



The Greeting

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE OF MAY STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BELFAST

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GETTING THE MESSAGE ONLINE

According to a recent survey, some 71% of the UK population use the internet. This means that the majority of people allow their understanding of current affairs, culture and brand awareness to be shaped by the articles and images they meet on-line each day.

The younger generations, (and by that I mean those under 40), make common use of the internet to keep in touch with friends and colleagues at a level which involves hourly updates. The ability of the internet as a communication tool is unquestioned, yet as Christians our contribution is often limited in comparison to what comes from secular and even anti-Christian schools of thought. Increasingly I am becoming ever more aware that in the midst of mission in the city centre we must continue to promote the Gospel message with material which can be emailed or downloaded.

I have recently been involved in a project at Church House which involves projecting images and simple thought-provoking comments onto the scaffold coverings erected at Howard Street.

I turned some of the images into a little movie and made it available on the associated website www.heavensabove.me and have been surprised by the number of people who were interested in the moving images.

This of course was a very basic first attempt, but it has occurred to me that perhaps we should try to create more professional clips or footage involving interviews and speech rather than simply using graphics. Hopefully, towards the end of February, I will be able to start producing simple little movies and it will be interesting to see how well these can be used. The beauty of such work is that once it is hosted online, people can download it and send it to others and we can never be sure how often or how far away it may be used to extend God's Kingdom.

It has been encouraging that very recently some in the business community have been asking for 'tracts' regarding specific things happening in their workday lives. It is good that we are able to help to equip them for the ministries in the workplace that they have been called to.

Of course, while we seek to minister to the business community, we live in the midst of a diverse culture which includes homeless people as well as many other social challenges. We want to meet these challenges, but of course some of them require substantial resources in order to make a noticeable impact. Some of the younger folk who are starting to assist us and to meet for prayer in May Street, are involved in going out onto the streets to befriend people who are homeless. Hopefully, as we work together, we can all make a difference in the different places and ministries God has called us to and we look forward to seeing God's Kingdom extended further in May Street and Belfast city centre.

KEITH DRURY

“WHAT NEXT?”

May Street has been challenged by the South Belfast Presbytery to come up with a new version of the five year plan which ran from 2003 – 2008.

The convener of South Belfast Presbytery, Rev Derek McKelvey, asked for and has now received a range of ideas from the Minister, Kirk Session, congregational committee, sub-committees including Urban Soul, the congregation as a whole and individual members.

The views of the congregation were articulated at two general meetings held in the lecture hall on December 7 and January 5.

Mr McKelvey has now received many different views and we anticipate a response soon.

Meanwhile, in his role of Director of City Centre Mission for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, our Minister has been in contact with the “significant other” interested party involved with May Street, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Board of Mission.

We recognise that Keith's dual role as Minister of May Street and Director of City Centre Mission is unique and challenging. We have been working together to ensure that both roles can be carried out in harmony and have asked Keith from time to time to clarify any distinctions between the two, so that May Street's mission outreach work is fully integrated into the wider ambitions of the church for Belfast City Centre.

This is our 180th year as a congregation and once again we find options open to us. In a way, this is nothing new for a church that has seen two world wars and 30+ years of civil unrest whilst maintaining good links with neighbours and visitors from around the world.

The question for May Street, South Belfast Presbytery and the Board of Mission is “What next?”

We look forward to stimulating and challenging debate in the next few months and our message to both Presbyterian organisations is that we are ready to talk together and to act positively for the advancement of Christ's kingdom here in Belfast city centre.

ARTHUR ACHESON
Clerk of Session

MAY STREET ON THE MAP

Following the success of the Urban Hymns event in October, May Street is to be one of the venues for the upcoming 5th annual Belfast Nashville Songwriters Festival and Song Writing Convention. The event runs from February 18 to 22 and is expected to attract hundreds of visitors to Belfast.

The first event, on Friday February 20, is a song writing convention featuring Josh Rouse, Eilidh Patterson and Catie Curtis at an In the Round concert. Ticket price is £16.

But the showstopping event will be a concert on Saturday February 21 by noted country singer and guitarist Nanci Griffith in conceert, support by John D'Arcy and with Ralph McLean from Radio Ulster acting as MC. Nanci Griffith's career has spanned three decades and among hit songs she has written are Late Night Grand Hotel, Trouble in the Fields, Love at the Five and Dime and Outbound Plane. Tickets for the concert (7.30pm) cost £24 and are available from Belfast Welcome Centre.

