



The Greeting

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TAKING RISKS

This week I watched a film with the children called "Night at the Museum". The story-line was simple – all the exhibits in the Natural History Museum came to life at night-time. This unusual occurrence resulted in a cultural clash of Biblical proportions which was sufficient to make the population of Brixton look as uniform as a box of imperial mints.

Some of the free standing exhibits roamed around, including the skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex, but the real problem developed when the night watchman encouraged everyone to enjoy freedom and inhabit the same space. Cowboys were taken from their display case and introduced to the same floor space as the Roman soldiers, who without a second thought, immediately went to war – despite the night watchman's instructions.

Freedom is a great thing, but slowly the museum by night was becoming a place of anarchy, a kind of battleground for all the greats of history who had ever lived. Our world needs history and each age of history needs its own heroes, but when all the heroes find themselves on stage at the same time, taking a final bow can be a dangerous thing because it may just be at that unguarded moment you lose your head. Of course, as in all good films, there was a little romance, a gullible but desperately nice guy, a hard employer and three bad guys, and of course, the obligatory Egyptian scroll in the basement which was the cause of everyone coming to life from sundown to sunrise.

Balanced against that was the terrible museum feel that only museums can create, the sense of being so near to greatness and yet so far. The sense of wonder and the awareness that you can't really experience it at all, added to the sense



*A Blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year*



that you are experiencing different worlds and yet these worlds are long gone and all you are looking at is a piece of wax, or a model made in Taiwan, by some guy who was listening to an ipod at the time. Maybe that's why museums are not heavily visited, except by history geeks and mothers at a loss to know what to do with kids on a rainy day. But a museum where all the exhibits come to life – well that's exciting, but as we said, also similar to an acid-fuelled party after Glastonbury.

At May Street we have heritage, we could do the museum thing, safe, predictable and mind-numbingly boring for everyone. We could even create that sense of yesterday but like the museum, not really deliver on it either. From the film, I was reminded that we could suffer the same fate, unless we allow a few things to happen.

First we need to allow risk. Very little in life has ever been discovered that did not involve risk. Even safety matches need to be struck because playing safe only keeps us on the baseline while the opportunities pass us by.

Secondly, museums are good but they are even better when there is life. Let's never quash creativity but together bring about a wonderful place of vibrancy, full of rich discoveries.

Thirdly, let's be aware that when all the players are on the field, there can be anarchy. Different opinions and committees jostling to be heard, and any number of referees always at the ready to blow their whistles. What was interesting about this film, however, was that one night when the three bad men broke in they stole the Egyptian scroll which brought everything to life. Suddenly there was death and silence, the life of the museum was gone. Thankfully, a little quick thinking got the scroll activated and for one night all the animals and exhibits in the museum had their chance to get the scroll back from the burglars. If they failed, they would never live again and with their new united purpose, the anarchy came to an end. The jostling and wars ceased and everyone pulled together to make sure that the scroll was retrieved from the fleeing burglars before it was gone for ever.

It was simply the realisation that they had one goal and only one goal – to live, to breathe and

to enjoy life, and it was this that brought them together. Ironically it was this very same mission which took them outside the museum in their pursuit and caused them to be seen by the whole community and the community witnessing this, never saw the museum the same way again. The next day, crowds thronged the steps of the museum as they queued to enter

At May Street we want to be the ultimate museum, we want to be the tourist attraction, and we want to be the place where dreams are birthed. There is only one way to make that happen, and that is to be prepared to risk everything, because failure is usually only present where commitment and risk are consistently lacking. I have a new saying: "Only the enlightened crow enjoys the scarecrow for a roost." It takes guts to be the first crow to land beside the straw-headed monster with the tilted cap, but when you do, you realise the field is your oyster and your old foe the scarecrow is now your best viewing point.

KEITH DRURY

TO THURSDAY LUNCHERS

A big thank-you for your attendance and support over the year so far. However, this time I don't want to over-eulogise you. Together, Sunday worshippers and midweek worshippers simply make up different aspects of God's church seeking to bring God to the City, none of us own God's church any more than the other. We are aware that our Thursday regulars have contacts in the offices, so we encourage you to make every effort to bring fellow colleagues into Urban Soul as a first introduction to May Street.

