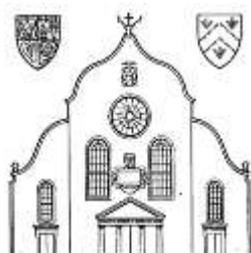


CANONGATE KIRK THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE & EDINBURGH CASTLE

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter August 2020



MINISTER'S LETTER

Let me tell you about Jonny, except that's not his real name. Jonny used to come to our 10am Family Service very occasionally, sometimes weighed down with carrier bags on his way home from the supermarket, and would sit towards the back of the King David Aisle. He lived locally and suffered from a range of serious health issues, both physical and mental. Jonny had what we now know to call "underlying health conditions" and a couple of months ago he contracted Coronavirus, and died in hospital aged 61.

I only heard this news the other day, and felt shocked and sad for various reasons. Partly because I hadn't been asked to take his funeral, there being nobody to pass on word of his loose connection to the Kirk. And partly because I might never have heard and never have known. It's one of the hazards of city-centre ministry, not always knowing what becomes of the people we encounter on the edge of the congregation and of the community, not least those with underlying health issues of one sort or another.

The example set by Jesus in the Gospels encourages us constantly to reach out to those on the edge, on the margins of society, and if I've learned anything fresh from Jonny's life and death it is the importance of reaching out in the here and now, whatever it may or may not lead to. And if we're all to learn anything as we emerge gently and gratefully from the recent crisis it must surely be to remember those who have died however well we knew them or not, and to acknowledge those who reached out to them in hospitals and care homes and were with them to the end when the rest of us couldn't be. There are other things to hold on to, of course, like the many acts of kindness and appreciation that have gone on behind the scenes and I hope we remember those too.

Jonny's death means that as a congregation we do not emerge entirely unscathed by Coronavirus. But if it makes us stop and think a bit more about all those who have suffered one way or another in these dark and difficult times, then some good might come of it.

May he rest in peace.

REOPENING OF CANONGATE KIRK

You may know that we reopened for our first service of public worship on Sunday 26th July – the Seventh after Trinity and the Nineteenth after Lockdown! It was a short half-hour service with elements of both our usual weekly services but no hymns. Thirty people attended in total, well within the Scottish Government's maximum of fifty and an ideal number to help us find our feet amidst all the necessary restrictions and precautions. In the coming weeks we still need to know in advance who is planning to attend, partly for monitoring the numbers and partly for maintaining a track and trace list. A weekly e mail will be sent out to those members of the congregation for whom we have up to date contact details: if you do not - or cannot - receive such an e mail, but would like to attend, please let the office know. And please remember that a filmed version of each service will be available on our website every weekend. You can always watch from the comfort of your own home!

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible studies usually take a break during the summer but due to the unusual nature of this year's summer, with partial lockdown still in place, there is still a need for us to continue. The current series takes the theme "Practical Paul", focusing on the practical second halves of St Paul's letters. The short introduction to the study series, as well as material for each session, is available on our website and sent via email to our regular participants. If you'd like to be added to the list, or find out more details, please get in touch with Rev Breda Ludik on ludik.breda@gmail.com

OFFERINGS

Some members have been asking for Canongate Kirk's bank details so that they can arrange electronic transfers to continue to support the Church's work during the current crisis. If you'd like those details please e-mail canongatekirk@btinternet.com and we'll pass them on. Meanwhile if you usually give via weekly envelopes, please save them up at home and we'll get them eventually!

BBC RADIO 4 PRAYER FOR THE DAY

You might like to know that the Minister has been asked to lead this very short item at 5-43am every morning beginning on Saturday 15th August and continuing from Monday 17th through to Friday 21st. As in previous years it will be available on the BBC iPlayer for a month afterwards, so don't feel you have to listen "live". It's pre-recorded in one go, so he won't be listening either....

VJ 75

As the military church for Edinburgh, Canongate Kirk was due to host a major service for Royal British Legion (Scotland) to mark the 75th anniversary of VJ Day on 15th August. That can no longer take place but elements of the service were filmed privately in the Kirk recently, to be broadcast online on the day. Details will be circulated when available.

FLAGS FOR EDINBURGH

You might like to know that we are currently participating in *Flags for Edinburgh*, a public art project by Peter Liversidge originally staged in 2013, that has invited sites across the length and breadth of the city to fly a flag saying simply 'Hello'. Forming part of a series of artist works marking the intended dates of this year's festival, *Flags for Edinburgh* continues until

30th August 2020, sending a greeting to residents across the city as well as the wider world during the gradual re-emergence after an extended period of lockdown.

LIFE AND WORK

Lockdown Weekly is a free weekly update which is a useful resource to help people keep in touch with events in the Church of Scotland while churches are shut and many of us are in isolation. Free every Friday to download from the Life and Work website at <https://www.lifeandwork.org/> Life and Work magazine will continue to be published as normal and distributed to readers who have a subscription. If you need to contact the team please email editorial enquiries to magazine@lifeandwork.org or all other enquiries to admin@lifeandwork.org.

RESTRICTED DONATIONS FOR FRESHSTART

Freshstart, the charity which helps formerly homeless people get established in their new home, have had such a huge response with donations that at the moment they need ONLY the following items: mugs, glasses (not wine glasses), small side plates, dinner and soup plates, cereal bowls, pots and pans, cutlery, small electrical items, shampoo/conditioner, shower gel, soap, toothpaste, UHT milk, tea bags, coffee, large boxed cereal. If you wish to donate any of these items, please call them on 0131 476 7741 and you will be allocated a time where you can deliver to their warehouse. Currently, Canongate Kirk cannot collect donations for Freshstart.

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