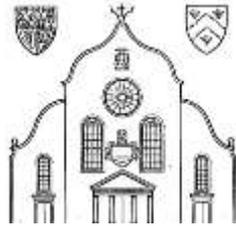


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter February 2024



MINISTER'S LETTER

Lieutenant-General Sir Norman Arthur KCB CVO died shortly before Christmas at the age of 92. He was Governor of Edinburgh Castle from 1985 to 1988 and his banner hangs in the King David Aisle of Canongate Kirk. On the other side of the Kirk hangs a Regimental Standard of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, which Norman Arthur commanded in the early seventies. As befits a true cavalry officer, he had also formed part of the British Equestrian team competing in the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960. These two strands of his life – horses and the army – came together rather wonderfully on the castle esplanade when he was installed as Governor of Edinburgh Castle on horseback. It is reported that when he crossed the drawbridge at the end of the installation ceremony, the applause from the spectators suddenly unsettled his horse, a grey called Blitz. But the Olympian rider hadn't lost his touch and the Governor stayed firmly in the saddle!

It's a striking image that reminds me of the famous entry of the victorious General Edmund Allenby not on horseback but on foot through the Jaffa Gate into the Old City of Jerusalem in December 1917. He quite deliberately chose to walk as a mark of respect for the holy city, and in humble acknowledgement of the one who had once made his own triumphal entry into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey.

Easter is relatively early this year – Sunday 31st March – so as a result Lent starts earlier than usual too. Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday fall on 13th and 14th February respectively. The penitential season of Lent, which comes to an end with our own humble acknowledgement of the one who once made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, on Palm Sunday, calls for a degree of humility from the start, as we prepare once again to follow in his footsteps all the way to the cross and beyond.

*When I survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.*

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISMS

10th December Lyra Rose Collins
13th January Ralph Charles Thom Whitten *St Margaret's Chapel*
"Then he took them in his arms and blessed them."

WEDDINGS

9th December Anika Allan & Chris Sheldon *St Margaret's Chapel*
16th December Holly Gilfether & Mark Williams *St Margaret's Chapel*
"Those whom God has joined together, let not man divide."

FUNERALS

1st December Gerardus Fox Lauder Loan
19th January Mairead Anderson Ettrick Road
18th/19th January John St Clair Lismore Crescent
28th January James Ogilvy (Interment of Ashes) *Cortachy, Angus*
"Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY!

Belated congratulations to Rose Henderson, the oldest member of the Canongate family, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Boxing Day, 26th December 2023. Rose lived in the parish before moving to a care home only last year, where a birthday party was held for her in the afternoon. In the morning she had been delighted to receive a card from The King and Queen!

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 14th February. The group is open to crafters and non-crafters, skilled and non-skilled alike – you can be sure of a friendly welcome.

FEBRUARY CONCERT

The Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland will give a concert in Canongate Kirk on Sunday 18th February at 3pm. Admission free.

EVENING SERVICES

Our joint services with St Giles' resumed in January. The next service will be on Sunday 24th February 2024 at 7pm here in Canongate Kirk. As before a quartet of singers from the Cathedral choir will be in the gallery. All welcome.

KIRK SESSION

The Kirk Session next meets on Monday 26th February at 6pm in the Harry Younger Hall.

CHRISTMAS APPEALS

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to our retiring offerings at Christmas, and raised £2000 in aid of the UNICEF Gaza appeal. We received a letter of thanks from Head of Supporter Care, Vicky Johnson, with the following message:

I am writing today to say thank you so much for raising £2000 to support UNICEF's vital work for children. Your kind gift will help protect children affected by conflict and disaster in Gaza, by providing life-saving food and other essential supplies.

Children are at the heart of everything we do and it's because of supporters like you we can reach them with the essential support they need...

Prior to Christmas we also collected over seventy washbags for Crisis, Edinburgh's local charity for homeless people. This has become something of an annual appeal and it's encouraging to see how thoughtfully and how generously so many of our members and friends respond to this opportunity to offer practical help and support to those who are struggling. The washbags were gratefully received and gladly distributed over the Christmas period. Thank you again!

TRUSSELL TRUST

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

HONOURS OF SCOTLAND

The very accurate replica of the Honours of Scotland on our Palace pew is a familiar sight in Canongate Kirk, and was featured on our latest Christmas card. The real Honours, the centre piece of which is the Crown of Scotland crafted of gold and silver and laden with 94 pearls and 43 gemstones, are housed in Edinburgh Castle and have recently undergone the most significant conservation work in their history. Carried out by Historic Environment Scotland, this painstaking work has ensured the Honours can continue to play an active role in Scottish ceremonial events for many years to come. Historic Environment Scotland are offering free tickets if booked on-line for many of their sites on the first Sunday of every month up to March 2024. For more information visit <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/historic-sundays/>

ST GILES' AT 900

This year St Giles' Cathedral celebrates its 900th year as a working church with a number of events both inside and outside the church. One of these is HEART, a magnificent public sculpture by Michael Pendry measuring five metres tall and transforming the interior with an evening illumination and soundscape for visitors until 11th February. It's part of the Burns and Beyond Festival.

Tickets: <https://www.burnsandbeyond.com/events/heart-by-michael-pendry/>

In addition, Edinburgh Central Library currently has a display within its Edinburgh and Scottish Collection showcasing some pieces on the Cathedral's architecture and history, including a pencil sketch of St. Giles' and surrounding area by J.M.W. Turner, probably done when Turner visited Scotland in 1818.

COLLECTING CANS

If you haven't yet made a New Year's resolution, or are looking for a simple commitment during Lent, why not take one of our collecting cans home to fill with loose change? Every little helps!

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