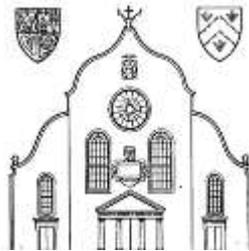


CANONGATE KIRK THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE & EDINBURGH CASTLE

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter March 2021



MINISTER'S LETTER

Instead of the usual Lent Study Group this year, the Kirk Session has approved my suggestion that in our own homes and time we might like to read and reflect on a particular novel, *The Road to Grantchester*, by James Runcie. James is a friend of mine, and - more significantly - son of the late Robert Runcie MC, Archbishop of Canterbury and distinguished Scots Guards officer. Some of you will be familiar with the Grantchester Mysteries series on ITV, adapted from earlier books and featuring Rev Sidney Chambers as an engaging clergyman detective in post-war rural England. *The Road to Grantchester* is a more serious prequel to the series and traces Sidney's transition from serving as a soldier in the Scots Guards in Italy in 1944 to becoming ordained as a vicar in the Church of England. En route he wrestles with issues of faith and doubt, not least in the midst of the horrors of war, and prepares to return to whatever "new normal" awaits at home. These seem like timely themes to me, and this immensely readable book's four parts – War, Peace, Faith and Love – lend themselves to further reflection as once again we find ourselves on the Lenten road to Easter. If you'd like to take *The Road to Grantchester* at the same time, it's available from all good bookshops though I am reliably informed that Blackwell's has it on offer! And if, as you read it, you have comments or questions you'd like to share with the author, then James will be happy to answer them in the next edition of this newsletter, just in time for Easter. Please send them to canongatekirk@btinternet.com Eventually, when such things are possible, I hope to invite James Runcie to come and give us a talk in person!

Over the course of this last year many of us have read more books than usual – if you've come across one that might lend itself to this sort of exercise, do let me know. Perhaps this can be the start of a Canongate Book Club?! Not to be confused with the publishers of the same name. Incidentally a more deliberate Lenten reflection book that has been recommended is *Rooted in Love*, edited by Bishop (of London) Sarah Mullally.

Meanwhile the annual **World Day of Prayer** takes place on Friday 5th March. There will be an online service hosted by a local church (see below) and if you would like a copy of the accompanying booklet to follow the service "live" or in your own time, please get in touch with the office and we'll send one out by return. This year's theme is "Build on a strong foundation."

PARISH REGISTER

Funeral

10th February

Nan Goldwyre

St Albans Road

“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

WORSHIP FROM AFAR

In line with the Scottish Government’s latest announcement on cautious easing of restrictions, we do not anticipate services in Canongate Kirk resuming until after Easter. In the meantime a weekly pre-recorded service continues to be uploaded to our website every weekend. These services may also be heard on a landline telephone – simply dial 0131 546 4001 and press 1 when prompted. Calls are charged at your phone provider’s usual local rate – please let anyone know who is unable to access the internet but might appreciate this kind of connection. You should also bear in mind that Canongate volunteers still stand ready to help with the delivery of shopping or medicines to those who could do with this kind of support. Please let the office know if you or someone you know might come into that category.

KIRK SESSION NEWS

The Kirk Session has successfully maintained its usual pattern of meetings over the last year, using the internet’s Zoom option, and we’re grateful to Elise Ramsay for facilitating these online gatherings. At a previous meeting it was announced that her husband, Stuart, had agreed to succeed David Croft when he steps down after 20 years loyal service as Session Clerk at the end of this year. In the meantime Stuart is assisting David, to learn the ropes, and we’re grateful to them both in this time of transition. Along with our Presbytery Elder, Jane Stewart, and the Minister, David has recently been representing Canongate in fortnightly online conversations with others from the city-centre cluster of churches as part of the Presbytery of Edinburgh’s ongoing strategy process to encourage communication and collaboration. At our latest meeting the Kirk Session learned of the Church of Scotland’s encouragement of congregations more widely to engage with the issue of climate change, not least in anticipation of the global conference, COP26, to be held in Glasgow in November 2021. One of our elders, Alexis Moyer, has kindly offered to find out more about how we might go about becoming an “eco-congregation”, and if you would like to lend a hand please get in touch with her through our Kirk office.

PHYSIC GARDEN HOLYROODHOUSE

Now that Spring is upon us, if your daily walk brings you into the parish you might like to know that the Royal Collection Trust’s latest initiative at the Palace of Holyroodhouse is open every day, free to visitors and accessible from Abbey Strand. The new garden consists of three distinct areas, each representing a phase in the palace’s 900-year history. In the 15th-century monastic gardens of Holyrood Abbey, there is a meadow of medicinal plants including daisies, which were used to treat coughs and wounds; sorrel, once thought to cure ulcers, sores and ringworm; and mallow, used to treat scurvy. Nearby, flowering bulbs, including crocuses, tulips and alliums, have been planted in a geometric pattern to reflect the design of 17th-century gardens. A third area reimagines the physic garden that was established in the palace grounds 350 years ago by the doctors Sir Robert Sibbald and Sir Andrew Balfour, two founding members of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. In an online introduction HRH The Duke of Rothesay describes the fascinating garden as a reminder of the importance of history, nature and medicine in all our lives. Well worth a visit as it gets established.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

On Friday 5th March at 2pm Augustine United Church, Edinburgh, are hosting a virtual World Day of Prayer service. Materials for 2021 have been written by the women of Vanuatu and the theme is 'Build on a strong foundation.' There will be participation by women, men and young people from all over Scotland and it will be led by musicians of Augustine United Church.

Join using the Zoom link:

Webinar ID: 895 9398 3883

Passcode: 901656

Or phone 0131 4601196. And you will be asked for the above webinar ID and passcode. (There may be costs involved if you dial in with your phone.) For more information contact administrator@augustine.org.uk

OFFERINGS

Our supply of weekly free will offering envelopes has finally arrived, and will be posted out to members shortly. Please let us know if you'd prefer not to receive envelopes but instead to arrange electronic transfers or other means of direct giving to continue to support the Church's work during the pandemic. If you'd like further details please e-mail canongatekirk@btinternet.com Donations can also be given via our website. Meanwhile we're grateful to everyone who continues to support Canongate Kirk any way at all in these challenging times. We are also now registered as a beneficiary of the Amazon Smile scheme, whereby 0.5% of the net cost of purchases you make on Amazon can be donated to us at no extra cost to yourself. To set the ball rolling you need to register at <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and nominate Canongate Parish Church of Scotland, Edinburgh as your chosen charity. Please note you need to use our formal Scottish charity name rather than Canongate Kirk.

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