It all seemed to go down well and provides us with food for thought for the future. Even though it was a rather early start (breakfast available at 7.45am) it attracted new people to Urban Soul and helps spread the word about the cafe and May Street.

March 2 was certainly a busy day. No sooner had the business types left than we started making preparations for the catering for the World Women's Day of Prayer service, which took place in the sanctuary at 11am. In advance of the service, we laid on tea/coffee and scones for members of the choir which was leading the praise. Other worshippers called in for a cup of coffee before attending the service and afterwards, many people came down for lunch.

We are delighted to be partnering with the Sunday night Underground fellowship organised by the Rev Lee Eagleson. We are sharing the coffee making and enjoying being part of this new way of doing church. The target age group is people in their 20s and 30s and we are delighted to see the numbers building up.

And just to show we cater for all age groups, don't forget Urban Seniors, a 50+ Interest Group which is going to hold meetings every Thursday morning in the cafe. The programme kicks off on April 19, with a talk about Titanic Tartans by Clifford Smyth. The group meets from 10am to 12 midday, come along for a cup of coffee and a chat.

We are also delighted to be providing Street Pastors with a base at weekends. On Friday March 23 the group held an information night at Urban Soul to tell others about its work at various night-time venues in Belfast.

Our day to day business is building up so if you are in town and would like to try us out, please head for Urban Soul. We are open Monday through Saturday from 10am to 3pm, serving morning coffee and scones as well as light lunches. See you soon!

RUBY HUTCHINSON  
Urban Soul Committee

## URBAN SOUL SENIORS

A new venture at Urban Soul is being rolled out in April – it is the Urban Soul Seniors 50+ Interest Group. The initiative, kindly supported by the charity UnLtd, is intended to reach out to people aged 50 and above and involves meetings every Thursday morning (10am-12noon) at Urban Soul.

The programme starts on April 19 when we will welcome along Clifford Smyth to give us a short talk on Titanic Tartans. The rest of the programme is:

**April 26** – Titanic Tours with Terry Madill.

**May 3** – Family Archives with Charlotte Murtagh.

**May 10** – Family Archives with Charlotte Murtagh.

Come along at any time during the session and enjoy and cup of coffee and a bun for just £2. The bus stops outside Urban Soul, so you won't have far to walk! Details from Urban Soul on 9032-5554.

CHRISSIE HEWITT AND DAVID McAULEY

## BIRTHDAY GIRL



**Celebration time:** May Street member Betty McKeown is the centre of attention at a surprise birthday party held in the lecture hall after church on February 12. Pictured around the table (from left) are Betty McVicker, Ruby Fannin, Barry Bell, Betty McKeown, Jean McCrum, Ena Kirkpatrick and Patricia McCrossan.

## STREET PASTORS

First of all many thanks to all concerned at May Street Presbyterian Church for making us so welcome in Urban Soul – we really appreciate it! We held an open evening in Urban Soul on March 23 and were pleased to welcome some members of the congregation. I thought it would be useful to

put some details in The Greeting about the work in which we are engaged.

Belfast Street Pastors has volunteers going out on the streets from Urban Soul Café once a week at present. In the last few months we have picked up hundreds of bottles, helped people to safe transport, prevented assaults, prayed with people, answered many questions, given out flip-flops and even helped two people off a bridge who were contemplating suicide. As Christians we aim to be salt and light on the streets between 10pm and 2am.



**Key role:** Every weekend, the volunteer members of Street Pastors help people in need on the streets outside various nightspots in Belfast.

To cover more areas and evenings, we need many more volunteers! If you are over 18, are a committed Christian, can commit to some training and 1 evening per month on the streets, PLEASE sign up now! Training begins on Saturday April 21 and there is another information evening on Monday April 16 in Common Ground Café, University Avenue. All the forms are on our web site [www.belfast.streetpastors.org.uk](http://www.belfast.streetpastors.org.uk) or you can send an email to [belfast@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:belfast@streetpastors.org.uk) or phone 075 1623 0181.

TREVOR BETTS  
Interim Coordinator

## THE UNDERGROUND

If you are aged in your twenties or thirties and would like to sample Christian fellowship with a difference, then come on down to The Underground in Urban Soul any Sunday evening. The Rev Lee Eagleson has launched this new gathering and it convenes every Sunday evening from 8.30pm to midnight.