All told, more than one hundred songwriters take to the stage during the festival, which celebrates the art of song writing and the Sister Cities link between Belfast and Nashville.

5TH BELFAST NASHVILLE SONGWriters FESTIVAL AND SONG WRITING CONVENTION

18TH - 22ND FEBRUARY 2009

THE ART OF SONG WRITING

5 DAYS
100 SONGWRITERS
30 CONCERTS
20 WORKSHOPS



Josh Rouse

Nanci Griffith

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CATIE CURTIS THEA GILMORE BEN GLOVER NANCI GRIFFITH
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(OF COCKNEY REBEL) (OF THE MAVERICKS)
TIFT MERRITT DECLAN O'ROURKE EILIDH PATTERSON
JOSH ROUSE MARK SELBY TIA SILLERS FOY VANCE

TICKETS: ONLINE AT WWW.BELFASTNASHVILLE.COM OR TEL: 028 9024 6609
OR CALL AT BELFAST WELCOME CENTRE, 47 DONEGALL PLACE (CLOSE TO CITY HALL)





Super star: Nancy Griffith, who plays *May Street* on February 21

Festival Director Colin Magee said: “We set out to create something special to give recognition to the writer behind the song. The festival will feature talented songwriters such as Foy Vance, Ken Haddock and Declan O’Rourke alongside other international artists such as Nanci Griffith, Steve Harley (of Cockney Rebel), Josh Rouse, Raul Malo (of The Mavericks) and Tift Merritt”

Grammy Award winning songwriters Tia Sillers (‘I Hope You Dance’) and Mark Selby (‘There’s Your Trouble’) travel over from Nashville to perform and Thea Gilmore, Catie Curtis, Dana Cooper and Buddy Mondlock have all agreed to take part. The festival also provides a platform for many local songwriters including Ben Glover & The Earls, Eilidh Patterson, Paul Casey and John McGurgan at this internationally acclaimed event.

Over five days in February, 30 concerts and 20 workshops have been organised involving more than 100 songwriters and attracting hundreds of tourists to Belfast. The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Tom Hartley has given his support to the international event:

Mr Hartley said: “Belfast City Council is

delighted to be associated with the 5th Belfast Nashville Songwriters’ Festival. The celebration of the art of song writing enables us to discover more about our shared musical heritage. It sends out a positive message of our cities internationally and enhances our tourism potential; broadening the cultural tourism package aimed at the US market has clear economic benefits for Belfast. I would like to wish Panarts every success with their festival and look forward to the many events across Belfast and its profile being raised at home and abroad”

Tickets can be bought online at www.belfastnashville.com or at The Belfast Welcome Centre 47 Donegall Place, in front of Belfast City Hall, telephone (028) 9024 6609 for more details.

TUESDAY CIRCLE

Our November meeting took the form of a First Aid talk. Mrs Joy Jackson, who has been in St John’s Ambulance Brigade for some 50 years, was our speaker for the evening. She wore her uniform and explained that they have dress uniforms and functional wear. Joy has received honours for her work in St Johns and we were allowed a glimpse of her medal. In the course of her career in First Aid, she has met several members of the Royal Family.

Of course, she shared with us her vast knowledge of helping in times of emergency which is something that everyone should be taught. There were a very small number of members present that night which was disappointing and I hope in the future our meetings will be enjoyed by more people.

Christmas is always special and this year was no exception. We had our meal in the lecture hall and Margaret Potts was the cook. It was excellent; we all enjoyed a four course meal in the comfort of our own surroundings where the car parking was convenient and the price was right! The secretary had compiled a few games to keep the brain ticking over and a good fun night was had by all.

On January 27 we enjoyed a cooking demonstration by one of our members, Jean

McCrum. These cookery evenings are always popular and we had a good attendance.

We are glad to say that our member Judy Morton, who is now back home after her spell in hospital, is continuing to improve and regain her independence. We hope she will be back with us soon, perhaps for our celebrations of 40 years of the Tuesday Circle which are planned for April 28.