Hopefully as they get to know us they will feel more inclined to come along to one of the services. There is nothing more difficult than sharing the gospel in our neutral environment workplaces which is why we have designed Urban Soul to assist you in your mission before God. That is why we have the gospel tracts on the tables designed around May Street are written in a language which we hope best communicates God's word to others. If there is any way we can help you in your mission before God, please tell us so that we can assist you. We want Urban Soul to wipe its



May Street
redefining church

Once upon a time..

**Come to a candle lit Georgian period Christmas
at May Street Church, Belfast.
Thursday 6th Dec 5pm—8pm**

Authentic period carriages and Clothes
Mulled wine and Food (M&S)

Soup kitchen by Cuisine De France
Art Exhibition, School choirs and much more.

Also enjoy the professional 'Blue Jar' ensemble in the
magical Urban Soul basement

**Find us behind City Hall opposite Ross's
auction rooms**

www.maystreetchurch.co.uk

URBAN SOUL

own face commercially but we are not prepared to sacrifice God's mission for simple financial return, so if you have any ideas as to how we can help you reach your office with God's message, please do speak to us.

this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and every good wish for the New Year.

ENA KIRKPATRICK
SECRETARY

THURSDAY OUTREACH

The Thursday opening of our church continues with a service at 1.05 pm - 1.30pm and lunches 12.00pm-2.00pm.

This is an opportunity for people in the city centre on a Thursday to take part in a time of worship led by our Minister, the Rev. Keith Drury, and also enjoy lunch at their leisure in the lecture hall.

The numbers attending each week are very encouraging and everyone attending is assured of a warm welcome.

There will be a short break over the Christmas period after the service on December 13 and resuming on Thursday January 10.

SAM NELSON

TUESDAY CIRCLE

The September meeting was cancelled, due to a number of our members being unable to attend so we re-arranged our calendar of events.

On October 23 we welcomed a member of the crime prevention team from Donegall Pass Police Station. Brian Tracey, a crime prevention officer, gave us a very helpful talk with lots of tips as to how to keep safe at home, in the car and on the street.

Bob Brookes, who was scheduled to be with us in September, will now be the speaker on November 27. We hope for a good attendance and have extended an invitation to all in the congregation who are interested in gardening and even those who are not, as Bob Brookes is a well known enthusiastic gardener and those who have not already got this bug may be smitten on the night.

In December, as usual, we plan to treat ourselves to a special meal, and this year we are again going to Spa Golf Club in Ballynahinch where we have had pleasurable evenings in the past. May I take

URBAN SOUL

Things steadily get busier at Urban Soul on a weekly basis as the number coming in for lunches continues to grow, slowly but steadily. We are building up a number of regulars and coming to enjoy them as friends rather than simply diners. It is critical to have the consistency of being open as much as possible as people come to make it their place in the city.



Barista boys: Adam Harbinson (left), the business support executive at May Street, instructs the Presbyterian Moderator, Dr John Finlay, in the art of making a good café latte on the occasion of his visit to Urban Soul, the May Street basement café, on the evening of Thursday November 15.

We now have an Urban Soul course which is aimed at helping us learn how to best communicate God's truth to our office colleagues, although it also helps us understand what exactly God's



Trad band: Gemma Gormley's Irish traditional band which provided the music at the inaugural Irish evening at Urban Soul, which took place on Thursday September 13.



Keeping in step: The Irish dancers who put on such an impressive display at Urban Soul during the Irish night in September are pupils from St Malachy's Primary School.

purpose is for us in this world. We hope to begin this shortly on a Thursday evening after work. If you are interested please contact us.

COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Congregational Committee will be held at 7.30pm on Monday January 7, followed by a meeting of Kirk Session.

THE CHOIR

Since the last edition of The Greeting there have been two highlights for the choir when we sang special praise items – the Harvest Service on October 14 and the Remembrance Day Service

on November 11. We were delighted that Chrissie Hewitt joined us for the Remembrance service when we sang 'The Supreme Sacrifice'.

One of our members, Kathleen Rea, has just returned after a three week holiday in South Africa. We look forward to hearing all about the trip!

At the moment our thoughts are turning to Christmas and our annual Carol Service which will be held on Sunday morning December 23. We hope that there will be a good turn-out of the congregation, their families and friends to join us in the singing of traditional carols and worship. Please put this date into your diary.

With good wishes to the congregation for Christmas.

VALERIE MORTON
SECRETARY

PEACE AGENT

Thanks go out to Brian Gourley for handling May Street's Bible reading at Belmont Presbyterian Church on Sunday November 11 at their annual Remembrance Service. Brian is a great supporter of the peacemaking cause in May Street. All the usual churches involved in the peacemaking group participated with either a Bible reading or prayer, while address was delivered by the Rev Liz Hughes from Whitehouse Presbyterian Church.

