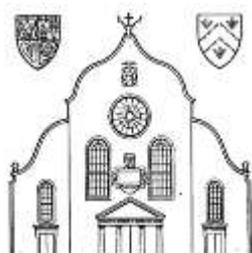


CANONGATE KIRK THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE & EDINBURGH CASTLE

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter May 2021



MINISTER'S LETTER

Since the sad news of the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, it has seemed as if almost everyone he ever met has shared a personal memory of their encounter, often featuring an example of Prince Philip's famous wit and wisdom. My own came some years ago during the great privilege of spending a weekend at Balmoral. I was due to preach at Crathie Kirk on the Sunday morning but after dinner on the Saturday night His Royal Highness offered his apologies for being absent from the service as he was due to leave very early the next day to drive to Sandringham. Slightly taken aback at the prospect of such a long journey, I asked with a degree of pastoral concern, "Are you driving all the way, Sir?" to which he immediately retorted "If I don't drive all the way, I won't get there!"

His quietly impressive funeral in St George's Chapel, Windsor, on 17th April was conducted every bit as carefully as it had been planned, and marked the end of the very long and adventurous journey of Prince Philip's extraordinary life. At the news of his death, I wrote a letter of condolence to HM The Queen on behalf of our Kirk Session and congregation, and we continue to hold Her Majesty and all the Royal Family in our thoughts and prayers as – like so many families before them this last challenging year – they continue to come to terms with their loss amidst the sadness and strangeness of difficult days.

The metaphor of a journey can be overused but it seems as if we are at last heading in the right direction after the twists and turns of the unexpected road we have travelled since March 2020. Restrictions are gradually lifting – some in relation to churches are still under review but it seems as if numbers permitted to attend services are going to be driven by the number a building can safely accommodate. In our case that means just a few more than we have been allowed until now, but it is to be hoped that further easing of restrictions will be introduced quite soon. We still have some distance to go, but if we don't drive all the way, we won't get there. And with patience and perseverance, we WILL get there!

PARISH REGISTER

Funerals

9th April

Alastair Macfarlane Drummond Place

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

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PARKING

Edinburgh City Council has now introduced on-street parking charges from 12.30pm to 6.30pm every Sunday. With this in mind the Kirk Session has agreed that we shall continue to hold one service at 10.30am with the addition of a monthly evening service when the Council reintroduces its Open Streets programme, when it can be particularly difficult for some of our members to access the Kirk in the morning. Looking ahead we shall keep open the option of an additional earlier service, as previously, though it would have to start considerably earlier than the previous 10am Family Service slot. Comments – especially from those who used to attend the 10am service – would be welcome!

WORSHIP FROM AFAR

A reminder that although we have been allowed to hold restricted services since Palm Sunday, there are still alternatives to attending in person. The weekly service is livestreamed to our website at 10.30am every Sunday and then available online at any time, and 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.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The Annual Review for 2020/2021 is now available and thanks are due to David Croft and to James Anderson for ensuring its publication during trying circumstances. In fact, the theme of the pandemic, and a variety of our responses to it, runs through the review from start to finish and makes for a fascinating read. In an effort to reduce postage costs, copies can be picked up in church, but a number will be posted out in due course. If you don’t get a copy one way or another, and would like one, please get in touch with the office.

TOWARDS AN ECO CONGREGATION

At its last meeting the Kirk Session was pleased to hear from Alexis Moyer of the steps we are currently taking towards becoming an *eco-congregation* of the Church of Scotland, and keen that they should be more widely shared in the hope that others might like to join her in taking a lead in this initiative. It can be implemented at various levels. In our church services, for instance, we need consciously to include environmental themes and concerns in our prayers and hymns, when we are allowed to sing again! And when we can celebrate Holy Communion again, we should be using organic bread and wine. After church hospitality should eventually serve Fairtrade products in re-useable cups and plates. More widely, consideration needs to be given to issues like energy use, waste management, ethical investments etc. The Kirk Session would like to encourage members of the congregation to form a small group to work with Alexis in steering us towards full compliance with the eco initiative, and to help arrange occasional talks about environmental matters including climate change, make available relevant study materials and encourage members of the local community to become involved. One option might be to develop the area around the mercat cross in the Kirkyard, with plants and wildlife in mind. Please speak with Alexis or the Minister if you would like to get involved.

CLARINDA'S

The local tea room which takes its name from the pen-name of Robert Burns' favoured correspondent Nancy McLehose, who lies buried in our Kirkyard, has reopened after a year of closure. So far it's only open 10am-4pm Saturdays and Sundays for takeaway, but if you find yourself in the parish at a weekend (after church on a Sunday?!) why not drop by? Maggie and her team will be pleased to see you, and we wish them well as we welcome them back to the Canongate.

OFFERINGS

Our supplies of weekly freewill offering envelopes have been replenished - 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.

CURRENT EXHIBITION AT THE QUEEN'S GALLERY

The Palace of Holyroodhouse has now reopened to visitors, with The Queen's Gallery hosting a new exhibition entitled *Victoria and Albert: Our Lives in Watercolour*. Throughout their marriage, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were enthusiastic patrons of the art of watercolour painting. This exhibition documents their lives, private and official, together and includes many scenes of Victorian Edinburgh being displayed for the first time in Scotland. Until 3 October 2021. Gallery opening times: April – October 09:30-18:00 (last admission 17:00)

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<i>Usual Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Fri 8am – 12 noon</i>			
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