ENA KIRKPATRICK

URBAN SOUL CAFE

Exciting times for Urban Soul, the cafe which we operate in the basement of May Street Church. Following the flooding damage which occurred last August, the premises underwent a complete refurbishment over the Christmas holidays. A new wooden floor has been laid, new permanent seating installed, insulation improved and the whole place has a much warmer and cosier ambience. The food and the coffee are as good as ever, and the standard of service excellent. So if you haven't been along for morning coffee or lunch, now is the time.

And a new venture for 2009 is the opening of the cafe from February 2 onwards at breakfast-time, Monday to Friday, to attract the early morning market. Everything from filled sodas to cooked breakfasts and coffees to go is on offer from 8am. So if you're wanting something to eat before work, or something to take with you to the office, head to Urban Soul in May Street. We're ideally located, just beside the bus stop.

Urban Soul has recently been involved in several additional contracts, helping to boost our income. Thanks to Colin McKeown's contact, the Design Council held a supper evening at our premises early in January. Then we provided catering after the service of thanksgiving for the life of Catherine Torney on January 15. And on January 22, Urban Soul was the venue for a cookery demonstration organised by Invest NI. So, busy times.

Please come along for breakfast, morning coffee or lunch and have a look at our new decor. I'm sure you will be impressed.

MARGARET POTTS

THE CHOIR

During December, the May Street choir carried out a poll of the congregation's best loved carols. This idea stemmed from a survey carried out by the BBC a few weeks earlier into the UK's most popular carols. Members of May Street were asked to nominate their three favourite carols.

A large number of members of the congregation took part, and the results were collated by the choir. Then the top three were included in the May Street carol service, which took place on Sunday December 21. Here are the results:

- 1 - Oh Little Town of Bethlehem.
- 2 - Silent Night.
- 3 - Oh come, all ye faithful.
- 4 - Hark the Herald Angels.
- 5 = Away in a Manger, In the Bleak Midwinter.
- 6 - Once in Royal David's City.
- 7 - Joy to the World.
- 8 - The First Nowell.
- 9 - O Holy Night.
- 10 = While Shepherds Watched, Angels from the Realms of Glory, and It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.

If you would like to compare May Street's results with those in the BBC survey, please refer to the December edition of The Greeting, as the BBC list was published in that issue. I would like to thank the congregation for their interest and participation in the poll.

It is with great sadness, and yet thankfulness for her life, that I record the death on December 20 of former choir member Catherine Torney. Catherine was closely involved in many aspects of May Street and was a long-standing and faithful member of the choir, leaving our ranks just a few years ago. After her retirement she continued to be greatly interested in the activities of the choir. She readily agreed to participate in the choir's annual summer outings and her presence always added to the enjoyment of such occasions. We offer our sympathy to Catherine's sons David and Richard and the family circle. We also think at this time of our colleague Kathleen Rea, who was such a support to - and good friend of - Catherine over many years.

VALERIE MORTON



Presidential pick: Keith Drury's montage created for the President's Club to mark the inauguration of Barack Obama.

OBAMA IN THE PICTURE

May Street minister the Rev Keith Drury was commissioned to create an artwork for the Belfast-based Presidents' Club to mark the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama. The Presidents' Club is a not-for-profit venture seeking to encourage inward investment from America into Northern Ireland.

The painting was intended to reflect something of who Barack Obama is. The finished piece was a mixed-media work and used words from Obama's victory speech which formed the background of the canvas.

In addition, the logo of the Presidents' Club, along with some of their views on Obama's success, were incorporated into the painting. Finally, Obama's face was over-painted on the sealed surface layer.

Congregational secretary Robin Morton was well pleased to see that some of the most noticeable text on the art piece was taken from the headlines of the Belfast Telegraph. Also

embedded in distinct purple lettering are the words, 'One God, Many People and One God - Must Trust.

The painting was unveiled at a reception at the Presidents' Club in Talbot Street on January 20, the day of President Obama's inauguration. The reception for business and civic leaders had live-TV coverage of the ceremony in Washington as a backdrop on the plasma screens throughout the Presidents' Club business facility in the Cathedral Quarter.

Mark Finlay, a founder trustee and director of the Presidents' Club, said: "We have eight wonderful, but traditional, presidential portraits on our wall. We thought it most appropriate to commission a contemporary portrait of the new president, who everyone believes is going to bring a new style, inspire new conversations and usher in a new era."