Whitehouse church was destroyed in 2003 by an arson attack but it was the spirit of both sides of the community that was the basis of her sermon. The church now has been rebuilt and is more vibrant than it ever was. Both Protestant and Catholic residents from the area and churches from all denominations pulled together to create a church that reaches out to and is used by everybody. This is something that Mrs Hughes and the members of Whitehouse are understandably very proud of. The attack was meant to divide the

DEADLINE

The deadline for all contributions to the next issue of the Greeting is Sunday
January 27

DOUBLE THE VISION

In my old age it seems I have developed cataracts in both eyes which at times cause double vision and the inability to see everything clearly. However when I was thinking over the past year in May Street, I was delighted to reflect that in many ways we have doubled the vision of God's work in this church and that His plans are taking on a greater dimension and growing clarity.

The staff numbers have almost doubled with the welcome addition of Adam Harbinson and the 'entry points' have doubled at the front giving passers-by a choice of coming up the steps into the sanctuary or going down the adjacent steps into Urban Soul.

Debbie Lindores has doubled her workload by not only caretaking the church but managing the latter as well. Both she and Adam have done an amazing job along with Adam's wife Pauline and Ruby Hutchinson and all the other volunteers in making Urban Soul a very special place to come and enjoy a chat or music over great food and coffee.

Thursday lunchtimes have also doubled to give the mid-week congregation a choice of lunches either in Urban Soul or with the ladies in the Lecture Hall who continue their loving outreach in the traditional way with home-made soup and warm and gracious hospitality.

Further encouragement up in the sanctuary with more doubling of vision. We now have double the numbers at the Tuesday lunchtime Prayer for the City at 1.05pm and also at the informal Communion service on Wednesdays at 1.05pm And also on Thursdays at the mid-week service where the Rev Keith Drury continues his wonderful teaching and preaching. It's all about Jesus and Keith always points to Him.

God has seen our labours and heard our prayers. Yet we



Tourist trail: Welcoming visitors William and Diana Smyly from Bedford in England to May Street for the Harvest Service on Sunday October 14 are (back row from left) Chris Hewitt and Clive Gilmour, along with Barry Bell (centre, front row), who is a cousin of Mr Smyly's.

community but only served to bring both sides closer together.

The service was finished with refreshment afterwards. My thanks go to Campbell Young from Belmont for organising the night.

STEPHEN WILSON



know it is not by our might but by the work and power of His Holy Spirit that the harvest grows. We merely sow but He gives the increase. So like Elisha who asked for a double portion of his anointing we continue in May Street to ask God for a doubling of His anointing on us in all areas of our church work in mission to Belfast.

CHRIS HEWITT
MISSION SUPPORT EXECUTIVE

ALL CHANGE AGAIN

Change is not a bad word – it is the word that keeps us alive, like changing the air in our lungs every few seconds. We are hoping to see some changes at May Street as we welcome on board some new ministry partners in the New Year. All the i's are not dotted yet, but in due course we will inform you of what is happening.

YOUTH CHURCH

These are the dates for the New Year:

January 6: Julie Wilson.

January 13: free.

January 20: Chris Hewitt.

January 27: free.

February 3: Julie Wilson

February 10: free.

February 17: Chris Hewitt.

February 24: free.

CHRISTMAS GIFT DAY

Christmas gift day is on December 9, and Stuart Leatham and his father Peter from the Salvation Army will be present to accept all the gifts which will be passed on to those in need. Stuart is a band master, his wife Claire is a musician and his dad is a songster leader, so we are hoping for a couple of musical items!

Please remember those less well off than ourselves, bring your gifts and leave them beside the Christmas tree in the sanctuary during morning service. Thank-you in anticipation for your support

and participation in an event which reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas.

JULIE WILSON

A FRUITFUL LIFE

This feature on May Street midweek regular and faithful supporter Phillip McKee appeared in Sunday Life on Sunday November 11

As Belfast launches its newest farmers market at the Park Centre, Donegall Road, trader Phillip McKee explains why he changed career to become a fruit and veg market trader

What is your educational background?

I attended Loughries Primary School in Newtownards and Glastry College outside Ballyhalbert.



Marketing man: Phillip McKee and his son Peter show off some of the produce he sells at markets in Belfast and elsewhere.

Picture by courtesy of Sunday Life

What was your first job ?