It is something very different from traditional Sunday morning worship. Instead, those present chill out with a cup of coffee and enjoy a chat as they discuss pertinent issues. But it is not all heavy debate – sometimes you will find the focus is on a board game such as Cranium (a party board game based on Ludo, for the uninitiated).

Mr Eagleson said: “Our target age is around 27 but primarily we are aiming at the under-40s. We hope to work with non-Christians who want to find out more. Our philosophy is that people have to belong before they will believe.

“Our usual format is to have a period of worship around 9pm, then some music, then a short address from me which may spark some discussion. It’s all very informal and we aim to reach people who are not turned on by traditional worship but who are still keen to discover more about Christianity.”



**Underground movement:** *The Rev Lee Eagleson (right) and May Street clerk of session Arthur Acheson prepare to conduct a question and answer session about The Underground after the brunch which was served by members of May Street congregation on April 1.*

Word is spread by means of Facebook and Twitter and there is also a website, which can be found at [hello@undergroundbelfast.com](mailto:hello@undergroundbelfast.com). The four key features are: Worship, Mission, Discussion and Culture and the Underground already has a symbol – a distinctive letter “U”.

Ultimately, Mr Eagleson hopes to build the gathering up to around 50 people, at which stage he will propose splitting the group and seeking to plant a new community elsewhere in the city, perhaps at Titanic Quarter or Cathedral Quarter. There are also plans to run events in bars and restaurants.

May Street and Urban Soul are delighted to be able to facilitate Mr Eagleson in this new initiative

and we look forward to seeing it developing in the months to come.

ROBIN MORTON

## CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

### Deaths

**March 31:** Miss Edna Hamilton, formerly of Cavehill Road, at the Ambassador Nursing Home.

*Blessed are those that die in the Lord*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

During the vacancy at May Street, the now familiar rotation of visiting preachers for Sunday services week by week has been established and is working well. Details are printed below. The Sunday morning service runs from 11am until 12pm.

Dr Rodger Crooks, convenor of the vacancy, is continuing to handle the Thursday services, which run week by week from 1.05pm to 1.30pm.

All welcome.

Sunday services (11am)

**April 8** (Easter Day) – Dr Rodger Crooks

**April 15** – The Rev Alistair Kennedy

**April 22** (Titanic commemoration) – Rev Jimmy Johnstone

**April 29** (Communion) - Dr Godfrey Brown

## NASHVILLE BELFAST SONGWriters FESTIVAL

Thanks to all at May Street who helped to make the 8th Nashville Belfast Songwriters Festival such a success. The organisers were well pleased, the audiences were delighted and all the artistes were full of praise for the venue and the acoustics.

May Street acted as the venue for three concerts. On Thursday February 23 we had American John Oates (of Hall & Oates fame) along with upcoming local artistes Iain Archer and Gareth Dunlop.

On Friday February 24 it was the turn of the ever popular American songwriter/singer Nanci

Griffith, and on the Saturday evening the star turn was Fionn Regan from Co Wicklow.

All three concerts attracted large audiences and Urban Soul provided catering before each concert and during the interval. In the end, the singers performed from the choir stalls, which reduced disruption to the church. All that had to be moved was the Communion table and everything was back in place for the Sunday service on February 25.

ROBIN MORTON

## COLLECTORS

- Apr:** Gordon Kirkpatrick, Brian Gourley, Valerie Condy, Clive Gilmour.
- May:** Kathleen Rea, Alan McCrum, Barry Bell, Robin Hewitt.
- June:** Kathleen Rea, Robin Morton, Jenny Wilson, Arthur Fannin.

## MUSIC THEATRE FOR YOUTH

Music Theatre 4 Youth, the charity which is based at May Street Church, is continuing to have a successful and exciting 2012. The charity, now in its seventh year, has been going from strength to strength.



**Star turn:** *Singer John Oates enjoys the acoustics of May Street Church during his performance on February 23 during the Belfast Nashville Sognwriting Festival.*

During March we were honoured to meet with Junior Ministers Martina Anderson and Jonathan Bell at Stormont to discuss our charity and its future. The Ministers have kindly offered The Long Gallery at Parliament Buildings to MT4Uth to hold a reception in the autumn which will give us some much needed exposure.