"Keith's work is truly creative and reflects our vision. I am sure it will be a great conversation piece amongst our members from across the island and the many groups we have scheduled to

visit shortly from Boston, New York, Silicon Valley, Colorado and Washington.”

Mr Drury’s art piece incorporates mixed media and is finished in oils. He refers to his style as ‘the real facebook’ as it involves a collage of newspaper articles underlying the subject of the painting. The words form a narrative which captures the events, speeches and activities of the campaign and election.

Mr Drury commented, “I consider myself privileged at this momentous time to have been asked to create such a piece for The Presidents’ Club in Belfast. As a not-for-profit organisation, I know they work extremely hard to create relationships and to deliver inward investment into our community which ultimately benefits all. I hope the piece will become a focal point for those visiting the club and that it will help them in fulfilling their objectives.”

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the annual business meeting of May Street Church will be held at 7.45pm on Monday February 23. All members of the congregation are invited to attend this important meeting, at which the accounts for the year will be presented and an update given on future plans for the church.

This year there is no election to committee, as those elected at the 2008 ABM will serve a three-year term.

ROBIN MORTON
Congregational Secretary

CHRISTMAS WRAP

Many thanks to those who made Christmas such a memorable time at May Street. The festive season kicked off in style with the congregational lunch on December 7, which was attended by almost 50 people. A fine meal was served and a most enjoyable time of fellowship had by one and all. Thanks to Margaret Potts and the ladies of the congregation for all their hard work.

The congregational lunch was also the occasion for a well deserved presentation to Chrissie

Hewitt, who has now retired as mission support executive at May Street. The presentation was made by the Rev Keith Drury, who paid tribute to her efforts over the past five years. In response, Chrissie expressed thanks and also the hope that the midweek church opening would continue despite her retirement.

Thanks to Elizabeth Doran for organising the Christmas card service, which was much appreciated by members of the congregation. It meant everyone could exchange cards and greetings without suffering from the vagaries or charges of the Royal Mail. It was a huge task for Elizabeth, but one which she carried off with aplomb.

The sanctuary was looking splendid for the Christmas services, but all the decorations had to be taken down at the start of January, so thanks to all the team involved in that exercise.

ROBIN MORTON

PEACE AGENT

Recent events have included the annual cross-community carol service organised by the DoE/DRD at Clarence Court in Adelaide Street and an inter-denominational service at St George’s Church of Ireland early in January. Both were well supported.

So far, nobody has come forward to take over from Stephen Wilson as May Street peace agent. While applications are still invited, we are grateful to May Street clerk of session Arthur Acheson, who has agreed to fill the post in the interim. Anyone with ideas as to how to promote the valuable work of peace and reconciliation is invited to contact Arthur.

PEACE MEETING

Notification of the next meeting of the inter-church group involving May Street, St Malachy’s, Fitzroy, St George’s and Belmont. It will take place in the Urban Soul coffee shop at May Street at 7.30pm on Wednesday March 11, when Mamoun Maboyed and Johnston McMaster will speak on “Extremism in religion”. All welcome for what should be a topical and fascinating discussion.

PRESBYTERIAN MUTUAL SOCIETY

As requested by the moderator, Dr Donald Patton, petition forms have been lodged in the vestibule of May Street as part of a campaign by the Presbyterian Church for the Government to alleviate the plight of investors with the Presbyterian Mutual Society, which went into administration in November.

The petition, which is also available online and which is to be sent to Downing Street, reads: "We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to provide similar governmental guarantees to UK mutual societies as for banks."

The petition may also be signed online at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/Save-the-Mutuals/> where it was originally submitted by Thomas Stanley Callaghan. The petition is only open to British Citizens or residents and if you have already signed online there is no need to sign again.

Completed petition forms should be returned by February 18 to: Mutual Petition, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Church House, Fisherwick Place, Belfast BT1 6DW.

In his message, Dr Patton said: "Some weeks ago I wrote to the Prime Minister seeking his sympathetic attention for the plight of investors in the Mutual Society. The matter has been referred to the Treasury which is undertaking a review of the regulatory framework for financial mutuals in Northern Ireland. On January 21 I met with several of our local MPs at Westminster and we discussed the Mutual Society. Everyone is aware that the First Minister, Peter Robinson, is seeking a meeting with the Prime Minister on this subject. I too, am following up my original letter with another requesting a face-to-face meeting with the Prime Minister.

