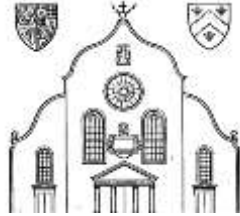


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter September 2024



MINISTER'S LETTER

If you haven't yet had a chance to visit the National Gallery to see Vermeer's famous painting "A Young Woman Standing at a Virginal", it's there only until 8th September and well worth a visit. The image of an expensively dressed young woman standing calmly at an elaborately decorated harpsichord will be familiar to many. Its presence here in Edinburgh has been part of the National Gallery in London's 200th anniversary "National Treasures" celebrations, whereby twelve of the UK's most iconic and well-loved paintings have been sent to different galleries around the country.

The publicity surrounding it rightly states "It isn't often we have a true icon in our midst" but those of us who were fortunate enough to be in the Usher Hall for Sir Mark Elder's final concert as Principal Conductor of the Hallé Orchestra during last month's Edinburgh International Festival could say the same. At this stage in his illustrious career Sir Mark himself could probably qualify as a national treasure, but it was during his impromptu farewell speech that a true moment of revelation came completely out of the blue. He had just recalled his earliest visit as a student to the Edinburgh Festival and his memory of hearing Dame Janet Baker give a concert. He went on to say that he was pleased and proud that he and Dame Janet had gone on to work together over the years and had become friends, but then said he was even more pleased and proud that "she is with us here in the hall tonight". The audience audibly gasped then applauded then looked around to see where she might be sitting. It isn't often we have a true icon in our midst. Sometimes we know, and sometimes we are blissfully unaware.

In the Gospel according to St Matthew it is that sense of not knowing that Jesus picks up on. "Lord", he is asked, "when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the answer came, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Or as the ancient Celtic Rune of Hospitality puts it more succinctly, *Often, often, often goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.*

It isn't often we have a true icon in our midst. Or is it?

Neil Gardner

PARISH REGISTER

Baptism

31st August India Rose Edie Callander *at Prestonhall*
Honor Alma Emilia Callander *at Prestonhall*
“Then he took them in his arms and blessed them.”

Funerals

6th August Ethan Hunter Alnwickhill Crescent
30th August Lady Airlie *at Cortachy*
“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

Memorial Services

9th August Brigadier Allan Alstead Moray Place
27th August Rev Marion Dodd *at Melrose*

ROYAL VISIT

We were pleased to welcome Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh to the Palace pew in Canongate Kirk for our morning service on Sunday 18th August. Just a few days before we had welcomed the Master of the King’s Music, Dame Judith Weir, in what turned out to be one of her last official engagements before her successor was announced, at the final of the Young Composer competition run by the Sacred Arts Foundation. Dame Judith was delighted to be in Canongate and encouraged to hear the impressive work of some very talented young choral composers.

PARISH GROUPING WITH ST GILES’

900th Anniversary Service St Giles’ Cathedral celebrates its 900th anniversary with a special service on Sunday 1st September and we send our warmest congratulations to our neighbouring congregation on reaching this historic milestone.

United Evening Service

Our next monthly united evening service in conjunction with St Giles’ takes place at 7pm on Sunday 29th September. As usual a quartet of singers from the Cathedral choir will be in the gallery. All welcome.

Organ Recital

On Sunday 6th October our own organist Simon Leach will give the “St Giles at Six” recital with music by J S Bach, Duruflé, Leighton, James Macmillan and Helen Leach. Free admission. All welcome.

Young Adults Group

St Giles’ are keen to establish a Young Adults Group for under 40s and would welcome any eligible contenders from Canongate. They plan to meet from time to time and if you are interested please email Rev Sam Nwokoro on sam.nwokoro@stgilescathedral.org.uk

St Giles’ Neighbourhood Group

The St Giles’ Neighbourhood Group is a small group of volunteers who come together to raise money for local charities. They organise fund-raising activities such as a can collection on Princes Street at Christmas and help staff night kitchens for the homeless through the Bethany Trust. They are always looking for new members and would particularly welcome anyone in the Canongate congregation who might like to find out more about their work (with no obligation). Anyone is welcome to simply observe an (online) meeting or contact us to find out more. Please get in touch with Alan Convery at alanconvery@hotmail.com at St Giles’.

CANONGATE KIRKYARD TOURS

The last of these fascinating monthly tours by guide and historian Eric Drake takes place on Sunday 1st September exploring Canongate's connections with soldiers and sailors from the 18th to the 20th century. Tours start at the front of the Kirk at 11.30am and last an hour.

OPEN KIRK

On the last Saturday of the Festival/Fringe we had over 1000 visitors at Open Kirk! Although the number of tourists and visitors to the Royal Mile is beginning to drop, weekends can still be busy and if members and friends of the congregation can take a turn to make them welcome on Saturday mornings and afternoons as well as Sunday afternoons, that would be much appreciated. Volunteers can sign up on the board in the foyer. Thank you!

