

SHEENA TODD



Gathering/ Call

The grace and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all.

The Bible says: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

We have gathered here in this sad hour to take our leave of Jean McPhail Todd, whom we all know and love as Sheena, to remember her life and to commend her to God's grace,

We grieve for Sheena because a loved and loving sister, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend is no longer with us, we remember her with gratitude for all she meant to us and we take comfort in the thought that Sheena may be beyond our reach, but is not, as I firmly believe beyond God's loving care, as was promised to us through Jesus Christ when he said: I will be with you to the end of time. Not all who would like to say goodbye to Sheena can be here today, but we know that they are with us in their thoughts and prayers.

Prayer

Gracious God,

You have promised that your love will surround us all the days of our lives, that you will comfort us in times of grief. In remembering your promise and in bringing our loss before you we also remember Sheena's life with gratitude for the person she was and for the love she instilled in those who knew her. We give you thanks for a life full of joy and energy, full of laughter, song and dance. May it be a comfort to all that Sheena was cherished by many here on earth and that she is precious to you beyond this life.

We thank you for the memories we share of a life lived to the fullest, for memories that will stay with us, memories of travelling the country, of shopping trips and beautiful clothes, memories of the joy of singing and performing, memories of hard work and of duty.

We thank you for the love Sheena gave and received, for a mother who was always there for her children, taught them what they needed to learn, for a loyal friend and a sparkling personality that captured the hearts of those who knew Sheena.

We thank you for Sheena's life and for the eternal life you have promised her from now on at your side through your son Jesus , where

she will find eternal peace, peace that this world cannot give. In this sad hour let us all remember that you have sent your son Jesus Christ, so none of us is lost, that you have sent him to provide a place for each of us, let us live in the assurance that Sheena has now found a place in your house, as we all will.

Loving God,

You know that times of grief and loss can disrupt our lives, overwhelm us and leave us in pain. You know our heartache when we cannot say goodbye as we would have wished. May we be able to seek and find your comfort in times of sadness and grief and may we be assured that we are not alone, that you walk with us through darkness and through light. Loving God, we know that your son gave his life so we may live in eternity. We entrust Sheena and ourselves to your loving care in this time of sadness and grief and we pray that we may feel your presence. For this we pray in Jesus name. AMEN

Music: Make me a channel of your peace

Reading:

Reading OT: Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
² My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
³ He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
⁴ indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
⁵ The LORD watches over you—
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
⁶ the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
⁷ The LORD will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

Reading NT: Gospel of John 14

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God^[a]; believe also in me. ² My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.” ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Eulogy

Let us now take a moment to remember Sheena's life, a life full of joy and song and love, and although we might be sad that we cannot take our leave as we would in different times, that some who would like to be here cannot, we will honour her life, a life that was precious to us as it will always be to God and we will remember who Sheena was to each of us, remember the love and the joy she gave and received, so we can then commend her to God's grace.

Jesus said: I am going to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I shall come again and take you to myself so that where I am you shall be also, and so we take our leave of Sheena in the assurance that she is now with God, as he has promised to her and to all of us.

And yet, it is hard for all who loved her, journeyed through life with her in friendship and in love, that she is now beyond our reach and so let us also share the grief we feel for a person who was important to all who have come and to all who would have liked to be here and let us take the time to share the memories of who Sheena was.

Jean McPhail Todd, whom we all know as Sheena was born on 16 May 1937 in Kilmarnock as the eldest daughter of William McCreath, a creamery worker and his wife Elizabeth, who worked as an invisible danner and maybe this is where Sheena has first developed her love of beautiful clothes, clothes which as she would say could "make or

break you". And while she certainly never had a hole in her jumper as a child, she would be impeccably turned out as an adult. As a child Sheena was full of mischievous fun, for example when she cut off her little brother Matt's beautiful curls or when she thoughtlessly ran into the street. The bus that caught her on one such occasion is said to have brought on her asthma and as doctors said that singing would help, it is just as well that she enjoyed it and had a beautiful voice that brought joy to others – that singing and dancing were the passion of her life.

It is no surprise then that it was dancing that brought her together with a certain young man from Auchinleck at the Ayr pavilion and Sheena knew as soon as she heard his name -Matt – that this was the man she would marry, that he would be family. Matt and Sheena started their married life at the schoolhouse in New Cumnock, where Matt worked as a teacher. Matt doated on Sheena and they shared more than a house, they shared their interest in dancing, in fun, in holidays. While the children Beth and Gavin were young, holidays were always around the UK, but later in life Sheena and Matt became more adventurous and travelled around Europe and once Matt got over his suspicion of flying also further afield, to the USA for example. It is testimony to Sheena's love of fun and laughter that one day, on their tour to Yugoslavia they were – together with their London friends Linda and Andrew put off the bus for laughing.