"It is important that as many Presbyterians as possible sign the petition which has been placed online on the Downing Street website.

"I have also asked for this petition to be sent out to Ministers in printed form to be made available for members of congregations to sign. We need thousands of signatures to indicate to the Government the widespread concern of the Church at large and to support those placed

in personal difficulty by the events which were triggered by the Government guarantee to the banking system. This will also strengthen our hand as we make representation to government.

"I do not know what the eventual outcome of these approaches, and of the Administrator's work, will be. Clearly it will be some time before we know. I urge our people to keep these matters constantly in your prayers and for us all to hold together through these stormy times. We look to our God who has been our refuge and strength in our long and often difficult history and to His Word which assures us that He is "an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea... The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." (Psalm 46:1,2,3,7)

PMS AND MAY STREET

Although May Street does not have any church funds invested in the Presbyterian Mutual Society, we are aware that some individuals may have made investments in the PMS. We would invite anyone who is suffering from hardship as a result to contact the Minister, the Rev Keith Drury, in confidence.

DEADLINE

The deadline for all contributions to the next issue of the Greeting is Sunday
March 29

COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the congregational committee will be held at 7.45pm on Monday March 30, 2009, followed by a meeting of the Kirk Session.

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Deaths

December 20: Catherine Torney, late of Woodstock House, Belfast 6.

Blessed are those that die in the Lord

UCB TAKES TO THE AIR

United Christian Broadcasters (UCB) has announced the launch of broadcasting Christian radio on DAB digital radio in Northern Ireland. Following a successful fundraising campaign, the charity began broadcasting in Northern Ireland on January 30.

And among the broadcasters is Juls Martin, organiser of the Halo night club which runs in the basement of May Street Church. To our great delight Juls, who had been broadcasting a Sunday morning programme on U105, will be on the air every evening with UCB.

UCB has hired Juls to do the 7pm to midnight show five days a week. He will be based here in Belfast and is really excited about this opportunity. He had been asking The Lord for direction for over a year now.

An awareness and fundraising event, which Juls co-hosted, was held at the Whitewell Tabernacle in Belfast on January 23, to help secure the final amount of funding. Speakers at the event included founder of Operation Mobilisation, George Verwer, Pastor James McConnell and founder of UCB UK, Ian Mackie.

“This is a pretty incredible time for UCB”, said Gary Hoogvliet, UCB’s Director of Broadcasting. “On a weekly basis, we receive hundreds of emails from people letting us know how much they’re being encouraged and stretched by what they hear on UCB and it’s great that in troubling times, we’re able to point people to a greater hope. We’re looking forward to broadcasting in Northern Ireland too. We know many people have waited for this for a long time, so we’re excited that this is finally becoming a reality.”

UCB already broadcasts on DAB digital radio to most major cities in England and Wales and after Northern Ireland, hopes to continue to expand coverage across the UK.

UCB is a Christian media charity, providing radio programming via DAB digital radio and television programming via digital satellite. UCB’s radio programmes are also available via digital satellite and the Internet. Check ucbmedia.co.uk/dab for DAB coverage in your area.

UCB provides thought-provoking, life-changing resources to churches, Christians and people seeking a better understanding of the Christian faith, currently reaching more than a million people across the UK and Ireland.

ROBIN MORTON

HOLY COMMUNION

The Kirk Session has announced the following dates for Communion services during 2009:

Sundays April 26, June 21 and September 27.

The Harvest Thanksgiving service will take place on Sunday October 18.

Please put these dates in your diary now, and plan to be available.

COLLECTORS

Feb: Kathleen Rea, Stephen Wilson, Robin Morton, Jenny Wilson, Arthur Acheson, Arthur Fannin.

Mar: Kathleen Rea, Christine Hewitt, Alan McCrum, Barry Bell, Robin Hewitt, Clive Gilmour.

Apr: Kathleen Rea, Gordon Kirkpatrick, Frank Boyd, Valerie Condy, Brian Gourley, Andrew Acheson.

