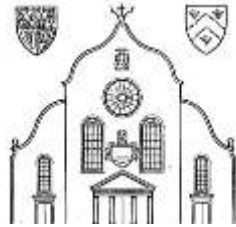


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter March 2024



MINISTER'S LETTER

It's almost five years since the disastrous fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on Maundy Thursday 2019. As it happens, I was there just a couple of weeks ago and can report that although it's still shrouded in scaffolding and surrounded by cranes, much of the roof has been restored including the distinctive narrow Gothic spire, or *flèche*. The original wooden one that rose from the roof and fell so dramatically during the fire provided one of the most enduring images of that fateful day, as it was gradually consumed by the flames until it collapsed. At the time it was hoped that Notre Dame would be restored in time for this summer's Olympics, for which the city is already gearing itself up, but in fact it's now scheduled to reopen in December this year.

A nearby building with a similarly shaped replacement spirelet is the *Sainte-Chapelle*, the holy chapel commissioned by King Louis IX in 1238 to house his collection of Passion relics, including what was said to be a fragment of the True Cross and the Crown of Thorns, among the most important relics of mediaeval Christendom. They were long since transferred to Notre Dame - and survived the fire - but the holy chapel still houses one of the most magnificent collections of 13th century stained glass anywhere in the world. Remarkably most of it survived the onslaughts of the French Revolution, which is more than can be said for the spire, which was wantonly torn down but later replaced.

As Holy Week and Easter approach once again we are reminded how Jesus, himself considered a revolutionary by the authorities, was seen as such a threat that they conspired to do away with him, to take him down once and for all. Yet his resurrection is so much more than a restoration. For by his death he in turn destroyed death, and by his rising again he opened the kingdom of heaven. Once and for all.

Happy Easter!

Neil Gardner

PARISH REGISTER

WEDDING

24th February Dacia Boyce & Caleb Miller *St Margaret's Chapel*

"Those whom God has joined together, let not man divide."

FUNERALS

12th February Bob Knox Cluny Lodge

19th February Michael Anderson Chirnside

21st February Rosa Henderson The Jewel Care Home

28th February Flora Ross-Russell Regent Terrace

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

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

This year our Holy Week and Easter services follow the usual pattern, with the addition of an evening service on Easter Day, which coincides with our united evening service on the last Sunday of each month:

Maundy Thursday, 28 th March	7pm	Holy Communion
Good Friday, 29 th March	7pm	Evening Service
Easter Day, Sunday 31 st March	10.30am	Holy Communion
Easter Day, Sunday 31 st March	7pm	Evening Service

In addition, your attention is drawn to a performance of Brahms' German Requiem by the Cathedral Choir in St Giles' at 6pm on Palm Sunday, 24th March, and to the services every evening of Holy Week at 7pm in the Cathedral. Members of our congregation would also be welcome to attend the service of Tenebrae traditionally held on the Wednesday evening of Holy Week in Old St Paul's Jeffrey Street.

SUNDAYS IN MARCH

It's worth noting that the Fourth Sunday in Lent, 10th March, is Mothering Sunday. The following week, on Sunday 17th March, our regular 10.30am service will be followed by the annual congregational meeting to note the accounts, copies of which will be available at church or can be emailed or posted out on request. And on Palm Sunday, 24th March, we will be joined at our morning service by friends from the Royal Regiment of Scotland Association as part of their reunion weekend.

EVENING SERVICES

Our monthly united evening services in conjunction with St Giles continue on Easter Sunday, 31st March, at 7pm and on Sunday 28th April, when our guest preacher will be The Right Revd Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. All welcome!

SEASON OF REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

Following our recent efforts to encourage volunteers to help with various aspects of the church's life, the Kirk Session has agreed that a couple of new rotas will be introduced to encourage volunteers to offer support. A number of people indicated their willingness to give the Bible readings on Sunday mornings, and a new rota will allow volunteers to sign up to do this on specific Sundays. A further rota will similarly encourage those who have offered to help with other duties – welcoming, hymnbooks, offering etc – to do so. Ideally Sunday by Sunday, a team will consist of three elders and three non-elders, with six elders taking responsibility for Communion Sundays.