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL UPDATE

As part of the Fringe, the opening service of the Edinburgh Sacred Arts Festival took place on Sunday 11th August. We were joined by the Choir of the Robin Chapel and the address was given by James Holloway CBE, formerly Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. We were also the venue for two more Sacred Arts Festival events – 'Refuge and the Road Home' with poets Christine De Luca and Elspeth Murray and Katherine Wake on flute and the final of the Edinburgh Sacred Art Foundation's Young Composer competition with prizes presented to these very talented young people by Dame Judith Weir, Master of the King's Music. The closing service of the Edinburgh Festival of the Sacred Arts took place at the Church of the Sacred Heart in Lauriston Street with Neil invited to preach a homily. As part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Canongate Kirk once again became Venue 60 and we hosted our own wide range of concerts including our organist Simon Leach's harpsichord recital, That 70's Choir performing to a packed-out and dancing audience and traditional Scottish folk music from Fringe regular Alastair Savage and friends. Pictures can be seen on the website! A big thank you to our stewards who helped make these events run smoothly.

CHARITY BICYCLE RIDE

In early September, Duncan Anderson (one of our regular attendees) will be cycling from London to Amsterdam to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. The journey will cover over 300 miles across four countries, split over four days of cycling through both cities and the countryside. All prayers, encouragement and any donations towards this worthy cause would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made at the following website <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/duncanlondontoamsterdam> or by speaking with Duncan or Alexis at the Kirk. Good luck Duncan!

CRAFT CLUB

The Craft club continues to meet monthly in the Harry Younger Hall on the second Wednesday of each month from 6.30pm – 8pm with the next meeting on Wednesday 11th September. The group is open to crafters and non-crafters, skilled and non-skilled alike – you can be sure of a friendly welcome.

KIRK SESSION Next meets at 6pm on Monday 23rd September in the Harry Younger Hall.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT EXHIBITION

'Eric Liddell: Legacy of an Olympic Legend' is an inspiring exhibition commemorating the legendary athlete and marking the centenary of his iconic Olympic gold medal victory in Paris in 1924. From 25th July – 12th September, Mon – Sat, 10am to 5pm. Admission free.

KING'S GALLERY EXHIBITION

'Style and Society – Dressing the Georgians' is the current exhibition at the re-named King's Gallery at Holyroodhouse, exploring Georgian fashion with examples of fine art, luxurious

textiles, jewellery and other accessories from the practical dress of laundry maids to the glittering gowns worn at court. Open every day except Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9am – 4.30pm. until Sunday 22nd September. Ticket prices and more information on the King’s Gallery website at <https://bit.ly/3TzisQM>

EDINBURGH AT 900

2024 marks the 900th anniversary of King David I introducing a new system of local government into Scotland, and making Edinburgh a royal burgh. To celebrate this anniversary, a range of events will be held across the city until August 2025, and the Museums and Galleries Service will be hosting a number of them at the City Art Centre and Lauriston Castle. All events are free, but pre-booking is essential for most (see individual listings for more information). Details of the city-wide celebrations can be found at <https://edinburgh.org/900/>

RIDING OF THE MARCHES

This spectacular event will take place this year in the afternoon of Sunday 15th September. It is free to watch and all are welcome to the Royal Mile. Entertainment starts at around midday and the horses will be making their way up the Royal Mile to muster by the Mercat Cross opposite the City Chambers, usually around 4pm. There may be parking restrictions in force on the Royal Mile in the morning but please don’t let that put you off coming to church! More information at <https://edinburghridingofthemarches.com/>

ROBERT FERGUSSON 250



‘Remembering Robert Fergusson’ is a special event organised by the Scottish Poetry Library paying tribute to the famous poet who died 250 years ago this October aged only 24 and is buried in our Kirkyard. It will be a night filled with poetry readings, musical performance and discussions about Fergusson's impact on Scottish literature with special guests Scottish writer and broadcaster Billy Kay, authors Andrew O’Hagan and James Robertson, musician Kirsteen McCue and Professor Rhona Brown. Rhona leads on the University of Glasgow project 'The Works of Robert Fergusson: Reconstructing Textual and Cultural Legacies.' The event will take place at St Cecilia’s Hall at 7pm on Thursday 17th October 2024. Tickets at <https://bit.ly/3X3zSH2>

YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOU!

There are now rotas in place for volunteers to sign up to help with Sunday duties – if you’d like to be part of the welcoming face of Canongate Kirk, giving out hymn books and orders of service and taking up the collection etc, please sign up against any particular Sunday. There’s a rota for those who would like to read lessons too. Not to mention the rotas to help with tea and coffee after the service, to arrange flowers in advance, and to support Open Kirk’s remit of welcoming visitors and tourists at weekends. There are lots of opportunities to work with and get to know other members of the family of our congregation – don’t be shy!

TRUSSELL TRUST

We continue to collect donations for Edinburgh foodbanks supported by Trussell Trust. Non-perishable foodstuffs/toiletries can be brought any Sunday and left in the basket in the foyer.

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<i>Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Thursday 9am – 12 noon, Fri 8am – 12 noon.</i>			
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Scottish Charity SC 015251			