MIDWEEK SERVICES

May Street is well into its next season of midweek services so if you are in town during the week, please drop by. On Tuesdays we have a weekly Prayers for our City gathering at 1.05pm, while on Thursdays we hold the usual lunchtime service, running from 1.05pm to 1.25pm. Many of the regulars tell us that the services provide a welcome break from the working day and provide a chance to refocus one’s priorities in the midst of the pressures of business. So why not try it for yourself?

Incidentally, our Wednesday communion service has been suspended for the time being.

Despite the retirement of Chrissie Hewitt,

the congregational committee is keen to see the midweek opening of our sanctuary being continued. If any members or friends of the church would like to volunteer perhaps for one or two days a month, it would enable us to draw up a rota. At present, arrangements are in hand to have the church open on Tuesdays and Thursdays to facilitate the services. On other days, a notice is placed on the front door advising visitors that they are at liberty to visit the premises, but should gain access by means of the Urban Soul cafe.

BASEMENT REVAMP

While most people were taking a breather over the Christmas and New Year holidays, the May Street basement was a hive of activity. With the Urban Soul cafe closed for three weeks over the holidays, the opportunity was taken to renovate the premises, which suffered flood damage last August.

The old floor was ripped up and the damp material removed. The work involved dismantling the cafe and all its fittings, and dumping all the rotten floor timbers. A smart new wooden floor has been laid and fresh insulation installed. The opportunity was also taken to install some more protection to prevent a recurrence. The cost of the work so far has been covered by a claim on the May Street insurance policy, which is most gratifying.

Phase one was completed in time to enable the cafe to resume business in January, and very smart the refurbished premises look. Customer response has been favourable, and the consensus is that the cafe is now a lot cosier.

Phase two is now under way - the refurbishment of the adjoining schoolroom. Once again, rotten timbers have been removed and buckled flooring is being addressed. In addition, work is being undertaken such as the installation of a ramp and new exit which will help May Street secure the entertainments licence for the basement. A number of access and egress conditions need to be met before we can secure the licence and resume activities at the Halo night club.

May Street's thanks go to Urban Soul Action Group member Ruby Hutchinson, who has driven

the scheme forward and has acted as project manager, a role which involved her being on site most days when work was in progress. We are also grateful to cafe manager Margaret Potts for her forbearance during all the disruption, and commend her and her staff for the way they got up and running so soon after the all-clear was given.

ROBIN MORTON

CATHERINE TORNEY

It is with regret we record the death on December 20 of lifelong May Street member and congregational stalwart Catherine Torney. After a period of illness, she passed away peacefully on Saturday December 20 at Mount Lens Nursing Home in Belfast. Mrs Torney requested that her body be donated for medical research, so no funeral was held. However, arrangements were made for a service of thanksgiving and memorial for her life, which was held at May Street on Thursday January 15. The Rev Keith Drury and the Rev Niall Bayly officiated.

In his address, Mr Bayly recalled how he had made pastoral visits to Mrs Torney on many occasions over the past nine years. Although she had been confined to home in recent times, Mr Bayly said he had come to know her as a person of deep humanity who had a genuine concern for others in the social and spiritual sense. This, he said, had been demonstrated in her early and life-long support of the Corrymeela Community.



***Sadly missed:** Catherine Torney, who was a lifelong member of May Street.*

Mr Bayly said that Corrymeela founder Dr Ray Davey and his wife Kathleen - who died in December - had often spoken warmly and appreciatively of Mrs Torney's support and friendship over many years. But Mrs Torney had also displayed her concern and interest in others through her active membership, witness and contribution to her beloved congregation in May Street, which had begun with her baptism in 1916 by Dr Wylie Blue.

Educated at Princess Gardens School in Belfast, she then studied to obtain her National Froebel Foundation certificate. This enabled her to realise her ambition of opening a kindergarten school for children with special needs, something which revealed her compassion and humanitarian concern. She conducted the school from her home in Ava Avenue in the Ormeau Road area.

When World War Two started in 1939, the little school was disbanded and Mrs Torney went into the NAAFI, the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, which provided canteens and shops for British military personnel at home and abroad.

Mr Bayly said that Catherine had met her husband Tom through May Street tennis club and they were married in May Street on June 12, 1946 by the same Dr Blue who had baptised her. He said they were blessed by the arrival of their two sons, David and Richard. Mr Bayly said the fact that Mrs Torney's two sons and their wider families were present at the service, demonstrated that "the rest was history".