I was a clerical assistant with the Department of Education in Bangor.

What made you decide to pursue your present career?

When my four-year-old daughter Laura was diagnosed with Cockayne syndrome, a life shortening illness, I resigned as an investment consultant with the Prudential to work on the family farm, as I felt I needed to be at home with Laura and my wife Pauline.

The farm went very well for several years until supermarkets cut our margins which led to me declaring myself bankrupt. I then had to find a way to support my wife and three children.

I decided to become a market trader, as I had a good understanding of fresh fruit and vegetables and their value to our health and wellbeing.

How long have you been in your current position?

It's seven years since I started with a small shop at St George's Market. We also attend markets in Londonderry, Liffey Valley in Dublin, Malahide and Howth. We take part in events like the Balmoral Show and Ballywalter Game Fair.

The Park Centre is our latest marketplace and we're delighted with the venue, which has free parking. It is well sited with the new slip road off the M1, and is convenient to all areas of Belfast especially with the improving Westlink.

What does a typical working day involve?

We leave home at 3.30am to have the best choice at the wholesalers. Market set up will take two hours and we open for business at 8.30am.

I leave the stall for a couple of hours to carry out my duties as a member of the prayer team of the Divine Healing Ministry, an interdenominational organisation which meets at St George's on Monday, St Finnian's on Tuesday, May Street Presbyterian on Wednesday and Shankill Road Methodist on Thursday.

Then I'm back on the stall until the close, when we load the lorry in preparation for the next

market. Weekends are exceptionally busy as we leave home at 2.30am on Friday to attend the Dublin area markets and return home at 11pm on Sunday night.

What are your main responsibilities?

To make sure the business is a success, enabling me to provide for my family and continue my Christian commitments.

I have to get the order right for each market, based on customers' needs.

We offer the freshest and best of produce. I know the local growers who supply me and I make sure that before I buy anything I taste it. My favourite phrase on the stall is "Put this in your mouth", as once you've tried something you'll have confidence to buy it.

When I'm buying I'm not looking for bargains, I'm looking for quality and flavour. My carrots come in bunches with their stalks to stay fresh and retain all their delicious flavour.

We supply local nursery and primary schools and encouraging children to eat fruit is a big responsibility. I make sure the fruit is just ripe for eating and that way they will enjoy every bite.

What skills do you need?

The ability to entertain and engage customers. We have flying pineapples and strawberries that are "the food of love"! We take time to show customers how to choose ripe fruit and how to cut open a mango or pineapple.

It's also a fun way to talk about the health benefits of eating fruit and veg. We stress the importance of buying unwashed vegetables and eating potatoes in their skins. We show how to present fruit in new and tempting ways - like banana and berries on cocktail sticks, or pear and raspberry, apple and strawberry. It looks inviting and is a joy to eat.

What's the best thing about your job?

The variety of people I meet. Making new friends by taking time to talk to people and to listen.

And the worst?

The rain! But our stall is designed to protect

customers and produce from rain or hot sun and the layout accommodates 30 people.

What sort of personal qualities does your job require?

You've got to be interested in people and your produce. Know how to hold a conversation with people and know how to prepare every variety of fruit and veg on the stall, plus their nutritional benefits.

For example, blueberries contain antioxidants which can protect against prostate cancer and Alzheimers disease and romanesco, like broccoli, contains antitoxins.

Where would you like to be in 10 years time?

Working the markets just two days a week with my son Peter and continuing to serve the Lord.

What advice would you give to someone wishing to pursue a similar career?

It's a great job and to succeed at it you need to know what your customer wants, which is the freshest and best produce. You present it to them looking its best and as nature intended, not washed and polished and stripped of its nutrients.

You have to be dedicated and there for your customer on each market day. The best way to learn the trade is on a market stall.

If you could swap jobs with someone for one day, who would it be and why?

Rev Brother David Jardine who runs the Divine Healing Ministry based at St Finnian's, and Townsend Street, Belfast, because the Lord sends him to people who need him.

When my daughter Laura died in hospital he arrived within half-an-hour to be with my family and no one had called him. I'd like to have that relationship and make that difference in people's lives.

- The Farmers Market at Park Centre takes place every Thursday, 10am to 4pm.

ACHESON ACHIEVEMENTS

Well done to various members of the Acheson

family who have been hitting the headlines recently. Congratulations, first of all, to May Street treasurer Andrew Acheson who has been awarded a Masters in Business Administration from Queen's University, having studied part-time over the past few years. His graduation ceremony takes place later this month.