It would be wrong to say though that Sheena's life was just a song and a dance. She worked hard throughout her life and her work as a cashier was only briefly interrupted when Beth was born in 1963 and Gavin a year later. Apart from her paid work which she only left at the age of 67 or 68 from law firm DW Shaw, Sheena was a family person and was always there for her children. She was good at sewing and cooking and Gavin's wife Catherine learned more than one lesson from her. To the last she would make her famous homemade soup, which her grandchildren appreciated, and Euan took gratefully back to uni. Sheena might have clashed once or twice with Beth, who had inherited her strong and determined character, but with the help of peacemaker Matt they have always made up again and Gavin, too, who as a child preferred to be outdoors, appreciated what Sheena had taught him, which stood him in good stead when he had his own family. In 1966 the family moved to East Park Road in Ayr and this is when Sheena became a member of St James. It is here that she could foster her talents as well as her love of fun, especially as a founding member of the famous St James concert party and she became a loyal friend, particularly to choreographer Marina and to Dorothy, a friendship that would be lifelong and survived Marina's moving away from Ayr with long phone calls and frequent cards and notes. The friendship and loyalty to St James also continued throughout Sheena's life beyond the family's move to a larger house south of the river and it was the ladies of the concert party who supported her through

Matt's illness and death. Matt had made Sheena promise that she would not give anything up on his account and indeed she did not only continue what she had always been doing, she also took up gardening – previously Matt's domain - in addition to keeping the house in order and the large garden became her pride and joy until she downsized to Chestnut Road. Even though she found a soul mate in David who had also been recently bereaved and shared many interests with Sheena and whose companionship she enjoyed, nobody could ever take Matt's place in Sheena's heart.

Sheena had not been well for the last six or seven years, ever since she had an accident with complications in her back garden – before that she had been remarkably fit and healthy. She was a fighter and never complained about any of her health issues. When there was something she could not do, because of her eyesight for example, she would state it unceremoniously as a matter of fact. It is testimony to her determination that as long as this was possible, she loved her shopping trips with Beth to Boots and to Marks and Spencers where she was a well-known personality and her last Christmas created special memories for the family. When she was admitted to Ayr hospital after a fall it was less than two weeks before she passed away. To not be able to say goodbye as in normal times is painful, and so it is my sincere hope that it is a comfort to all who cared for Shenna that – as I firmly believe – she did not die alone, but that God was with her

as He had been with her throughout her life and that she is now at peace at His side. AMEN

Poem (read by Kieran)

She Is Gone - David Harkins

You can shed tears that she is gone
or you can smile because she has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back
or you can open your eyes and see all she has left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her
or you can be full of the love you shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember her and only that she's gone
or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind,
be empty and turn your back

or you can do what she would want:
smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

Reflective music

Intercession

Loving God,

We give you thanks for a life lived to its fulness, for the privilege to have known in Sheena a lady full of love to her family and loyalty to her friends, for a lady whose life was happy and full of energy, for Sheena's resilience and her fighting spirit. We give you thanks for a lady who will be remembered with love and admiration and in giving thanks we pray for all who were closest to Sheena.

We pray for Matt who knew Sheena the longest grew up with her, was close to her all his life and for Jeanette who became part of her family, her life. May you grant them the peace that only you can give here on this earth and beyond.

We remember in prayer Beth and Andy, Gavin and Catherine, who mourn a mother and mother-in-law who was there when she was needed, freely gave love and affection and expected nothing in return, who have the greatest reason for gratitude for Sheena's life, Grant

hem the strength to grieve and when the time is right the courage to let go.

We remember in prayer Amy and Euan, Kieran, Ryan and Gavin who share their parents' pain, knew Sheena's love and care, and we remember Danielle, Fiona and Niamh, supporting their partners in their grief and for Hallie, who will know Sheena from the memories of others. May they all find comfort in you and in each other.

We pray Matt and Carol, who were part of Sheena's life and for all who shared a part of life's journey with her and her family, who were important to Sheena's life as she was to theirs. May you be with them and may your presence be their comfort and their strength.

We will not forget to pray for the doctors and nurses of Ayr hospital and for the NHS who workday and night for patients like Sheena and who will feel the pain when there is a life they cannot save. Grant them resilience, compassion and strength so they can continue to serve their community in these challenging times.

For all this we pray in Jesus' name.

Committal:

The apostle Paul says: For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jean McPhail Todd is committed into the hands of God in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ who died was buried and rose again for us and is alive and reigns for evermore

Music: The Lord is my Shepherd

Closing prayer

And as we turn from this place to face the world, as we return to our places of work and leisure, a world that has changed because Sheena, a lady who gave and received love is no longer in it, we acknowledge before you that our hearts are sore and our wounds are raw

Grant us the courage to grieve, grant us the courage to acknowledge our loss and in time we ask that you may grant us the courage to let go.

We pray that the tears of our pain may turn into the smiles of happy memories, memories we can cherish and through which Sheena will live in our hearts

Grant us the assurance that Sheena is now safe with you and at peace. Fill our hearts with your peace, too and let us look to you in hope, the hope that you have prepared a place for all of us.

For this we pray in Jesus name AMEN

Benediction

And now go forth in peace and be comforted in the assurance of God's love. And the God who is higher than all our understanding, God the father, son and holy spirit, be with us all now and forever. AMEN