May Street, he went on, had been an essential part of Tom and Catherine Torney's married life. Mrs Torney played an active role in all the congregational organisations, serving in the Girls' Auxiliary, the Presbyterian Women's Association, the May Street choir and the Ladies' Bowling Club. Until last year, she had been a member of the congregational committee. In addition to these valued commitments, the Torneys used to organise annual treasurer hunts, and assisted regularly at the senior citizens' annual tea.

Mr Bayly said Mrs Torney had loved poetry and literature, something that had been illustrated by the reading by David Torney at the service of WB Yeats' poem "The Lake Isle of Inisfree", the verses

of which he said he and Catherine had often recited together during his visits.

Over the years Mrs Torney had applied her talents to the benefit of May Street. She used to write and present a pageant which involved many members of the congregation, and which was enjoyed thoroughly by all the participants and the audience. Her intellectual gifts were applied also to writing a book on the history of May Street congregation, covering the period from 1929 to 1987.

As well as having an active mind, Mrs Torney enjoyed handicraft such as knitting. Indeed, one example of her work was the nativity scene which was still displayed year by year in the May Street sanctuary. All the characters and animals were made and knitted by her. The manger scene was a lasting memorial to a gifted, warm-hearted and generous person.

But Mr Bayly said it was Mrs Torney's spiritual dimension which he wished to highlight. During his 43 years of ministry, Mrs Torney was someone who had made one of the deepest impressions on him. She had confirmed in him the importance and value of mutual ministry to each other, something everyone could do and share between themselves in Christ's name.

On behalf of everyone at May Street, sympathy is expressed to David, his wife Maureen and their children Christopher and Karen; and also to Richard, his wife Denise, their children Keri and Colin and their grandchildren Aoife and Liam.

ROBIN MORTON

YOUTH CHURCH

I would like to say a big thank you to our congregation for being so generous on Gift Day at May Street, which was held on Sunday December 7. As always, there were bags and bags of gifts under our Christmas tree in the sanctuary. The Salvation Army took our gifts and distributed them out to families who were very grateful. So again, THANK YOU!

Here are the Sunday School dates for the next two months:



Gift time: Checking over the presents at May Street are (from left) Stuart Lenthem (Salvation Army), The Rev Keith Drury and Keith Hillier (Salvation Army).



Smile please: Gathered round the Christmas tree at May Street are (from left) Andrew Johnston, Heather Johnston, Sophie Booker, Julie Willson, Anna Wilson, Harry Booker, Ben Acheson, William Booker, Chrissie Hewitt and Craig Johnston.

February 1: Julie Wilson
 February 8: free
 February 15: Chrissie Hewitt
 February 22: free
 March 1: Julie
 March 8: free
 March 15: Chrissie
 March 22: free

JULIE WILSON

DEAR GOD

Dear God
 So far today,
 I've done alright.
 I haven't gossiped,
 I haven't lost my temper,
 I haven't lied or cheated,

I haven't been greedy, grumpy
 Nasty, selfish or over indulgent.
 I'm very thankful for that.
 But in a few minutes Lord,
 I'm going to get out of bed,
 And from then on, I'm probably
 Going to need a lot of more help.

SPRING

Though the skies seem grey above me,
 And I can't see the light of day.
 There's a ray beaming through the shadows,
 And a smile can't be far away.

Though the earth seems bleak and barren,
 And the seeds lie brown and dead,
 Still the promise of life lies within them,
 And I know springtime is just ahead.

Thank God for the promise of springtime,
 Once again my heart will sing.
 There's a brand new day a-dawning,
 Thank God for the promise of spring.

THE GOD ON THE MOUNTAIN

Life is easy...
 When you're up on the mountain.
 And you've got peace of mind
 Like you've never known.
 But, things change...
 When you're down in the valley.
 Don't lose faith...
 For you're never alone.

You talk of faith...
 When you're up on the mountain.
 Talk comes so easy
 When life's at its best.
 But down in the valley
 Of trials and temptations,
 That's when faith...
 Is really put to the test.

For the God on the mountain
 Is still God in the valley.
 When things go wrong
 He'll put them right.
 And the God of the good times
 Is still God in the bad times.
 The God of the day
 Is still God of the night.

Poems contributed by Elizabeth Doran