

Tilly Black

Profile of Tilly Black Immanuel Presbyterian Church's "First Lady"



Tilly was born at Drumcon, Rasharkin, Co. Antrim in 1918. She lived her early years in a small farm and latterly in a roadside house. She attended Rasharkin Primary School and left at 14 years of age to work at home on the farm where she helped in the fields and with the fowls and livestock. Tilly recollects washing clothes using a wash board and a big tub – with no mangle to assist she had to hand wring the clothes to help them dry. Even though the work was hard Tilly missed the farm at first when she left.

Tilly had an elder sister and a younger brother and liked school fairly well. She had ambitions to be a dressmaker and on occasions knitted clothing that was sold in her Mother's grocery shop. She attended Rasharkin Presbyterian Church. Tilly said that she always knew she needed salvation.

"It was a summer night and my sister and I went to a local mission hall and the speaker at the meeting said directly to me – "do you want to give your heart to the Lord"? On my way home I said to my sister I wanted to become a Christian, I knew I was a sinner that needed salvation, and then we knelt and prayed on the grass. I was immediately aware that something had happened and I was now saved. I was about 16 at this time". Tilly remembers her sister with great affection saying that her sister was an amazing Christian.





Tilly met her husband Bill through the Faith Mission. Bill was from Belfast and when Tilly was 25 she was married in her Faith Mission uniform in Rasharkin Presbyterian Church. She and Bill were allocated by Faith Mission to Scotland and they lived and worked as missionaries, over the years, in Dunfermline and the Highlands. Tilly taught in the Sunday school.

On their return to Belfast, Bill was now a Director in Faith Mission, they lived in a mission house in the Balmoral area but Tilly counts Ballymena as her favourite place.

Moving from Oldpark Presbyterian, where she attended for 8 years, to Immanuel was easy for Tilly once she had visited and felt it was the right place to go to from her very first visit. Prior to Oldpark she had attended Clifton Street United where Donald Gillies preached

Tilly said “I was happy at Oldpark. I love Immanuel – I love to see the young people and I pray they would be separated from the world”

Tilly died on Friday 20th February 2015 and passed from this scene of time to be with her Lord and Saviour whom she loved and served with great faithfulness for many years.



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