We start our programme for 2012 with our skills building boot camp from April 10-15 with more than 100 participants from all over Ireland training in acting, singing and dancing in the lovely surroundings of our residential accommodation at Rockport School, Holywood.

## DEADLINE

The deadline for all contributions to the next issue of The Greeting is Saturday May 26.

In the same week we are showcasing our very first piece of devised music theatre as part of the Titanic Creative Arts Festival in the stunning new Public Records office in Titanic Quarter. We will also conclude our 2011 project with Translink, in which we will be presenting a devised performance by some of our Level 2 students and Loreto College, Coleraine, focusing on the rail safety message at our Level 2 boot camp showcase.



**Right note:** *Junior Ministers Martina Anderson and Jonathan Bell after a meeting at Parliament Buildings with Music Theatre for Youth chairman Jenny Cooke (extreme right) and operations manager Erika Reid (second from left) along with MT4Uth singers Jemima Brown and Oisin Clancy.*

We are looking forward to our exciting productions this summer. We are delighted to secure The MAC, Belfast's brand new flagship arts centre, for our Level 3 production of Les Miserables where a cast of 50 young people from across Ireland will be led by our top-level Artistic Team from London's West End and Gothenburg.

We also very much looking forward to presenting our Level 2 production of Oliver! as part of the Charles Dickens 2012 Centenary celebrations in The Waterside Theatre, Derry in August. Please

keep an eye on our website for further information and for information on how to book tickets.

The Music Theatre 4 Youth Academy is still going strong and is becoming a great success. We are delighted to have over 100 young people take part in our skills building classes every Saturday here in May Street and look forward to our showcase of work in The Waterfront Studio on 28th April.

ERIKA REID  
Operations manager

## CHANGE OF PLAN

The proposed Ballyclare Male Voice Choir concert, which had been scheduled to take place in May Street on April 22, has been postponed.

## BOYS' BRIGADE SERVICE

Once again, May Street hosted the annual parade service organised by the Boys' Brigade Belfast Battalion, which this year took place on Sunday March 25. The speaker was the Rev Brenda Weatherill, chaplain of the Belfast Battalion and of the 38<sup>th</sup> Belfast BB Company, and her theme was "On the Road". An offering was taken up to support the international work and witness of the Boys' Brigade.

Worshippers were welcomed to May Street by the battalion vice-president, Denis Marriott. Music at the service was provided by Symington Memorial Silver Band. The readings were by Donald Fry, secretary of the Old Boys Union, and by Billy Thompson of the Stedfast Association.

After the service, the BB officers took part in a short parade from May Street around the City Hall and back, accompanied by Symington Memorial Band, conductor Noel Roy. The salute at the City Hall was taken by Alderman Ruth Patterson, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast. The officer commanding the parade was Leslie Dick. Clive Callender acted as commanding officer for the parade.

May Street acts as venue for the bi-monthly meetings of the Northern Ireland Stedfast Association when guest speakers give a talk. The Association is open to Boys' Brigade Old Boys

and associate organisations. Further details can be obtained from BB House at 028-9032-4853.

## GO TELL THEM THAT JESUS IS LIVING

A light on the dark horizon,  
Shining with luminous ray,  
Banishes fear and sorrow,  
For Christ is risen today!

Oh sing it to those who sorrow,  
The message is clear and sweet,  
"He is the resurrection,"  
Go tell it to those who weep.

Go tell them that Jesus is living,  
He's living just as He said,  
And some day He's coming in glory,  
Coming to quicken the dead.

Then all the pain and the suffering  
That now His beloved ones feel,  
Will pass, for "There is no sorrow  
On Earth that Heaven can't heal!"

So tell them that Jesus is living,  
That He will illumine the way  
Over the troublesome waters,  
For Christ is risen today!

## LEAD ME TO CALVARY

King of my life, I crown thee now,  
Thine shall the glory be:  
Lest i forget thy thorn-crowned brow,  
Lead me to calvary.

Show me the tomb where thou wast laid,  
Tenderly mourned and wept;  
Angels in robes of white arrayed  
Guarded thee whilst thou slept.

Let me like mary, through the gloom,  
Come with a gift to thee;  
Show to me now the empty tomb,  
Lead me to calvary.

May i be willing, lord, to bear  
Daily my cross for thee;  
Even thy cup of grief to share,  
Thou hast borne all for me.

Poems contributed by Elizabeth Doran