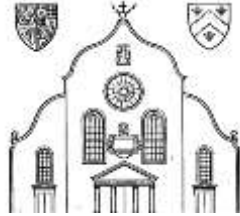


**CANONGATE KIRK  
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE  
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

[www.canongatekirk.org.uk](http://www.canongatekirk.org.uk)

**Newsletter May 2024**



**MINISTER'S LETTER**

At its meeting on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April, the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian readily approved a proposal that Canongate Kirk and St Giles' should "take the necessary steps to form a Basis of Parish Grouping." This is more or less a formalisation of what we are already doing in terms of closer collaboration, but the specific terms of the agreement will be circulated around both congregations in due course before being required to be put to a congregational vote in both churches in June. All being well, St Giles' - which is currently in vacancy - will then be allowed to call a new minister on the same terms as myself, a five year Basis of Reviewable Charge. Such a Basis for Canongate will be renewed for five years from the date of the induction of the new minister of St Giles', probably early next year. In effect this means that we have several years to continue to develop our closer collaboration before the situation is subject to review once again, when options will include a "potential union". I hope that makes sense?! If not, please feel free to have a word. Thanks are due to our congregational representatives Louise Brodie, Colin Stewart and Miriam Weibye, who have helped get us to this stage.

Meanwhile in the wider Church of Scotland the General Assembly looms over the horizon. I have been asked once again to serve as chaplain to the Lord High Commissioner, this year HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, so I won't be able to attend as a commissioner. But no doubt the business before this year's Assembly will reflect something of the frustration and uncertainty that so many ministers and congregations are feeling, not least in those parishes where a church is scheduled for closure. For Daily Prayers at the Palace during the Lord High Commissioner's week, I usually adorn the lectern with one of our pulpit falls depicting that most powerful symbol of the cross in the antlers. It's found in many corners of our parish, from the Kirk roof to the Palace gates, and reminds us of the encounter between King David I and the stag many centuries ago. But with all that it tells of endurance and perseverance, it surely reminds us that we still have much to be thankful for in our own day and age.

*Neil Gardner*

## PARISH REGISTER

### BAPTISMS

7<sup>th</sup> April Sophia Belle Helen Reid

14<sup>th</sup> April Christopher Buchanan Weld Menzies

*“Then he took them in his arms and blessed them.”*

### WEDDING

3<sup>rd</sup> April Morgan McKay & Ross Mitchell

*“Those whom God has joined together, let not man divide.”*

### FUNERALS

30<sup>th</sup> March Lillian Davidson (Washington DC)

11<sup>th</sup> April Irené Young (Chamberlain Care Home)

23<sup>rd</sup> April Elizabeth Main (Dunbar)

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

## UNITED EVENING SERVICES

At our monthly evening service on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April we welcomed as our guest preacher The Right Revd Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The service was followed by refreshments in the foyer, when folk from Canongate and St Giles’ had a chance not only to meet the Moderator but to have a chat with each other! This month’s service takes place at 7pm on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May – that’s the day of the Edinburgh Marathon, so if it proves too tricky to get to church in the morning, why not come in the evening?! All welcome.

## EARLY JUNE CONCERT

The Open Orchestra will perform at 7.30pm on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024. Free entry with closing collection.

## OPEN KIRK

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

## KIRKYARD TOURS

We are delighted to announce that local historian and guide, Eric Drake, will resume a range of tours on the first Sunday of each month up to and including September, starting next Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May with ‘Canongate’s Royal Connection’ - a fascinating delve into history from David I to Charles I including legends and facts, royal gifts, royal servants and more! Each month explores a different theme with Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June looking at Canongate and the Enlightenment (with glimpses of both the dark and light side of Enlightenment Edinburgh) and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July concentrating on Canongate and the Arts (writers, painters, musicians and more.) Tours start at the front of the Kirk at 11.30am and last an hour. Free of charge but donations to Canongate Kirk welcome. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3UJjSKA>

## KIRK SESSION

The Presbytery having given a green light to the prospect of our Parish Grouping with St Giles’, members of the Kirk Sessions of both churches are being asked to consider the formal Basis of Parish Grouping at special meetings on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May. Ours will take place at

6pm in the Kirk foyer (NOT the Harry Younger Hall) – it should not be a long meeting and elders are asked to attend if at all possible.

### **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 8<sup>th</sup> May. The group is open to crafters and non-crafters, skilled and non-skilled alike – you can be sure of a friendly welcome.

### **COFFEE MORNING**

David Croft has kindly offered to organize a Coffee Morning in aid of the Alzheimer's Society on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June in the Harry Younger Hall. If you would like to lend a hand, and get to know others in the congregation as well as support this worthy cause, please get in touch with David via the Kirk office.

### **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.

### **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!

### **INDUCTION OF REV JULIA CATO**

Members of the congregation will remember Julia Cato, who was a candidate in training with us some years ago. Julia has been called to the newly formed Northwest Kirk: Cramond and the Old Kirk and Muirhouse and will be inducted at a service in the Old Kirk and Muirhouse church at 7pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May. All welcome.

### **RECENT COLLECTION FOR MARIE CURE**

Helen Aitken writes: 'a big thank you to the congregation for their amazing generosity when I recently collected for Marie Curie. The excellent result was £141.66. Your support is greatly appreciated by Marie Curie.'

### **ROBERT FERGUSSON EVENT**

This year marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the untimely death of the poet Robert Fergusson, whose much-loved statue is just outside the gates of Canongate Kirkyard where he is buried.

The Scottish Poetry Library has organised an evening to celebrate his extraordinary life and times at 7pm TODAY Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May in Canongate Kirk. Poetry, music and conversation will be provided by writer James Robertson, academic Professor Rhona Brown and musician Tommy Reckless. Remaining tickets available on Eventbrite <https://bit.ly/3TA786S>

### **YEHUDI MEHUIN SCHOOL CONCERT**

We look forward to welcoming the latest generation of hugely talented students from the Yehudi Menuhin School of Music in Surrey for an afternoon concert at 3pm this Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. All proceeds go to Canongate Kirk.

### **KING'S GALLERY EXHIBITION**

'Style and Society – Dressing the Georgians' is the new exhibition at the re-named King's Gallery at Holyroodhouse, exploring Georgian fashion with examples of fine art, luxurious textiles, jewelry 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. Ticket prices and more information on the King's Gallery website at <https://bit.ly/3TzisQM>

### **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.

### **STEWARDS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The Presbytery is seeking volunteers to act as stewards for the General Assembly week of 18<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024. Stewards have a vital role at the General Assembly to ensure the safety and comfort of those attending. They provide a friendly welcome to the Assembly Halls, ensure the security of proceedings by checking passes, are alert to security threats and disturbances and have a responsibility to ensure the safe evacuation of the Assembly Hall if this is required. Individual shifts last for three hours and volunteers can select the day or days on which they could help. If you are interested, please contact Sandy Gemmill, Chief Steward at [assemblystewards@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:assemblystewards@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Minister: The Revd Neil Gardner [nng22@btinternet.com](mailto:nng22@btinternet.com) 0131 556 3515

Kirk Secretary: Imogen Gibson (office) [canongatekirk@btinternet.com](mailto:canongatekirk@btinternet.com) 0131 556 3515

*Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Thursday 9am – 12 noon, Fri 8am – 12 noon.*

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