Meanwhile his younger brother Graham has passed his final exams to qualify as an architect in Edinburgh. And last, but not least, their dad

COLLECTORS

Dec: Kathleen Rea, Gordon Kirkpatrick, Alan McCrum, Barry Bell, Robin Hewitt, Clive Gilmour.

Jan: Kathleen Rea, Gordon Kirkpatrick, Frank Boyd, Valerie Condy, Ed Hill, Geoff Hill.

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

Arthur has been appointed to the Northern Ireland Ministerial Advisory Group on Architecture and the Built Environment. Well done to all!

ECONOMIC FORUM

The latest meeting of the United Businessmen, otherwise known as the May Street Economic Forum, took place at 11am on November 29, and the topics for discussion included the Varney Review on business tax policy in Northern Ireland.

Congratulations to our member Mark Finlay, chief executive of Barnabas Ventures on his great efforts to get cars running around the island without "reference to the national question". Rally Ireland was a fantastic example to us all in bring positive attention and opportunity to these shores. Well done Mark!

RAYMOND SEXTON
JOINT FORUM CONVENOR
MAY STREET ECONOMIC FORUM

CHRISTMAS POST

Christmas is looming, and once again, the May Street internal postal service will be gearing up for the big rush. Many thanks to Elizabeth Doran who will once again be acting as our post-mistress. No need to worry about what size of stamp you need, just make sure the name is legible and that the recipient is likely to be at May Street to collect his or her cards. Regrettably, home deliveries cannot be undertaken.

The post box will be open in the vestibule on Sundays December 2 and 9, so please post your cards on one of those two Sundays. Final delivery will be made on Sunday December 16. No charge is levied for this service but you may like to make a donation to the Flower Fund in lieu of postage. If so, please do this by placing an envelope in the Sunday collection plate clearly marked for the May Street Flower Fund.

HARVEST HOME

Many thanks to all those members of the congregation who kindly donated foodstuffs to the Harvest Service on Sunday October 14. Thanks to too midweek regular Phillip McKee, who provided fruit and vegetables from his stall at St George's Market. The non-perishable items were conveyed by Alan and Jean McCrum to Blytheswood Care in Ballyclare, while Kathleen Rea delivered the perishable goods to the Martin Residential Trust at Glengormley. Thanks to those involved in the transportation arrangements.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

On Remembrance Day, November 11, May Street honoured the war dead and those who served in two world wars and more recent conflicts. Wreaths were laid in the vestibule and at the choir stalls, while the Last Post and Reveille were sounded by a bugler from the Boys' Brigade.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

During October, May Street found itself being used as the rather unlikely location for the making of Northern Ireland's first martial arts horror movie.

The film, entitled *The Battle of the Bone*, is being made by a local company, and there are hopes that it might receive its premiere at the cinema which will be opened at Victoria Square in March.

The imaginative plot involves zombies who attack Belfast as the Orange Order takes to the streets of the city for the annual July 12 parades. The film homes in on a march that degenerates into violence as loyalists and republicans clash. But the twist is that the combatants then join forces with each other to repel an invading army of zombies.

Filming took place at various locations such as Pottinger's Entry, Upper Arthur Street – and May Street, the idea being that the zombies chase the rioters onto the steps of our historic Georgian era church.

Producer George Clarke, who also wrote and acts in the film, said he wanted to make a film with a difference. Mr Clarke, a professional cartoonist, said he was delighted at being able to use May Street Church as the backdrop for some of the scenes.

Most of the filming took place on the afternoon of Sunday October 28 but another scene was shot on the afternoon of Thursday November 1, which involved some realistic looking blood being spilled on the steps of the church, along with an odd skull or two. Thankfully all the blood was artificial, and it washed off easily. All in the name of art, and May Street was pleased to be able to facilitate the film-makers. Roll on, next year's Oscars!

ROBIN MORTON

BACK IN THE FRAME

At its meeting in October the congregational committee voted to reverse its earlier decision to halt advertising in the Presbyterian Church box in the Churches Page in Saturday's Belfast Telegraph. The insertion had been suspended because of rising charges but it was felt that it would be beneficial to use the three-line mention to publicise both the Sunday service and midweek activities.

HIGH FLIERS

May Street hit the high spots in October when a plug for Urban Soul was included in the in-flight magazine of no-frills airline easyJet. The magazine, which has a print run of hundreds of thousands, and also goes on-line, is seen by all easyJet's passengers on its flights across Europe.