PARISH GROUPING MEETINGS

As part of the ongoing process of closer collaboration with St Giles, an initial meeting has been held to discuss moving towards a more formal "Parish Grouping" arrangement. Three representatives from each congregation, plus ministers, discussed those roles, responsibilities and activities that are distinctive features for our congregations, and those that could allow for closer collaboration. In our case the former would include our royal and military connections, and the latter provision for tourists and visitors, concerts and events, as well as reaching out to other denominations, charities and student residences associated with the Royal Mile area. A further meeting has been arranged for March and the congregations will be kept informed as to progress.

OPEN KIRK

Our programme to welcome visitors and tourists to Canongate Kirk will resume at Easter weekend and continue every weekend thereafter in the meantime. Please sign up on the board in the foyer in the church if you can help take a turn.

CONCERTS IN MARCH

Saturday 2 nd March	7.30pm	Scottish Chamber Choir	Renaissance Music
Saturday 9 th March	7.30pm	Open Orchestra	Spring Concert (ADMISSION FREE)
Saturday 16 th March	7.30pm	Calton Consort	<i>Stabat Mater</i>
Saturday 23 rd March	7.30pm	Linton Singers	<i>Voices of Angels</i>
Wed 27 th March	1pm	Trojan A Capella Choir from USA	(ADMISSION FREE)

Ticket information on our website

NEWS FROM HOLYROODHOUSE

David Rizzio, the private secretary to Mary, Queen of Scots, was famously and brutally murdered at Holyroodhouse on 9th March 1566. Tradition has it that he was eventually buried in Canongate Kirkyard. To mark the anniversary there are two events taking place at the Palace on Friday 8th March. The first is the Abbey Strand Book Club, which is meeting in the Abbey Strand Centre between 2pm and 4pm. This particular session is focussing on Rizzio. Tickets £12. Booking is online:

<https://www.rct.uk/whatson/event/1126550/Abbey-Strand-book-club>

The second is an evening talk within the Palace on Rizzio's life and legacy at Court, between 6.30 and 8.30. Tickets £25. Booking online:

<https://www.rct.uk/event/rizzio-life-and-legacy-at-court-03-2024#/>

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 13th March. The group is open to crafters and non-crafters, skilled and non-skilled alike – you can be sure of a friendly welcome.

FLOWER ARRANGING DEMONSTRATION

Pick up some new ideas with a flower arranging demonstration by a local florist in the Kirk on Saturday 23rd March starting at 10am with coffee. The session is free but a small donation towards the flowers is requested. All welcome!

JULIA CATO

A number of members of the congregation will remember Julia Cato, who spent time attached to our congregation as a candidate in training in 2018. It has recently been announced that Julia will become the Minister of Edinburgh Northwest Kirk, a new union between Cramond Kirk and the Old Kirk and Muirhouse. The date for her induction has not been set but in the meantime we offer her our congratulations and good wishes.

CONTACTLESS MACHINE

Our previous machine in the foyer has been replaced by a new ‘Payaz’ contactless machine which has allowed us to set up different donation values, or let the donor choose the amount they wish to give. Where applicable we will also be able to claim Gift Aid on donations. The first time you use the new machine you will be asked if you wish Gift Aid to be applied. If yes, just follow the steps on the screen. Once you have registered for Gift Aid, so long as you use the same card, you will not be asked again.

SUNDAY OFFERINGS



We are grateful to everyone who supports the church financially in the variety of ways, including contactless, that are now available. Many members of the congregation still prefer to put something in the offering bags when they are passed around during the service. If you give by other means, please feel free to pass the bag on to those sitting alongside you so that everyone has an opportunity to give their offering.

COLLECTING CANS

If you are still looking for a simple commitment during Lent, why not take one of our collecting cans home to fill with loose change? Every little helps!

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.

Minister	The Revd Neil Gardner	nng22@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515
Kirk Secretary	Imogen Gibson (office)	canongatekirk@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515
<i>Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Thursday 9am – 12 noon, Fri 8am – 12 noon.</i>			
Website: www.canongatekirk.org.uk		 @CanongateKirk	 @canongate.kirk
Scottish Charity SC 015251			