The mention of May Street was included in the guide to Belfast under "Insider Tip". It read: "The Urban Soul café, situated in the basement of May Street Church. The coffee and desserts are excellent and there is a live jazz band on Thursdays." The article also gave contact details. So if you haven't sampled Urban Soul on a Thursday evening, get on down there soon – before the place is packed out by easyJet passengers!

Our thanks to Chris Sherry of Ulster Tatler, who compiles the information each month for the easyJet magazine, and who kindly facilitated our publicity.

LET HOPE GO AHEAD TO 2008

Let Hope go ahead and you follow.

Let Hope go before you today.

Things will be better tomorrow,

If Hope is in view all the way,

For hope bears no load on her shoulders -

Smoothing the rocks and the ruts -

She forces a path through the boulders,

Dismissing the ifs and the buts.

You won't be afraid to keep going

Where Hope sheds a gleam on the track,

For Hope with her lamp brightly glowing

Moves forward and never turns back.

She never needs goading or prodding,

Unflagging she makes for the height.

While you in her footprints come plodding,

Eyes fixed on her beautiful light.

Alone, you would soon give up trying.

Alone you would never succeed,

But Hope undismayed and undying

Strides forward to give you a lead.

And now that the New Year is dawning,

And unknown the road you must tread,
There's nothing to fear if each morning

You're willing to send Hope ahead.

CHRISTMAS

A song was heard at Christmas

To wake the midnight sky.

A Saviour's birth, and peace on earth

And praise to God on high.

The Angels sang at Christmas

With all the hosts above,

And still we sing of the newborn King,

His glory and His love.

A Star was seen at Christmas,

A herald and a sign

That all might know the way to go

To find the Child divine.

The Wise Men watched at Christmas

In some far eastern land,

And still the wise, in starry skies,

Discern their Maker's hand.

A tree was grown at Christmas,

A sapling green and young.

No tinsel bright with candlelight

Upon its branches hung.

But he who came at Christmas

Our sins and sorrows bore,

And still we name His tree of shame,

Our life for evermore

A Child was born at Christmas,

When Christmas first began.

The Lord of all, a baby small,

The Son of God made man.

For love is ours at Christmas,

And life and light restored.

And so we praise through endless days,

The Saviour, Christ the Lord!

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

Before you bid, for Christmas sake,

Your Guest to sit at meat.

Oh, please to save a little cake
For them that have no treat

Before you go to party dressed
In silver gown or gold,

Oh, please to send a little vest
To them that still go cold.

Before you give your girl or boy
Great gifts to be undone.

Oh, please to spare a little toy
To them that will have none.

Before you gather round the tree
To dance the day about,
Oh, please to give a little glee
To them that go without.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

So crowded was the little town
on the first Christmas day.
Tired Mary mother laid her down
to rest upon the hay.

(Ah, would my door might have been thrown
wide open on her way!)

But when the Holy babe was born
in the deep hush of night.

It seemed as if a sabbath morn
had come with sacred light.
Child Jesus made the place folorn
with his own beauty bright.

The manger rough was all his rest;
the cattle, having fed,
stood silent by, or closer pressed,
and gravely wondered.

(AH, Lord, if only that my breast
had cradled thee instead!)

WOULDN'T LIFE BE WORTH THE LIVING.
WOULDN'T DREAMS BE COMING TRUE,
IF WE KEPT THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT
ALL THE WHOLE YEAR THROUGH?

GREAT LITTLE ONE
WHOSE ALL EMBRACING BIRTH
LIFTS EARTH TO HEAVEN
BRINGS HEAVEN TO EARTH.

BLESS US LORD THIS CHRISTMAS
WITH QUIETNESS OF MIND.
TEACH US TO BE PATIENT,
AND ALWAYS TO BE KIND.

GREET THE NEW

Let the Old Year pass away, mourn not, but greet the New.
Turn your eyes in hope and faith towards the distant view.
Know that you'll be guided safely down the unmapped road,
Given strength and courage for the bearing of your load.

Do not let the unknown future fill you with dismay.
It is in the bands of God - so go upon your way.
Trust in Him and have no fear - you do not walk alone.
He leads the faithful in the dark, and careth for His own.

Leave behind your grievances, your worry and your woe.
Drop the extra burden of your grudgeslet them go....
So that you can travel lighter with a conscience clear
Out into the great adventure of another year.

Poems contributed by Elizabeth Doran